



Montgomery County Efficiency Study for Shared Local and County Highway Services

Existing Conditions Report

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Project Steering Committee

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
Introduction	3
Highway Infrastructure in Montgomery County.....	3
Highway Service Costs and Revenue Support in Montgomery County	5
Highway Services in Montgomery County	11
Highway Equipment.....	17
Highway Personnel in Montgomery County.....	18
Public Works Facilities.....	19
Highway Service Cooperation	20
Suggested Alternatives for Further Work	21
Appendices.....	28
Bridge Inventory.....	29

List of Tables

Table 1: Summary of Centerline Miles for Montgomery County Municipalities 4

Table 2: Total Local Road Expenditures and Expenditures Per Mile 6

Table 3: Municipally Owned Miles per Employee 8

Table 4: Full Value of Taxable Property Per Mile of Municipal Road 10

Table 5: Number of Municipal Plow Routes and Average Miles per Plow Route..... 12

Table 6: Recent Annual Highway Investment 15

Table 7: Major Highway Equipment by Municipality in Montgomery County 23

Table 8: Highway Personnel, Job Title and Average Wage by Municipality in Montgomery 24

Table 9: Municipal and Highway and Public Works Facilities in Montgomery County 25

Executive Summary

Existing Conditions Report Summary

Montgomery County Efficiency Study for Shared Local and County Highway Services

Overview

In 2012 Montgomery County received a Local Government Efficiency (LGe) grant from the New York State Department of State. The purpose of the grant was to identify opportunities to reduce cost and improve highway services through intergovernmental service delivery or management changes among the 22 municipalities in the county. This is the first of three reports in this effort. It is based on detailed data collection from state and county sources and interviews with every local highway manager in the county and with other related municipal staff and professionals. Highway professionals were both cooperative and insightful in this effort. The Existing Conditions Report summarizes a number of dimensions of current highway operations and concludes with a group of alternatives for future change to be evaluated in detail in the next project report. A third project report will outline needed implementation issues for suggested alternatives.

The county's intermunicipal road system serve's a number of core public purposes including public safety and economic wellbeing. As we will outline below, the Montgomery County road system has some unique characteristics that must be confronted in both the short and long term.

Highway Infrastructure (Pages 3-5)

Road networks are very different from county to county in New York State. Among the key differences are variation in total miles and the mix of state, county and local roads. County road mileage as a percent of total local roads is extremely high in Montgomery, ranked first among counties in the state.

Service Costs and Revenue Support (pages 5-10)

Per mile service costs in Montgomery County follow the generally expected pattern observed in other parts of the state, with per mile highway costs generally higher in villages and on higher volume county roads. Spending for the City of Amsterdam is lower than expected in comparison with previous benchmarks. In comparing the number of fulltime employees per mile of road, Montgomery County stands out for a relatively high ratio of miles of road maintained per employee. Taxable assessed value is one measure of the resources available to municipalities to support public services. Substantial variation exists in taxable value available to different highway departments in the county.

Highway Services in Montgomery County (pages 11- 17)

Highway services provided in the county are reviewed in three major categories: Winter Maintenance, Summer Maintenance and Investment. Differences are noted in the service provision of two groups: town and county versus city and village. These two groupings of municipal types have significant differences in the services provided based on the nature of their road system and traffic. Highway investment projects in surface treatment and reconstruction are reviewed with comparison to available benchmarks. Investment figures are mixed for the county's towns taken as a group, but appear to be falling behind benchmark values for maintaining road surface conditions (Table 6). Local practices with

regard to a number of management options are reviewed, including: financial management, pavement management systems, sign inventories, and equipment maintenance.

Equipment (page 17)

Major rolling stock equipment is summarized in a single table. There are approximately 224 pieces of equipment across the counties 20 highway departments. Over 40% of this equipment inventory is either single or double axle dump trucks.

Personnel (page 18)

There are approximately 123 full time employees providing highway services across Montgomery County. The sizes of departments vary substantially among the county’s local governments from a high of 24 employees in Montgomery County to a low of zero in the Village of Ames. Three villages in the county have one-person highway staffing levels. Employees carrying the title of Motor Equipment Operator or Heavy Equipment Operator constitute over half (56%) of the full time highway personnel across the county.

Facilities (pages 19-20)

Highway and public works facilities are another critical component in the delivery of highway services. Most municipalities have more than one structure that is used for housing equipment and general maintenance purposes. Characteristics of municipal garage facilities, fueling facilities and covered salt storage are reviewed in this section. A number of highway managers expressed a need for new or renovated facilities.

Service Cooperation (pages 19-20)

County, town, village and city highway departments in Montgomery County cooperate extensively to informally share manpower, materials and equipment on a regular basis. Montgomery County has for decades contracted out winter snow and ice control to municipalities in the county. The bulk of this mileage is connected most directly to town highway networks and as a consequence towns in the county contract for a large majority of this work annually.

Suggested Alternatives for Further Work (pages 21-22)

1. **Regional Options for County Highway Operations.** Explore the potential for two or more regional locations or co-locations for improving service and reducing cost.
2. **Return of Local Roads to Town Ownership.** Examine the opportunity to better allocate network and reduce need for county travel time to more distant road segments. Examine the impact on state aid and feasible financial adjustments.
3. **Improving Service Cost and Performance Information to Improve Management Decisionmaking.** Examine the opportunity for using existing county software resources to create a simple approach for improving service cost information for local road managers -building on current practices by some current managers.
4. **Outline particular regional options for specific municipalities.** For example -where a shared facility (garage, materials storage, etc.) appears to have a particular advantage based on the age or location of existing structures.

Report Tables 7-9 (pages 23-26)

Introduction

The county's intermunicipal road system serves a number of core public purposes including public safety and economic wellbeing. For commuters, school children, local businesses, tourists and others --good roads that are maintained efficiently are important for direct daily needs. The county intermunicipal road network, including county, city, town, and village roads has to work well as a system and in an integrated fashion to properly serve the community. Many, if not most, users don't know when they switch from county to town to state roads as they traverse the network. While the legal responsibilities and constraints of municipal road ownership have to be respected, it is in every Montgomery County local government's interest to work to make the whole road network function effectively. Elected leaders and highway managers, many with direct ties to town government, are in the best position to foster this perspective and provide leadership to achieve this goal. As we will outline below, the Montgomery County road system has some unique characteristics that must be confronted in both the short and long term.

Highway Infrastructure in Montgomery County

Road networks are very different from county to county in New York State. Among the key differences are variation in total miles and the mix of state, county and local roads. Table 1 provides a summary of road mileage by municipality in the county. There are over a thousand miles of public roadway in Montgomery County. State owned mileage, including the thruway, constitutes about 20% (217 miles) of this network. Local municipal roads make up the balance of this network, about 80% (818 miles). Among the state's 57 counties (excluding New York City), Montgomery County's population ranks 45th and total local highway mileage is roughly comparable at a rank of 48th. The balance of local road ownership is shared by the city (9%), villages (6%), towns (36%) and county (48%).

County roads as a percent of total local roads is extremely high in Montgomery, ranked number one among counties in the state. Only three New York counties have county owned roads of more than 36% of the total local road system. Even more significant is Montgomery County's road mileage (57%) as a percent of town and county roads, also the highest in the state. The statewide average for counties is 27% (county road mileage as percent of total town and county mileage). Statewide most county lane miles are in towns. Stated another way, while statewide one in four combined town county miles is county owned, in Montgomery County the ratio is close to three county owned miles out of every five of the combined town-county total. Every town in Montgomery, except the Town of St. Johnsville, contains more county owned mileage than town.

As a general rule, county roads in rural areas are low volume collectors which collect traffic from other roads and channel the traffic to higher level roads such as arterials, interstates, etc. Collectors channel traffic from a number of lower volume roads that provide direct access to residential, agricultural, industrial or recreational land uses. In contrast, town roads are dominated by those road classifications that "feed" collectors. The collector roads often cross town boundaries and serve a more intermunicipal function which justifies the county role in the intermunicipal road network. We would expect that in

general the collector mileage would be less than the mileage of network of roads served by them. This is affirmed by a number of factors. For example, while town highway managers identified limited or no road striping. The county on the other hand, reports striping 170 centerline miles and 64 edge line miles, reflecting traffic volume and roadway importance for a portion of the county’s road mileage.

Table 1: Summary of Centerline Miles for Montgomery County Municipalities

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Local Government	2010 Population TOV for Towns	Town City or Village	Unpaved Mileage	County	Total Local	County Percent of Total Local	State	Total State & Local
Towns								
Amsterdam	3,784	19.8	0.0	38.5	58.3	66%	15.9	74.2
Canajoharie	1,366	35.4	6.0	41.0	76.4	54%	21.3	97.7
Charleston	1,373	32.0	20.3	36.0	67.9	53%	10.0	78.0
Florida	2,696	40.4	2.8	51.9	92.3	56%	28.8	121.1
Glen	1,723	26.4	0.3	38.3	64.7	59%	25.8	90.5
Minden	1,978	33.9	9.9	53.4	87.3	61%	26.0	113.3
Mohawk	3,049	31.6	5.4	34.5	66.1	52%	17.1	83.2
Palatine	1,894	26.9	8.2	38.4	65.3	59%	16.1	81.3
Root	1,715	35.4	6.0	47.0	82.4	57%	19.8	102.2
St Johnsville	899	14.7	1.2	13.3	28.0	48%	8.2	36.2
Subtotal	20,477	296.6	63.3	392.1	688.7	57%	189.0	877.7
Villages								
Ames	145	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.6	100%	0.5	1.2
Canajoharie	2,229	11.0	0.0	0.0	11.0	0%	3.5	14.5
Fonda	795	3.4	0.0	0.1	3.4	3%	2.0	5.4
Fort Johnson	490	4.1	0.0	0.0	4.1	0%	2.2	6.3
Fort Plain	2,322	9.6	0.0	0.0	9.6	0%	5.0	14.6
Fultonville	784	4.3	0.0	0.1	4.4	2%	3.1	7.5
Hagaman	1,292	8.2	0.0	0.0	8.2	0%	0.0	8.2
Nelliston	596	2.7	0.0	0.2	2.9	7%	2.2	5.1
Palatine Bridge	737	1.4	0.0	0.0	1.4	0%	2.4	3.8
St Johnsville	1,732	7.2	0.0	0.4	7.6	5%	0.9	8.5
Subtotal	11,122	51.8	0.0	1.4	53.2	3%	21.9	75.1
City of Amsterdam	18,620	75.9	0.0	0.4	76.3	0.5%	6.8	83.0
County Total	50,219	424.3	63.3	393.8	818.1	48%	217.6	1,035.8
		41%	6%	38%	79%		21%	

Source: Centerline mileage figures for columns 2,4,5,7 and 8 are taken from the New York State Department of Transportation County Summary Table for Montgomery County. NYSDOT creates county summaries from the annual inventory filed by local road managers. Unpaved road mileage figures were computed from NYSDOT inventory data with adjustments made based on consultation with local highway managers. Column 1 - Population figures taken from Census Bureau files, U.S. Department of Commerce. TOV= town outside village

Several highway managers interviewed for this project indicated that county policy in the Post WWII period contributed to the higher volume of county roads. During the post WWII period only county roads were eligible for state highway improvement aid. As a consequence the county adopted a policy of transferring town roads to county ownership in order to qualify for aid, improve the road and then transfer the road back to town ownership. At the outset the county had the authority to make these transfers of road ownership. During the period of this activity the state law governing road transfers changed and formal approval by the town board was required for roads to be transferred back to local ownership. As a consequence many roads that are not the typical county collector remain as county owned roads. One estimate is that up to 200 miles of county road fit in this category.

The road system is not static. New development, changes in place of employment and place of residence and other influences over time are linked to changes in travel patterns. These changing travel patterns can dramatically, but incrementally, influence highway networks and the role of particular roads in carrying traffic. Municipalities within some counties make regular adjustments of road ownership to reflect changes in the role that roads play in carrying traffic. Based on the factors discussed above an assessment of road ownership, particularly between the towns and county, should be conducted.

Bridges

The county has responsibility for most of the bridges in the county, with 119 bridges that qualify under the state definition with a span 20 feet or more (a list of the counties bridges with NYSDOT bridge condition ratings is attached to this report). The City of Amsterdam owns and maintains 18 bridges. Several municipalities have one to three bridges. Both the county and municipalities have a variety of box and other culverts that are maintained as a part of the network of municipal roads in the county.

Highway Service Costs and Revenue Support in Montgomery County

Highway infrastructure is a critical asset for municipalities in Montgomery County. It is important to understand how current financial support and service costs are structured in assessing options for change. Property and sales tax revenues along with state CHIPs Aid (Comprehensive Highway Improvement Aid) are the principal revenues sources for highway service spending in Montgomery County. It is important to assess how current spending on highways relates to the county-heavy distribution of road mileage infrastructure summarized in the first section. On average we would expect that county roads that serve as collectors for other road types in the network would need to have the built capacity to handle relatively higher volumes of traffic and be more costly to maintain. Previous benchmarks indicate that there is hierarchy of road/street costs needed to maintain adequate road condition overtime. While benchmark costs have not been updated for some time the differential between road types is still valuable. Suburban town roads and smaller village streets have generally higher per mile costs (from 40-45% higher) to maintain overtime than more rural town and county roads. Larger village and non-metropolitan cities have cost factors that make them still higher, another 40% more than smaller village and suburban town roads.

Table 2: Total Local Road Expenditures and Expenditures Per Mile for Montgomery County Municipalities

	2010 Population (TOV for Towns)	2012 Budgeted Total Local Road Expenditures	2012 Budgeted Expenditures Per Mile For Municipally Owned Roads
Town			
Amsterdam	3,784	566,400	28,606
Canajoharie	1,366	674,367	19,050
Charleston	1,373	538,839	16,839
Florida	2,696	734,827	18,189
Glen	1,723	425,472	16,116
Minden	1,978	847,000	24,985
Mohawk	3,049	851,284	26,939
Palatine	1,894	627,613	23,331
Root	1,715	466,962	13,191
St Johnsville	899	227,844	15,500
Subtotal	20,477	5,960,608	20,096
Village			
Ames	145		
Canajoharie	2,229	260,050	23,641
Fonda	795	243,893	71,733 *
Fort Johnson	490	100,904	24,611
Fort Plain	2,322	360,895	37,593
Fultonville	784	192,900	44,860
Hagaman	1,292	236,284	28,815
Nelliston	596	-	-
Palatine Bridge	737	58,798	41,999
St Johnsville	1,732	294,603	40,917
Subtotal	11,122	1,748,328	33,752
City of Amsterdam	18,620	1,675,150	22,070
Montgomery County		6,617,975	16,805
Total	50,219	16,002,061	19,560

Source: Population figures taken from Census Bureau files, U.S. Department of Commerce. Budgeted local road expenditures summarized from 2012 municipal budgets with a fiscal year beginning in 2012 (e.g. City and Village budgets for 2012-13FY).

*Budgeted operating spending for the Village of Fonda may be relatively high because of higher than normal expenses for capital items in comparison with other villages in the county.

Table 2 contains figures on current spending on roads by municipalities in the county. The table has total spending and spending per mile for municipally owned mileage. These figures represent budgeted expenditures for the 2012 fiscal year (2012-13 for villages and the City of Amsterdam). While these figures do not represent a multi-year average, road managers in the county indicated that budgeted spending for 2012 represented a typical year (in this era of fiscal decline) for their municipality. Budgeted spending figures were drawn directly from municipal budgets and an attempt was made include all relevant street and highway costs, including an allocation of fringe benefits for highway personnel. County contract dollars for winter maintenance and roadside mowing were subtracted from town and village budgets in calculating spending for roads owned by the municipality. The Town of Palatine provides winter road maintenance in the villages of Nellyston and Palatine Bridge. This service is provided from town resources. No adjustment was made to the mileage in the town or villages in the calculations for Table 2. No adjustment was made for seasonal or minimum maintenance town roads.

The average figure for villages in Montgomery County is higher than the average for town roads (68%), in agreement with previous benchmark information. Highway spending in some villages may be partially overstated because of the multiple service tasks being conducted by village personnel and the difficulty in parsing budget costs for the highway portion of their work load. Per mile spending in the City of Amsterdam is lower than we would expect from previous benchmark figures, falling somewhere between average village and town spending per mile. Montgomery County spending is significantly lower than the average per mile spending by towns in the county. Towns on average spend 20% more per mile than Montgomery County for county road maintenance and improvement.

Per mile figures do not reflect a variety of factors that can cause expected variation among municipalities in their road and street spending. For example, some towns noted that they had previously gone through a period of substantial road improvement and no longer needed to conduct the more expensive level of road reconstruction previously undertaken. Other town road managers were in a position of needing to do more significant work to upgrade the quality of their road network. Per mile budgeted expenditures for a single year do not adjust for such differences in service need and circumstances nor are they adjusted for differences in existing road condition across municipalities.

Table 3 below provides another view of differences among highway departments in the county. Dividing municipal owned road mileage by the number of fulltime municipal employees provides one measure of the number of miles of road that are “supported by” a single full time highway staff person. The average number of miles of road per employee for towns is more than double the average for villages. The figure for Montgomery County staff per mile is more than triple the average figure for towns in the county. These contrasts, impart, reflect the town crew size required to service county winter plowing contracts. On the other hand they reflect the relative size of the county owned road system and the level of county financial resources reflected in the level of county highway personnel. Another balancing factor is the county role in bridge maintenance and investment. In addition to road infrastructure, the same complement of county highway staff also carries responsibility for maintaining

the 119 bridges in the county with a span of 20 or more feet. This only further stretches the infrastructure responsibilities carried per county highway employee.

Table 3: Municipally Owned Miles per Employee

	2010 Population (TOV for Towns)	Full time Employees for Highway Purposes	Municipally Owned Miles Per Employee
Towns			
Amsterdam	3,784	5	4.0
Canajoharie	1,366	6	5.9
Charleston	1,373	6	5.3
Florida	2,696	6	6.7
Glen	1,723	5	5.3
Minden	1,978	7	4.8
Mohawk	3,049	7	4.5
Palatine	1,894	6	4.5
Root	1,715	6	5.9
St. Johnsville	899	4	3.7
Town Total	20,477	58	5.1
Village			
Ames	145	-	-
Canajoharie	2,229	5	2.2
Fonda	795	2	1.7
Fort Johnson	490	2	2.1
Fort Plain	2,322	6	1.6
Fultonville	784	1	4.3
Hagaman	1,292	2	4.1
Nelliston	596	1	2.7
Palatine Bridge	737	1	1.4
St. Johnsville	1,732	5	1.4
Village Total	11,122	25	2.1
City of Amsterdam	18,620	16	4.7
Montgomery County	50,219	25	15.8
County Wide Total	50,219	124	6.6

Source: Population figures taken from Census Bureau files, U.S. Department of Commerce. Number of Full time employees taken from records provided by the Montgomery County Personnel Department and modified through interviews with Highway Managers.

Taxable assessed value is one measure of the resources available to municipalities to support public services. A number of variables affect highway spending, but available tax base has proven to be an important one. The higher the amount of taxable value per mile of road the more revenue that a given tax rate will yield to support town highway services. Table 4 below contains the full value of taxable property and full value per mile of municipally owned road for all local governments in Montgomery County. Full value represents the current total assessed value adjusted by the state determined equalization rate. This adjustment brings total local assessments to a common “market” or “full value” standard, providing a fairer comparison across municipalities.

The Town of Amsterdam’s full value per mile of road, \$15.7 million, is the highest among towns over three times higher than the town average of \$4.4 million. In 2012 the Town of Amsterdam was unique among Montgomery County towns in raising no property taxes for highway purposes. The Village of Palatine Bridge has the highest full value per mile of road, \$29.6 million, across all municipalities in the county, almost four times the village average of 7.6 million. The average full value per mile for villages is about \$3.2 million higher than the average full value per mile for towns. The Town of Charlestown has the lowest full value per mile followed closely by the Town of St. Johnsville with the second lowest. The Village of Fort Johnson has the lowest full value per mile for villages with less than half the average taxable value per mile for Montgomery County villages.

The City of Amsterdam has about \$7.6 million dollars of full taxable property per mile of city street. This is about \$1 million less than the average for villages in the county. Montgomery County has \$5.5 million of full taxable property per mile of county road. This about \$1 million more than the town average.

In other counties, the municipalities with higher full taxable value of property per mile of municipal road tend to spend more per mile for highway services. This tendency also holds, generally, in Montgomery County towns and less so for villages (figures not included in Table 4).

**Table 4: Full Value of Taxable Property Per Mile of Municipal Road
For Montgomery County Local Governments**

	Town, City Village or County Centerline Miles	Taxable Full Value of Real Property*	Taxable Full Value Per Mile of Municipal Road*
Towns			
Amsterdam	19.8	382,965,270	15,712,899
Canajoharie	35.4	192,009,690	2,986,724
Charleston	32.0	80,238,997	2,507,469
Florida	40.4	180,076,475	4,457,338
Glen	26.4	136,161,892	3,932,741
Minden	33.9	163,668,950	2,939,530
Mohawk	31.6	208,588,555	5,714,514
Palatine	26.9	152,205,898	4,909,868
Root	35.4	97,010,757	2,740,417
St. Johnsville	14.7	80,376,771	2,664,766
All Towns	296.6	1,349,602,681	4,488,203
Villages			
Ames	-	5,964,383	-
Canajoharie	11.0	86,279,670	7,843,606
Fonda	3.4	28,009,906	8,238,208
Fort Johnson	4.1	15,161,571	3,697,944
Fort Plain	9.6	64,018,884	6,668,634
Fultonville	4.3	32,337,531	7,520,356
Hagaman	8.2	56,688,296	6,913,207
Nelliston	2.7	26,006,540	9,632,052
Palatine Bridge	1.4	41,414,656	29,581,897
St Johnsville	7.2	41,204,716	5,722,877
All Villages	51.8	397,086,153	7,665,756
City of Amsterdam	75.9	502,426,703	6,619,588
Montgomery County	393.8	2,175,729,958	5,524,962

Source: Centerline mileage figures are taken from the New York State Department of Transportation County Summary Table for Montgomery County. Taxable Full Value (taxable assessed value adjusted by equalization rate) figures for towns, City of Amsterdam and Montgomery County were provided by Montgomery County Real Property Tax Department for the 2011 tax roll. Village Taxable Full Value figures were taken from NYS Comptroller 2011 Level 1 Data for Villages.

* Full Taxable Assessed Values and Full Taxable per Mile were adjusted based on town taxation and service delivery practices inside villages.

Highway Services in Montgomery County

Information about municipal highway services in Montgomery County was collected through interviews with all highway managers and requests for documents to supplement the interviews. In some instances, managers were asked to review and correct summaries of local data (e.g. personnel). All municipal interviews were conducted in August of 2012. Managers were asked about current management and service delivery practices, the volume of service output and their willingness to participate in additional cooperative practices.

Most town departments provide highway services only. There are exceptions, for example, the Town of Florida assists with two water and sewer districts and park maintenance, and the Town of Glen provides assistance with a town water district. The staff in all village public works departments carry major responsibilities for other functions including water, sewer, sanitation, parks and other activities. Among the county's villages, Ames is an anomaly with no public works staff or village streets to maintain. In a similar fashion, the City of Amsterdam and the Montgomery County Public Works departments have broader service responsibilities. In the sections below, we discuss the highway activities of these departments. Winter road maintenance is discussed first followed by Summer Maintenance and Highway Investment, and Departmental Policies and Management.

Winter Road Maintenance

As noted earlier, all county road mileage is plowed under contract with other municipalities in the county. Most of the county's mileage is located in towns, but the City of Amsterdam and several villages also plow county mileage under contract. Table 5, below, provides a summary of the mileage plowed by all municipalities in the county, the number of plow routes, and the average miles per plow route. Town highway departments, on average, use larger equipment and can travel at faster highway speeds for winter road maintenance (plowing and materials application). Village and city public works departments, on average, encounter more traffic, use smaller equipment, have narrower streets, and have slower moving road networks with tighter turning radius required for plowing. Therefore we would expect that given, a comparable time constraint to complete plowing, village plow routes would be shorter because of time and equipment constraints. In Table 5, Montgomery County municipalities confirm these general tendencies.

Table 5: Number of Municipal Plow Routes and Average Miles per Plow Route For Local Governments in Montgomery County

	2010 Population (TOV for Towns)	Centerline Highway Mileage			Number of Plow Routes	Average Miles Per Plow Route
		Town City or Village	County	Total Local		
Towns						
Amsterdam	3,784	19.8	38.5	58.3	5	12
Canajoharie	1,366	35.4	41.0	76.4	5	15
Charleston	1,373	32	36.0	68.0	3	23
Florida	2,696	40.4	51.9	92.3	5	18
Glen	1,723	26.4	38.3	64.7	3	22
Minden	1,978	33.9	53.4	87.3	5	17
Mohawk	3,049	31.6	34.5	66.1	4	17
Palatine	1,894	26.9	38.4	65.3	6	11
Root	1,715	35.4	47.0	82.4	4	21
St Johnsville	899	14.7	13.3	28.0	2	14
Subtotal	20,477	296.6	392.1	688.8	Average=4	Average=16
Villages						
Ames	145	0	0.6	0.6		
Canajoharie	2,229	11	0.0	11	3	4
Fonda	795	3.4	0.1	3.5	3	1
Fort Johnson	490	4.1	0.0	4.1	1	4
Fort Plain	2,322	9.6	0.0	9.6	3	3
Fultonville	784	4.3	0.1	4.4	1	4
Hagaman	1,292	8.2	0.0	8.2	1	8
Nelliston*	596	2.7	0.2	2.9	1	3
Palatine Bridge*	737	1.4	0.0	1.4	1	1
St Johnsville	1,732	7.2	0.4	7.6	2	4
Subtotal	11,122	51.8	1.4	53.3	Average=2	Average=3
City of Amsterdam	18,620	75.9	0.4	76.3	8	10
County Total	50,219	424.3	393.8	818.1		

Source: Population figures taken from Census Bureau files, U.S. Department of Commerce. Centerline mileage figures are taken from the New York State Department of Transportation County Summary Table for Montgomery County. Number plow routes obtained through interviews with Highway Managers and average miles per plow route calculated by the author.

*Streets in the Villages of Palatine Bridge and Nelliston are plowed by the Town of Palatine Highway Department and supported by the Town wide Highway Fund.

The average village plow route (3 miles) is about one-fifth the mileage of the average town plow route (16 miles). The City of Amsterdam’s plow route average (8 miles) is about half the average for town

plow routes. Most municipalities in the county use a salt-sand mix for de-icing purposes. Road managers vary the salt-sand mix depending on conditions. The typical mix contains 10 to 30 percent salt. The Village of Fort Plain uses a salt-stone dust mix for winter road application. Three villages use only salt for winter road application: Fonda, Hagaman, and St. Johnsville. In addition to plowing and spreading de-icing materials, many villages haul snow from downtown areas and other similar spaces.

Summer Services and Highway Investment

Summer maintenance includes most of the other highway services, and improvements provided by local highway departments in late spring, summer and early fall. This includes: drainage maintenance (ditching and culvert replacement), brush and tree maintenance, shoulder maintenance, road side mowing, sign replacement and repair, center and edge line striping. Spring, summer and early fall is also the time that major highway improvement investments are made, including: bridge repair and construction, and the paving, reconstruction and rebuilding of local roads. Because of differences in the cluster of services provided, town and county, and city and villages will be reviewed separately.

Town and County Maintenance. The combined town owned roads and the county roads located in towns make up 84% of all the local road mileage in the county. All towns do drainage maintenance, brush and tree removal, sign repair and roadside mowing. The county does all of these routine maintenance tasks with their own forces, except mowing which is contracted out to towns for all county roads. Highway departments do not tend to keep annual records on the volume of work completed on many maintenance tasks. Town departments indicated that they typically mowed all of their roads two or three times per year (including county contract mileage and excluding seasonal and minimum maintenance roads). Ditch cleaning and other drainage maintenance is done annually but town highway managers, generally, were less able to indicate the volume of road mileage completed in a typical year. Town departments varied in the level of sign replacements and new signs needed per year. Town highway managers were, with several exceptions, hesitant to identify the volume of sign replacement and new sign activity per year. Several towns indicated significant sign replacement activity in order to comply with new reflectivity requirements.

There is substantial contrast in the volume of road striping done by towns and the county reflecting in part the road traffic volume on those county roads serving as local collectors. Two of the eight towns in the county reported doing limited annual road striping. Only two percent of town roads are treated with center line striping annually. In contrast, the county applies centerline striping to 174 miles (44%) of county road and edge line striping to 64 miles (16%). This striping is done via a contract with a private vendor.

City and Village Maintenance. Several factors differentiate city and village street maintenance from that generally provided by town and county highway departments. Town and county mileage most often has open drainage ditches and wider road profiles with berms and shoulders. This road profile requires more attention to cleaning open ditches to maintain adequate road drainage and roadside mowing of banks and the wider profile. City and village street systems typically have more enclosed drainage with curbing and no roadside mowing. While the enclosed drainage systems need maintenance it is different and sometimes a less consuming annual road task than the ditch cleaning activities required

for town and county roads. Villages and cities on average have fewer miles of road to maintain, but have high cost mileage with higher traffic volumes and activity, on street parking, denser more urban development around street corridors, sidewalks and more street lighting. Village crews most often have to coordinate their attention between street responsibilities and other public works activities in water, waste water, sanitation, parks and other functions. Three of the nine village departments have street striping responsibilities, covering 10% of village owned mileage in the county. There is substantial street striping in the City of Amsterdam, but this is considered a public safety function and managed by the city’s police department. For a variety of reasons, including budget constraints, only one village reported current curb replacement (St. Johnsville), and one reported active side walk replacement by village crews (Fort Plain).

Highway Investment

Highway managers in villages, towns, the City of Amsterdam and Montgomery County report making annual investment in road infrastructure. A number of managers indicated that the primary source for road investment, New York State’s Comprehensive Highway Improvement Program (CHIPs), has not kept pace with rising costs for highway materials, etc. In addition tight local budgets are putting pressure on Chips aid for use in more limited or shorter term purposes. As a consequence municipalities indicated that they have been reducing investment and are more regularly rolling over CHIPs funds from year to year to accumulate adequate funds and use them more efficiently for either a group of projects or a single large project. Municipalities in the county manage the investment process differently depending on road condition, manager preferences and financial resources.

Highway managers in the county were asked to indicate their annual investment in three categories; paving, chip sealing (“stone and oil” surface treatment), and reconstruction or rebuilding of local roads. Assuming adequate preparation and existing road conditions, new asphalt pavement is considered a ten year surface investment, while chip sealing is considered a 7-8 year investment. To maintain investment levels that will keep existing road quality, a typical benchmark is to pave with asphalt 10% of the municipality’s roads per year (based on an average 10 year life for an asphalt paving treatment) and a somewhat higher percentage (13-15%) for those roads maintained with a chip seal treatment. These are rough benchmarks because, depending on a number of factors, individual roads may need to be retreated in a shorter or longer interval.

Table 6 below provides estimates of recent annual paving and chip sealing and reconstruct or rebuild mileage listed by municipality. Based on the benchmarks noted above the City of Amsterdam (3%), and the villages taken as a group (7%) are falling below the 10% paving benchmark for adequate investment to maintain road surface condition. The figures in Table 6 are mixed for the towns taken as a group, but appear to be falling behind benchmark values for maintaining road surface conditions. If this persists, road conditions can begin to decline to the extent that leads to deterioration in road base materials, increasing the need for more costly road treatments and increasing dramatically the per mile costs of maintaining road conditions for road users. Montgomery County appears to be at or exceeding the pavement replacement needed to maintain road surfaces.

**Table 6: Recent Annual Highway Investment
For Local Governments in Montgomery County**

	2010 Population (TOV for Towns)	Town City or Village**	Unpaved Mileage	Road Investment in Miles		
				Paving	Chip Sealing	Reconstruct or Rebuild*
Towns						
Amsterdam	3,784	19.8	0	0.50	-	-
Canajoharie	1,366	35.4	5.99	2.00	7.00	1.00
Charleston	1,373	32.0	20.3	0.10	3.50	0.50
Florida	2,696	40.4	2.8	-	-	-
Glen	1,723	26.4	0.3	1.50	-	1.50
Minden	1,978	33.9	9.9	1.00	4.00	0.25
Mohawk	3,049	31.6	5.4	2.50	-	-
Palatine	1,894	26.9	8.2	2.00	-	0.25
Root	1,715	35.4	6.0	1.25	3.00	0.50
St Johnsville	899	14.7	1.2	1.50	-	-
Subtotal	20,477	296.6	63.28	12.35	7.00	4.00
<i>% of Subtotal Paved</i>				5%	3%	2%
Villages						
Ames	145	0	0			
Canajoharie	2,229	11	0	0.25	-	-
Fonda	795	3.4	0	-	-	-
Fort Johnson	490	4.1	0	0.25	-	-
Fort Plain	2,322	9.6	0	1.50	-	-
Fultonville	784	4.3	0	0.10	-	0.10
Hagaman	1,292	8.2	0	0.25	-	-
Nelliston	596	2.7	0	0.25	-	-
Palatine Bridge	737	1.4	0	0.25	-	-
St Johnsville	1,732	7.2	0	0.75	-	-
Subtotal	11,122	51.8	0	3.60	0	.10
<i>% of Subtotal Paved</i>				7%	0%	0%
City of Amsterdam	18,620	75.9	0	2	0	0
<i>% of Paved</i>				3%	0%	0%
Montgomery County	50,219	393.8	0	36.35	26.35	0
<i>% of Paved</i>				9%	7%	0%

Source: Population figures taken from Census Bureau files, U.S. Department of Commerce. Centerline mileage figures are taken from the New York State Department of Transportation County Summary Table for Montgomery County. Paving, Chip Sealing and Reconstruct or Rebuild mileage figures were taken from personnel interviews with highway managers.

*In some cases, towns indicated that their annual paving mileage is primarily done on the same roads that are rebuilt or reconstructed. To some degree this represents double counting in the table.

** The figures in this column are total municipally owned mileage, including both paved and unpaved

Bridge Investment and Repair

The county has maintenance, repair and replacement responsibility for the large majority of bridges in the county. County budget categories do not separate out bridge repair cost from the highway maintenance budget. The county no longer has a dedicated bridge crew due to reductions in budgetary resources and staff. Repairs are prioritized based on NYSDOT condition ratings and staff assessments. The City of Amsterdam follows a similar approach, contracting out bridge maintenance and repair.

Department Policies & Management

Highway managers in the county were asked a series of questions about management practices and policies. With the exception of Montgomery County, no other municipality in the county had general or specific written policies to guide service delivery and investment or set standards for highway services.

Financial Management and Budget Administration. Local highway managers in Montgomery County have a varied role in budget development. With a couple exceptions, town highway managers either drafted or help draft the highway department budget for the town budget officer (usually the Town Supervisor). Highway managers for the City of Amsterdam and Montgomery County also were involved in drafting their department budget. This role of draft a departmental budget increases the responsibility and involvement of managers in the budget process. Highway managers in the county's villages tend not to be involved in drafting relevant portion of the village budget, but work with their governing board in final development. The structure of village budgets is different, with highway and public works items split in different sections of the General Fund, making it more difficult for a manager to actually draft a portion of the village budget.

Towns all use a seasonal approach, allocating a fixed number of payrolls to winter maintenance. The seasonal approach reduces the linkage between the budgeted expenditures and actual spending on different highway services. The county, villages and City of Amsterdam all base budget allocations more on previous spending patterns adjusted for future expectations.

All but three municipalities in the county receive regular, monthly or more frequent, revenue-expense reports from municipal administration showing monthly and year to date spending and revenue receipts. Many managers maintain their own internal records on spending to date to compare with municipal administrative reports. All highway managers in the county considered the current level and type of financial reports received adequate for highway management purposes. Several managers expressed an interest in information that would improve their knowledge of costs on a service by service basis. Montgomery County Public Works collects and maintains a detailed database on cost information that permits full departmental costing of particular services and projects. The county public works commissioner uses this improved management information to adjust how services are provided and to guide decisions for contracting out services.

Pavement Management Systems. A range of paper and computerized approaches exist that help to manage and oversee the condition of municipal road inventories. These systems can be used to establish a condition index which is an average of the condition rating on each individual road in the municipality. The condition index can be used as a performance indicator to determine the effectiveness of maintenance and capital strategies and the adequacy of overall investment in the road network.

Pavement Management Systems call for developing an inventory with each segment in the municipality's road network, prioritizing each segment's importance (based on factors like traffic count, public safety, etc.) and regularly rating the condition of each distinct segment in the network. The priority rankings based on traffic, etc. can be combined with the condition to help determine

appropriate treatments and strategies to use with each segment. Highway managers oversee a varying number of roads and the smaller the number of roads managed the less formal this kind of system needs to be. Regular ratings provide an indicator of performance to judge the effectiveness and adequacy of highway service provision.

Two town highway managers, Canajoharie and Root, and two village managers, Canajoharie and Fonda, indicated the use of written system or list for managing the timing of pavement applications and road improvements. The county public works commissioner uses a written Pavement Management approach to prioritizing investments on county roads. Pavement management systems that develop an annual grading of pavement condition provide one of the few measures that permit comparison of road condition over time and with other jurisdictions. Such measurement approaches may seem too cumbersome or time consuming, but without such measures sound intermunicipal comparisons of highway efficiency are almost impossible to achieve.

Sign Inventory. Inadequate road way signage can be a significant liability risk for municipalities. An updated inventory of municipal road signs and their replacement history has proven to be important in managing the area of municipal risk. Four towns and two villages indicated that they maintained a paper sign inventory or were developing one. Highway managers for Montgomery County and the City of Amsterdam also indicated that they maintained a sign inventory.

Morning Road Clearing in Winter. Highway managers indicated that during winter snow, ice and storm conditions they routinely cleared roadways for traffic by between 6:00 and 6:30 a.m. This timing is geared to morning school bus routes and commuting needs.

Equipment Maintenance. Highway managers in the county vary substantially in their approach to equipment repairs. About half the departments in the county do some level of routine maintenance. The other half does most of the needed equipment repair, sending out for only the most specialized repair work. Only one department indicated that no repair was done in-house with municipal personnel. None of the towns or villages in the county have employees that are primarily equipment mechanics. Montgomery County Public Works Department has a staffed maintenance garage which services vehicles for other county departments as well as public works vehicles and equipment. The City of Amsterdam Department of Public Works also has a staffed maintenance facility which repairs vehicles for other city departments and does the majority of repair work in house.

Highway Equipment

Lists of highway equipment were obtained from highway and public works departments in Montgomery County. Municipal equipment records usually include make, model, year, and value. The value assigned is, by accounting rules, the purchase price. Because of the varying age and condition of municipal equipment their recorded values often have little relationship to current market or replacement value. Table 7, at the end of the report contains a summary of major “rolling stock” equipment for municipalities in the county. In addition to these larger equipment items, municipalities maintain information on smaller equipment and attachments used with larger rolling stock items (e.g. plowing and spreading equipment used with trucks for winter maintenance, chipping, etc.).

There are approximately 224 pieces of rolling stock equipment in the county. Almost 40% of this equipment is either tandem or single axle dump trucks. Pickup trucks represent about 10% of the total. The remainder of the inventory of equipment includes a variety of higher valued equipment that serves a number of specialty tasks for highway maintenance and investment.

Highway Personnel in Montgomery County

Table 8, attached to this report, contains a summary of highway personnel by municipality in the county. The Montgomery County Personnel Office provided an initial listing of highway job titles and salary and wage information for each municipality in the county (the names of employees were not included in the data provided). This initial listing was reviewed and updated by highway managers from each municipality. Similar data for the City of Amsterdam was obtained from the city’s Director of Employee Relations. The table summarizes the number of highway employees, job titles, pay scales (salaried and hourly), full and part-time status. During the interview with highway managers employee benefits for highway employees were reviewed. A number of highway managers noted a modest reduction in overall staffing in the last 4-5 years due to retirements not being filled with new employees and employees on disability leave and the lack of budget resources to provide additional staffing in their absence.

Table 8 reveals substantial variation in the size of highway departments in the county. The Village of Ames has no highway employees and three other departments have a single full time employee involved in highway services. At the upper end of the scale Montgomery County (24) and the City of Amsterdam (16) have much larger numbers of highway personnel reflecting on the scale of the highway infrastructure that they manage. In terms of road and bridge responsibilities outlined above, while Montgomery County maintains most of the bridges in the county and owns 57% of the town county road system, it employs less than half (24) the total number of town full time employees in the county (58). Most town highway departments and several village departments have between four and seven full time employees involved in highway maintenance and improvement. The county’s highway departments utilize a broad range of part-time workers for road side mowing and highway flagman in the warmer months and as supplemental personnel for winter road maintenance.

Of the 123 full-time highway department employees in Montgomery County, over half (56%) have a job title of Motor Equipment Operator (MEO) or Heavy Equipment Operator (HEO). Another fifth (19%) of highway employees have a job title of Laborer. Some departments, for local policy reasons, use the laborer classification for employees that operate major equipment and are typically classified as MEO or HEO by other highway or public works departments. These two groups of employees are the core of the highway work force in the county (75%). The remaining highway employees (25%) of the workforce have a supervisory title. It is important to note, that many of those with supervisory titles are “working” supervisors, directly engaged in operating equipment, etc. For example, the only full-time employee in each of the three one-person village departments in the county, have a supervisory title (Superintendent of Public Works, Street Commissioner, etc.).

Highway and public works departments in the county provide a common set of employee benefits with significant differences in the details. Highway employee benefits generally include: health insurance, sick time, vacation, other holidays, personal days, bereavement leave and participation in the state

retirement system. Local governments vary in the schedule for increasing and maximum vacation days, the use of compensating time off, employee cost sharing for health insurance and other details. Most departments have a standard eight hour day with a five day work week. About a quarter of the highway departments, predominantly towns, utilize a shortened work week of four ten hour days for portions of spring-summer-fall.

Public Works Facilities

Highway and public works facilities are another critical component in the delivery of highway services. Highway departments need adequate space for storing and maintaining motorized equipment, tool and parts storage, employee needs, and other space uses. In the survey of highway managers, information was collected about the general characteristics of municipal highway and public works facilities. Table 9 at the end of this document provides an overview of current public works facilities in Montgomery County. The table also provides information about municipal fueling facilities and salt storage facilities.

Most municipalities have more than one structure that is used for housing equipment and general maintenance purposes. Village facilities are all multi-purpose, housing both employee needs and equipment for multiple other functions like water, sewer and sanitation. The primary facility (“Building 1” in Table 9) usually houses space for employee needs, the most used portions of the highway truck fleet, has maintenance tool areas and in some cases a repair bay and is heated. Secondary facilities are generally “cold storage” for equipment, etc. and generally older or in a more deteriorated state of repair. In a few cases secondary facilities are newer additions to the primary facility. The construction dates of primary highway facilities in the county vary from the 1920s to 2007. Two primary facilities and two additions were built since 2000.

Montgomery County’s and the Town of Mohawk’s facilities in the Village of Fonda are located next to each other, and were hit severely by flooding in 2011. While adjustments have been made, both managers expressed an interest in a changed location in the future. The current Fonda location of these two facilities has been made more difficult by the threat of further road access restrictions at nearby railroad crossings. The Village of Fonda facility need could be part of town-county facility change as well. Several other municipalities indicated pressing needs for new or renovated facilities, including the Town of Canajoharie (inadequate garage sizing for new equipment profiles) and the Village of Fort Johnson (renovations). The Town of Canajoharie needs a new site that has adequate distance from streams.

The Village of St. Johnsville’s public works facility is sited adjacent to the Village Riverfront Park, Marina and Campsite on the Mohawk-Canal way. There is little room for garage expansion on this site and removal of the garage would permit the siting of additional amenities at this recreation location. The Town of St. Johnsville’s Highway Garage is at the edge of village development and might provide a good co-location site for a new or shared village Public Works facility.

Not all municipalities have their own fuel facilities. The Villages of Fort Plain and Hagaman purchase fuel directly from local private retail vendors. The Villages of Fultonville and Fonda purchase fuel from

the nearby Montgomery County facility in the Village of Fonda. Several municipal fuel facilities are shared with other public users, including, school districts and fire departments.

Facilities for the storage of salt, sand and salt/sand mixes have been constructed for most municipalities in the county. Several road managers indicated either plans or the need for new covered storage. The Village of Fort Plain and the Town of Minden have applied for grant funds to build a new joint covered storage facility. Some covered salt facilities in current use were not constructed for this purpose. The Town of St. Johnsville has an older structure for salt storage that is small and in need of replacement.

An appendix to this report provides photos of each primary highway/public works facility and some secondary facilities.

Highway Service Cooperation

County, town, village and city highway departments in Montgomery County cooperate extensively to informally share manpower, materials and equipment on a regular basis. Examples include sharing trucks with drivers for hauling materials, and sharing specialized equipment or highway staff with specialized skills, for particular tasks. Within sub-regions of the county, a town or village department often has a piece of specialty equipment that is shared with other nearby departments. This kind of sharing, most often with close by departments is valuable, minimizing the cost of transport and travel in inter-municipal sharing. Most highway managers in the county expressed the existence of a “blanket” governing board resolution addressing the key liability issues for routine sharing arrangements.

Montgomery County has for decades contracted out winter snow and ice control to municipalities in the county. The bulk of this mileage connected most directly to town highway networks and as a consequence towns in the county contract for a large majority of this work annually. In 2012, the county contracts, allocated on a cost per mile basis, totaled over two million dollars. In addition the county contracts for roadside mowing on county mileage in the warmer seasons. Mowing contracts, again primarily with towns in the county, totaled just over \$138 thousand in 2012. These two activities represent the most significant formal, contractual cooperative activity in the county. This formal contractual cooperation is buttressed by a variety of cooperative activities, including: town patching of county roads, town, village and city purchase of signs from the county sign shop (provided at cost), and regular sharing of specialized equipment.

As noted earlier, municipalities cooperate in other tangible ways that reduce the cost of highway services. These include the shared use of fuel facilities and salt and sand storage. These less formal activities are conducted under the authority of general resolutions passed by many of the municipal boards in the county that explicitly authorize such sharing by road managers, outline the conditions for its conduct and assign responsibility and liability.

Municipalities in the county also indicated significant sharing with highway departments from border counties. Cooperative activities with these border county departments were very similar to those observed among highway departments within the county. The Town of Ephratah in Fulton County was noted by a number of highway managers as a frequent sharing partner.

Equipment sharing. All departments in the county cited examples of equipment sharing with other departments. Highway managers expressed a mix of opinions on jointly owning a piece of equipment with another department. Some managers have had a direct experience in joint ownership. A number of managers expressed reservations about joint ownership, primarily expressing concern over how different people maintain equipment and the difficulties of assigning the cost of repair when shared equipment needs repair.

Private Contracting. Municipalities in the county contract out to private vendors for a number of specialty services. In recent years the market conditions have made it more attractive for many municipalities to contract out to private firms for “in place” asphalt. This may change in the years ahead with changes in materials prices and the demand for private sector services. Montgomery County is source of signs for many municipalities in the county, but some governments purchase from other private vendors. Road striping, bridge maintenance and other services are often more cost effectively provided by private companies. Road managers have to monitor changes in comparative costs over time to provide services effectively for citizens.

Suggested Alternatives for Further Work

In the current environment local leaders are looking for options that reduce cost while minimizing the negative impact on the quality and level of service provision to citizens. In this environment, care has to be taken to avoid short term strategies that will cut current costs, but undermine long term effectiveness and efficiency. It is important to pursue strategies that will help build the capacity for long term performance improvement and effective management for healthy attractive communities.

1. **Regional Options for County Highway Operations.** Explore the potential for two or more regional locations or co-locations for improving service and reducing cost. If regional network coverage has significant potential to reduce county highway department travel costs, explore options used by other counties to regionalize county service provision for non-winter highway services.
2. **Return of Local Roads to Town Ownership.** Examine the opportunity to better allocate network and reduce need for county travel time to more distant road segments. Examine the impact on state aid and feasible financial adjustments.
3. **Improving Service Cost and Performance Information to Improve Management Decisionmaking.** Examine the opportunity for using existing county software resources (used by the county highway department to measure service cost and performance) to create a simple approach for improving service cost information for local road managers -building on current practices by some current managers.

In the long run, efforts to examine changes in service delivery will be hampered by current budgeting and service cost accounting practices that make it difficult to compare the cost of service provision from one municipality or one practice to another. Cost of service practices need to be matched with some measures of performance, like average road condition (using a software or manual system that permits annual or multi-year pavement rating). It would be valuable for local governments in the county to explore changes in these practices to improve the ability to evaluate and compare actual service costs whether budgeted or actual linked to measures of performance. Software is available that assists in this area. The county has developed and uses a valuable cost accounting approach and several towns have developed some less detailed but valuable approaches along these lines.

4. **Outline particular regional options for specific municipalities.** For example -where a shared facility (garage, materials storage, etc.) appears to have a particular advantage based on the age or location of existing structures. In particular examine the potential cost and service impacts of creating a joint town-village facility or facility location on the current town highway site.

Table 7: Major Highway Equipment by Municipality in Montgomery County

	Dump Truck Tandem	Dump Truck Single Axle	One Ton	Pick-Up	Backhoe	Bulldozer	Grader	Loader	Roller	Excavator	Tractor	Total
Towns												
Amsterdam	5	2		2	1		1	1	1		3	16
Canajoharie	6			1			1	2		1	2	13
Charleston	1	5	1			1	1	1		1	2	13
Florida												
Glen	3			1	1		1	1	1			8
Minden	1	4	1	1							2	9
Mohawk	2	8	1	2			1		1	1	3	20
Palatine	4	5	1	1			1	2		1	2	17
Root	3	1	1	1			1	1	2	2	2	14
St Johnsville	2		1				1	1	1	1	1	8
Subtotal	36	17	6	9	2	1	8	9	6	7	17	118
Villages												
Ames												
Canajoharie		6	1		2				1		5	15
Fonda		1		1	1							3
Fort Johnson		1	1		1							3
Fort Plain		3		2	1		1		1			8
Fultonville		2	1		1							4
Hagaman			1		1						1	3
Nelliston			1	1								2
Palatine Bridge			1		1						1	3
St Johnsville		2	1					1			1	5
Subtotal	0	15	7	4	8	0	1	1	2	0	8	46
City of Amsterdam	4	4	1	4	2		1	2	1		2	21
Montgomery County	8	9	0	6	1	1	2	2	3	5	2	39
County Total	48	45	14	23	13	2	12	14	12	12	29	224

Source: Information on highway equipment was obtained through interviews with Highway Managers and equipment lists provided by the manager or other local officials

Table 8: Highway Personnel, Job Title and Average Wage by Municipality in Montgomery

	Superintendent		Supervisors & Foremen		Part Time Labor		MEO/HEO FT		Laborer FT			Total FT
	#	Salary	#	Average Wage	#	Average Wage	#	Average Wage	#	Average Wage		
Towns												
Amsterdam	1	\$49,262			5	\$10.40			4	\$21.25		5
Canajoharie	1	\$38,100			7	\$9.00	4	\$16.77	1	\$9.00		6
Charleston	1	\$41,586			2	\$10.00	5	\$18.61				6
Florida	1	\$46,520			5	\$14.34	5	\$18.19				6
Glen	1	\$35,000					4	\$17.67				5
Minden	1	\$49,088			1	\$9.50	6	\$16.18				7
Mohawk	1	\$44,300			21	\$11.17	6	\$16.79				7
Palatine	1	\$43,095			2	\$16.98	5	\$17.43				6
Root	1	\$41,000			6	\$10.50	5	\$17.66				6
St. Johnsville	1	\$30,900	1	\$13.24					2	\$12.74		4
Town Total	10		1		49		40		7			58
Village												
Ames												0
Canajoharie	1	\$51,581	1	\$17.63	3	\$10.25	3	\$16.78				5
Fonda	1	\$42,000			3	\$10.33			1	\$12.43		2
Fort Johnson			1	\$15.85					1	\$11.50		2
Fort Plain	1	\$60,719			7	\$11.83	4	\$15.48	1	\$10.88		6
Fultonville	1	\$37,000										1
Hagaman	1	\$35,360*							1	\$11.00		2
Nelliston	1	\$37,998*			4	\$8.06						1
Palatine Bridge	1	\$38,191			2	\$13.50						1
St. Johnsville			1	\$35,693					4	\$11.45		5
Village Total	7		3		19		7		8			25
City of Amsterdam	1	\$58,418	2	\$22.38	0	\$0.00	6	\$19.64	7	\$17.60	City Total	16
Montgomery County	1	\$81,459	6	\$19.20	0	\$0.00	17	\$15.98			Co. Total	24
All Municipalities	19		12		68		70		22			123

Source: Montgomery County Personnel Office, updated via Highway Manager interviews,

*Hagaman & Nelliston are Street Commissioners

Table 9: Municipal and Highway and Public Works Facilities in Montgomery County

		Year Constructed	Planned Replacement	Capability for Growth	Site Acreage	Number of Bays	Repair Lifts	Fuel Storage		Salt Storage	
								Age (years)	Fuels	Covered Storage	Age (years)
Towns											
Amsterdam	Building 1	-	-	-	-	7	0	17-18	Diesel & Gas	yes	15
	Building 2	-	-	-	-	7	-				
Canajoharie	Building 1	1920's	yes	no	-	6	0	20	Diesel	yes	-
	Lot 2				2						
	Additions										
Charlestown	Building 1	1972	-	-	-	5	0	-	Diesel & Gas	no	none
	Building 2	-	-	-	-	1	-				
Florida	Building 1	1920	-	no	-	7	0	22	Diesel & Gas	yes	10
	Building 2	1998	-	-	-	6	-				
Glen	Building 1	1962	-	-	-	6	0	> 20	Diesel & Gas	yes	19
	Building 2	2010	-	-	-	1	-				
	Building 3	1940's	-	-	-	-	-				
Minden	Building 1	1975	yes	yes	1.5	4	0	14	Diesel	yes	
	Building 2	-	-	-	-	4	-				
Mohawk	Building 1	1970's	**	no	2-3 acre	8	0	15	Diesel & Gas	yes	15-20
	Building 2	1970	-	-	-	4	-				
	Building 3	-	-	-	-	2	-				
Palatine	Building 1	1992	-	yes	8 acres	8	0	24	Diesel & Gas	no	-
	Building 2	-	-	-	-	-	-				
Root	Building 1	2007	-	yes	5 to 6	6	0	-	-	no	-
	Building 2	old struct.	-	-	-	4 to 5	-				
St. Johnsville	Building 1	1989	no	yes	1	3	0	-	-	yes	-

Montgomery County Highway Study –Existing Conditions Report

Table 9, (continued)		Year Constructed	Planned Replacement	Capability for Growth	Site Acreage	Number of Bays	Repair Lifts	Fuel Storage		Salt Storage	
								Age (years)	Fuels	Covered Storage	Age (years)
Villages											
Canajoharie	Building 1	1970's -80's	no	-	-	6	0	< 10	diesel & gas	yes	-
	Building 2	-	-	-	-	-	-				
Ft. Johnson	Building 1	1950	-	no	-	2	0	5	diesel	yes	5
	Building 2	1950's	-	-	-	2	-				
Ft. Plain	Building 1	1958	no	no	-	-	0		use private	yes	
	Building 2	2002	no	-	-	8	-				
Fultonville	Building 1	-	no	no	-	2 to 3	0	-	from county	yes	24
Fonda	Building 1	33?	no	no	-	3	0	-	from county	yes	2
Hagaman	Building 1	early 1900's	no	yes	-	2	0	-	use private	yes	1
Nelliston	Building 1	2005-6	no	no	-	3	0	-	-	-	-
	Building 2	dv?	-	-	-	2	-				
Palatine Bridge	Building 1	pre 1976	no	no	-	3	0	-	diesel & gas	-	-
	Building 2	-	-	-	-	2	-				
	Building 3	-	-	-	-	2	-				
City of Amsterdam	Building 1	1920s	no	no	-	5	0	yes	diesel & gas	yes	-
Montgomery County	Building 1	1930s	**	no	-	5-6	yes		diesel & gas	yes	-

Source: Interviews with highway managers in Montgomery County

** The Town of Mohawk and Montgomery County indicated a concern about the current location based on recent flooding and changes in the Railroad crossing access, and both municipalities have discussed alternative options, but there is no current planning process for change

Appendices

Highway Managers and other Professionals Interviewed

Town	Name	Title
Amsterdam	Dave Thibodean	Highway Superintendent
Canajoharie	Eric Boweman	Highway Superintendent
Charleston	Jeff Downes	Highway Superintendent
Florida	Bill Weller	Highway Superintendent
Glen	Dennis Mihuka	Highway Superintendent
Minden	Ron Kardash	Highway Superintendent
Mohawk	William Holvig	Highway Superintendent
Palatine	Art Logan	Highway Superintendent
Root	Don Oeser	Highway Superintendent
St Johnsville	Jeff Doxtater	Highway Superintendent
Villages		
Canajoharie	Jeff Schwartz	Superintendent of Public Works
Fonda	Chris Weaver	Street and Water Superintendent
Fort Johnson	Dave Carter	Public Works Foreman
Fort Plain	George Capece	Working Supervisor
Fultonville	Paul Daley	Superintendent of Public Works
Hagaman	Harold Weaver	Road Supervisor
Nelliston	Randall Conrad	Superintendent of Public Works
Palatine Bridge	Rodney Sutton	Superintendent of Public Works
St Johnsville	Bill Vicciarelli	Superintendent of Public Works
City of Amsterdam	Raymond Halgas	Superintendent of Public Works
Montgomery County	Paul Clayburn	Commissioner of Public Works
	Diane Hanson	Accounting Supervisor
	Richard E. Baia	Personnel Officer
	Jessie S. Bartosik	Personnel Associate
	Daniel L. Colón	Director, Information Technology
	Beth Claes	Programmer, Information Technology
	Sandra L. Frasier	Director, Real Property Tax Service Agency

Bridge Inventory

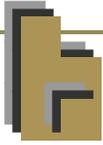
MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
N.Y.S.D.O.T. BRIDGE CONDITION RATING, COMPARISON SHEET

RATING DEFINITIONS:

- 1 = POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS
- 2 = USED TO SHADE BETWEEN 1 & 3
- 3 = SERIOUS DETERIORATION OR NOT FUNCTIONING AS ORIGINALLY DESIGNED
- 4 = USED TO SHADE BETWEEN 3 & 5
- 5 = MINOR DETERIORATION AND IS FUNCTIONING AS ORIGINALLY DESIGNED
- 6 = USED TO SHADE BETWEEN 5 & 7
- 7 = NEW CONDITION

BIN	FEATURE CARRIED	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
3308850	Burtonville Rd. Spur	7.000		*7.000								
3309430	Casler Rd.	4.408		4.408		4.408		7.000				
3309440	Clay Hill Rd.	5.633		5.633		5.327		5.245				
3309450	Hessville Rd.	5.102		4.898		4.980	4.939	4.939				
3309460	Davis Rd.	4.806		4.806		4.694		4.417				
3309470	Salt Springsville Rd.	5.020		5.102		5.020		5.020				
3309480	Paris Rd.	4.551		6.800		6.560		6.560				
3309490	Brockmans Cor. Rd.	4.711		4.711		4.342		4.342				
3309500	Freysbush Rd.	4.333		4.333		4.375		4.375				
3309510	Clinton Rd.	4.854		4.854		4.854		4.854				
3309520	Hessville Rd.	4.673		4.673		7.000		7.000				
3309530	Freysbush Rd.	5.041		5.041		5.265		5.265				
3309540	Sanders Rd.	5.020	5.020	4.939	4.939	4.939	4.939	4.939				
3309550	Olsego Rd.	5.347	5.347	5.347	5.347	5.143	5.061	4.959				
3309560	Cherry Valley Rd.	6.195		4.537	4.537	4.537	CONSTR.	6.711				
3309570	Measler Cor. Rd.	5.184		5.184		5.265		5.265				
3309580	Pickle Mill Rd.	4.735		4.735		7.000		6.783				
3309590	Waits Rd.	4.776		4.776		4.633		4.633				
3309600	Waits Rd.	5.082		5.082		5.102		5.102				
3309610	Vandensenville Rd.	4.714		7.000		7.000		6.517				
3309620	Vandensenville Rd.	6.326		5.957		5.957		5.435				
3309640	Bridge St. (R.R.)	5.469		5.266		5.734		5.734				
3309650	Triumpho Rd.	7.000	7.000	6.034		6.034		6.621	6.634			
3309660	Lasselsville Rd.	4.551		4.551		7.000		6.621				
3309670	Triumpho Rd.	4.556		4.776		7.000		6.379				
3309680	Spring St.	4.426		4.426		7.000		6.640				
3309690	South Buel Rd.	4.735		4.735		4.551		4.347				

3310200	Cemetery Rd.	4.963		4.963	4.556	4.369	4.389	4.389
3310210	Sulphur Springs Rd.		7.000	7.000	6.802	6.886	6.902	
3310220	Pattersonville Rd.	4.767		4.767		5.233	4.967	
3310230	Pawling St.	5.000	4.907	3.722	6.723		6.383	
3310240	Chuctanunda St.	5.295		80.000		4.773	4.562	
3310250	Cranes Hollow Rd.	4.694		7.000		6.886	6.448	
3310260	Cranes Hollow Rd.	4.867	4.867	4.867	4.523	4.800	4.800	
3310270	Cranes Hollow Rd.	4.967		4.967		4.900	4.900	
3310280	Cranes Hollow Rd.	5.306		5.028	4.500	4.500	4.500	
3310290	Cranes Hollow Rd.	5.000		5.000	4.900	4.900	4.900	
3310300	Cranes Hollow Rd.	5.286		5.286	5.057	5.057	5.057	
3310310	Cranes Hollow Rd.	4.417		7.000	6.886	6.448	6.448	
3310320	Cranes Hollow Rd.	4.806		4.806	4.694	4.694	4.722	
3366160	Crum Creek Rd.	5.086		5.086	4.857	4.857	4.971	
3366170	Thumb Rd.	5.919		5.919	5.484	5.484	4.863	
3367250	River Rd.	5.467		5.600	6.125	5.000	4.800	
4309630	Bridge St. (River)			4.806		4.667		
4310090	Main St. (River)							
4425030	River Rd.							
1038800	Theyer Rd.	4.257	4.257	4.257		4.257	4.257	4.257
2205240	N. Moyer Rd. *	3.472	3.472	3.189	3.585	3.585	2.604	3.472
2205250	Old Mill Rd. *							
2255330	Forest Ave. **	4.024	4.024	4.024	3.659	3.561	3.561	
2255340	Clizbe Ave. **	4.964	4.964	4.964	4.964	4.786	4.786	
2255350	Hewitt St. **	5.500		5.500		5.382	5.382	
2255360	Crescent St. **	4.037		4.111		4.111	4.039	
2255370	Second Ave. **	5.690		5.452		5.333	5.333	
2255380	Fourth Ave. **		6.719		6.719	6.500		
2255390	Prospect St. **	3.606		3.606		3.545	3.545	
2255400	Guy Park Ave. Ext. **	5.094		5.094		4.906	4.844	
2255420	Federal St. Ext. **	5.306		5.306		5.000	5.000	
2255430	Florida Ave. **	6.010		6.030		5.152	5.152	
2255440	Florida Ave. **	5.984		5.984		5.438	5.438	
2255450	Florida Ave. **	5.517		5.517		4.950	4.950	
2255460	Gilliland Ave. **	5.300		5.167		5.167	5.167	
2266890	N. Division St. **	5.057		5.859		5.672	5.797	
2266900	William St. *		7.000		6.915	6.447	5.447	
2266920	Old Tavern Rd. *							
2266930	Incinerator Rd. *	3.781		3.438	3.281	3.188	3.109	3.128
2266940	Willow St. **	5.400		5.267	5.267	5.167	5.167	4.967
2266950	Main St. **	5.000		5.000		4.680	4.120	3.920
2266960	Steadwell Ave. **			4.694		4.684	4.000	
2266970	Sprakers Rd. **	4.474						
2266980	Butler Rd. *	5.561		5.561	4.061	5.561	4.912	
2288900	Locust Ave		4.051				4.051	
2288910	Crescent Ave. **	4.152		4.375	4.319	4.208	4.208	4.264



Montgomery County Efficiency Study for Shared Local and County Highway Services

Alternatives Report

Submitted to:

Project Steering Committee

November, 2012

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
Introduction	3
Return of Local Roads to Town Ownership	4
Examples of Regional Options for County Highway Operations from Other New York Counties.....	7
County Only versus County-Town Joint Regional Approaches for Montgomery	12
Combined County Town Regional Options for Montgomery County.....	13
County Highway Department Mobilization Cost Estimate in Dollars	14
Improving Service Cost and Performance Information	16
to Improve Management Decisionmaking	16
Regional Options for Specific Municipalities	18
Sign Management	18
Conclusions and Recommendations.....	19

List of Tables

Table 1: County Comparison of Miles Per Employee from Three Recent Studies of Highway Services* 4

Table 2: Current Local Mileage by Town in Montgomery County with Proposed Mileage Change..... 5

Table 3: Estimated Financial Adjustments from a “County to Town” Road Mileage Adjustment Plan 6

Table 4: Four Alternative Regional Options..... 13

Table 5: Estimated Mobilization Costs for Summer Maintenance Activities..... 15

Executive Summary

Alternatives Report Summary

Montgomery County Efficiency Study for Shared Local and County Highway Services

Overview

In 2012 Montgomery County received an Efficiency and Effectiveness grant from the New York State Department of State. The purpose of the grant was to identify opportunities to reduce cost and improve highway services through intergovernmental service delivery or management changes among the 22 municipalities in the county. This is the second of three reports in this effort. The study examines a group of alternatives for future change recommended in the first project report. A third project report will outline needed implementation issues for suggested alternatives.

Alternatives for Further Work

In the current environment local leaders are looking for options that reduce cost while minimizing the negative impact on the quality and level of service provision to citizens. In this environment, care has to be taken to avoid short term strategies that will cut current costs, but undermine long term effectiveness and efficiency. It is important to pursuing strategies that will help build the capacity for long term performance improvement and effective management for healthy attractive communities.

County contracting out to towns for snow plowing produces a staffing mismatch for county road maintenance and improvement operations. The options examined are designed to help address this personnel issue for improved efficiency.

1. **Return of County Roads to Town Ownership.** We examine the opportunity to better allocate road network resources and reduce the need for county travel time to more distant road segments. The suggested plan would transfer 116 miles of county road to town ownership. The combination of the loss of county plowing and mowing revenue and increase in state aid yields a net loss to towns and a net increase to Montgomery County. (pages 4-6, and Appendix 1).
2. **Regional Options for County Highway Operations.** Two existing models of county-town regional highway cooperation are discussed (from Monroe and Jefferson Counties). An analysis of current travel times from the county facility and several alternative scenarios of multiple town-county regional sites are explored. These options are evaluated for their potential to improve service and reduce cost. Actual travel cost savings appear to be a small portion of total county highway costs. County town regionalization and countywide consolidation are discussed as options (pages 7-16 and Appendix 2).

3. **Improving Service Cost and Performance Information to Improve Management**

Decisionmaking. The opportunity for using existing county IT software resources (used by the county highway department to measure service cost and performance) is discussed and the potential to create a simple approach for improving service cost information for local road managers is proposed. This proposal builds on existing practices by some current managers.

In the long run, efforts to examine changes in service delivery will be hampered by current budgeting and service cost accounting practices that make it difficult to compare the cost of service provision from one municipality or one practice to another. Cost of service practices need to be matched with some measures of performance, like average road condition (using a software or manual system that permits annual or multi-year pavement rating). It would be valuable for local governments in the county to explore changes in these practices to improve the ability to evaluate and compare actual service costs whether budgeted or actual linked to measures of performance. Software is available that assists in this area. The county has developed and uses a valuable cost accounting approach and several towns have developed some less detailed but valuable approaches along these lines. (Pages 16-17)

4. **Outline particular regional options for specific municipalities.** (page 18)

- A shared facility (garage, materials storage, etc.) is suggested for discussion in the Town and Village of St. Johnsville. This option appears to have merit based on the age and location of existing structures.
- A shared salt storage facility at Town of Minden Highway facility with the Village of Fort Plain is suggested as an effective inter-municipal investment.

5. **Sign Management** (Page 18)

6. **Conclusions and Recommendations** (Page 18)

Introduction

The county's intermunicipal road system serves a number of core public purposes including, public safety, and economic wellbeing. For commuters, school children, local businesses, tourists and others -- good roads that are maintained efficiently are important for direct daily needs. The county intermunicipal road network, including county, city, town, and village roads has to work well as a system and in an integrated fashion to properly serve the community. Many if not most users don't know when they switch from county to town to state roads as they traverse the network. While the legal responsibilities and constraints of municipal road ownership have to be respected, it is in every Montgomery County local government's interest to work to make the whole road network function effectively. Elected leaders and highway managers, many with direct ties to town government, are in the best position to foster this perspective and provide leadership to achieve this goal. As we will outline below, the Montgomery County road system has some unique characteristics that must be confronted in both the short and long term.

Montgomery County has a long history of contracting out winter maintenance and summer roadside mowing to town highway departments. These formal arrangements are the tip of the iceberg in a very routine flow of town-county highway cooperation. To a great degree, winter road maintenance responsibilities and management define the minimum crew size for highway departments. With the contemporary travelling public, commuting patterns and school bus practices, highway departments have to maintain clear or passable roads for much of the 24 hour day. Each department has a set of plow routes, equipment and manpower that has been designed to clear roads to local expectations within a "reasonable" period of time. The number of employees needed for this basic road clearing plan provides the "bottom line" for department manpower needs. The town clearing of county highways increases the number of employees for the "bottom line" of department personnel needs (in comparison with town only personnel needs).

As a consequence, we would expect towns in the county to have more full time highway employees than they would without county plowing responsibilities and we would expect that the county highway workforce is much smaller than it would be if all winter plowing on county roads was done by county staff. Table 1 provides "Miles per Employee" data for three New York counties that have recently studied opportunities for improved highway efficiency.

In Table 1, the lower the number of miles per employee the higher the department's level of staffing for a given number of miles of road. Looking at Montgomery County, for example, each county employee supports 15.8 miles of road, which is three times the local town miles supported by the average town employee. We find a similar pattern for Herkimer County, with the average county highway employee supporting twice as many miles of road as the average for towns in the county. In Chemung County, with only limited county contracting for snow plowing to towns, the situation is reversed. The average town highway employee supports a slightly higher number of miles of road (2.1) than a county highway employee.

Table 1: County Comparison of Miles Per Employee from Three Recent Studies of Highway Services*

	Miles Per Employee		County Owned Mileage	County Owned as a % of all Local	Countywide Population	Area in Square Miles
	Town Departments Average	County Department				
Counties Not Contracting Out Snowplowing to Towns						
Chemung (2004)	8.2	6.1	244.5	24%	88,830	407
Counties Contracting Snowplowing to Towns						
Montgomery (2012)	5.1	15.8	393.7	48%	50,219	403
Herkimer (2010)	7.2	13.5	578.5	46%	64,519	1,412

*Data on miles per employee for Chemung County were taken from a 2004 consulting report by the author and for Herkimer County from a 2010 consulting report compiled by CGR. Road mileage data was taken from the New York Department of Transportation’s local highway mileage report for 2011, and population and area figures were taken from the New York State Comptroller’s Municipal Finance Level One Data for Counties for 2011.

These figures help demonstrate how contracting out for all county highway snow plowing creates a personnel mismatch for addressing maintenance and improvement needs on county highways for those maintenance and improvement tasks conducted during the remaining months of the year.

Below, we will examine several alternatives to try and address this personnel mismatch. First we will examine the potential for transferring a portion of county owned roads to local ownership. Second, a regional approach may permit the county and towns to utilize this combined pool of highway personnel more efficiently for the county’s non-winter maintenance needs. We will discuss two broad regional approaches, a combined, contractual strategy (the Combined County-Town Regional Option) and a county centralized strategy (the County Only Regional Approach).

Return of Local Roads to Town Ownership

In the Existing Conditions Report we outlined the process whereby formerly towns roads more suited to local ownership are currently owned and maintained by the Montgomery County. As a consequence, county roads as a percent of total local roads is extremely high in Montgomery, ranked number one among counties in the state. Many roads that are not the typical county collector remain as county owned roads. One estimate is that up to 200 miles of county owned road fit in this category.

The transfer of a portion of these local roads to town ownership may provide the opportunity to better allocate highway resources and reduce county travel costs to more distant road segments. Such a transfer would have to be initiated by the county and approved by the recipient town governments. Over the years, county public works leaders have developed a list of roads that merit return to town ownership. Appendix A contains a list of roads suggested by the current Public Works Commissioner in response to a legislative request. Following the list is a set of maps that help visualize the location and function of the set of roads proposed for transfer. While not definitive, this list benefits from the commissioner’s years of experience and understanding of the county road network. It will service as a valuable starting point in considering this option.

The proposed set of road transfers includes 75 separate roads across the county’s ten towns. It involves 116.6 miles of current county owned roads. Rather than county collectors these roads are lower volume roads that provide direct access to residential, agricultural, industrial or recreational land uses. Table 2 below shows the distribution of roads recommended for transfer across the county’s towns.

Table 2: Current Local Mileage by Town in Montgomery County with Proposed Mileage Change

	Current County	Current Town	Total County &Town	Percent Town	Total Miles for Transfer	New County	New Town	New % Town
Amsterdam	38.5	19.8	58.3	34%	14.9	23.6	34.7	60%
Canajoharie	41.0	35.4	76.4	46%	11.1	29.9	46.5	61%
Charleston	36.0	32.0	67.9	47%	8.3	27.7	40.3	59%
Florida	51.9	40.4	92.3	44%	15.0	36.9	55.4	60%
Glen	38.3	26.4	64.7	41%	12.0	26.3	38.4	59%
Minden	53.4	33.9	87.3	39%	19.4	34.0	53.3	61%
Mohawk	34.5	31.6	66.1	48%	7.8	26.7	39.4	60%
Palatine	38.4	26.9	65.3	41%	12.7	25.7	39.6	61%
Root	47.0	35.4	82.4	43%	14.3	32.7	49.7	60%
St Johnsville	13.3	14.7	28.0	53%	1.3	12.0	16.0	57%
Total	392.1	296.6	688.7	43%	116.6	275.7	413.1	60%

In nine of the county’s ten towns, the town mileage component would move from less than 50% of local highway miles to more than 50%. Total county mileage moves from 392 miles of road to 275, while total town mileage changes from 296 (43%) to 413 (60%). After the change Montgomery County would still be among the highest counties in terms of percent of county mileage to total local mileage. While this may help address the county’s personnel mismatch by reducing county road responsibilities, the potential financial impacts on town government may provide a barrier to the proposal’s adoption.

The transfer of roads from the county to town ownership would have a number of local impacts. One significant impact would be the loss of revenue for snow plowing and summer mowing on the roads transferred. A second impact would be the changes in Consolidated Local Street and Highway

Improvement Program Aid from county to town road transfers. Table 3 contains data to estimate the combined impact of these two financial changes. The total CHIPS apportionment to municipalities has several components. The SLRSP (1979 Safer Local Roads and Streets Program) is not formula but distribution driven, adjusted only by the amount of funds in the program. The balance of the apportionment is the TIF (Transportation Improvement Fund). For towns this is basically a per mile allocation for town owned roads with some adjustments. For counties, the TIF allocation also includes a portion based on the percent of motor vehicle registrations statewide, a portion for the total local centerline road miles in the county as a percent of local miles statewide, and then a portion based on per mile county allocation for county owned roads.

Table 3: Estimated Financial Adjustments from a “County to Town” Road Mileage Adjustment Plan

Town	Total CHIPS Apportionment SFY 2012-13	SLRSP Amount	Loss of Plowing & Mowing Contract	Estimated Change in CHIPS AID	Combined Change in Revenue
Amsterdam	31,375	11,696	83,496	14,826	(68,670)
Canajoharie	68,039	26,299	61,992	13,053	(48,939)
Charleston	60,982	23,543	46,648	9,746	(36,902)
Florida	77,202	29,818	83,776	17,546	(66,230)
Glen	48,690	18,685	67,032	13,604	(53,428)
Minden	61,783	23,662	108,416	21,771	(86,645)
Mohawk	56,374	21,511	43,568	8,583	(34,985)
Palatine	51,606	19,488	71,176	15,176	(56,000)
Root	64,416	24,673	79,968	16,032	(63,936)
St Johnsville	27,614	10,629	7,112	1,467	(5,645)
Montgomery County	1,993,227	575,996	653,184	310,069	343,115

In Table 3 the loss of county contract dollars for plowing and mowing is estimated and the increase in per mile TIP aid. The last column contains the net of these two adjustments for each town and the county (assuming the county would lose TIF aid and retain plowing and mowing contract dollars). The most questionable portion of these estimates is the estimated loss of CHIPS aid for counties, because of the number of factors involved.

The proposed road ownership changes would negatively impact the county’s towns. A phased in reduction in county plowing and mowing contract dollars may alleviate the one-time size of this fiscal impact for towns, but it would not change it. Current state aid and contract arrangements provide a barrier to such a change even though it could help address the personnel imbalance currently faced by

the county in fulfilling its non-winter maintenance and improvement responsibilities on county roads. Additional work needs to be done to more exactly estimate the changes in CHIPS aid from such a plan. A reasonably precise figure can be obtained from the New York State Department of Transportation with a formal request that includes some data from Table 3.

Examples of Regional Options for County Highway Operations from Other New York Counties

Several approaches have been used to adjust the overall alignment of responsibilities among highway departments within counties. These approaches can be viewed as a potential means to address the personnel mismatch outlined above and reduce overall costs of road maintenance services in the county while improving quality or performance. A number of counties, like Montgomery, contract with one or more municipalities for a limited number of highway functions (e.g. winter road maintenance). Here we will look at two more comprehensive approaches.

The approaches outlined here are utilized in two different upstate counties: Monroe and Jefferson. The approaches in Monroe and Jefferson have been fully implemented with decades of experience. Each of these approaches will be outlined briefly below followed by a comparative assessment for Montgomery County purposes.

1. Monroe County: Contracting Out

Monroe County (2010 population of 744,344) has a land area of about 660 square miles and 665 centerline miles of county road. Total local road mileage in the county is about 2,965 with 2,300 owned by town, city (Rochester) and village governments. Monroe County is a denser more urban environment, with almost four times the local centerline miles of Montgomery, the percent of county miles in the local road network (22%) about half of Montgomery County.

For at least 40 years, Monroe County has been engaged in some relatively unique practices of contracting out work on county roads to town highway departments. The county contracts out to towns all winter snow and ice control, major paving jobs, summer major maintenance and CHIPS (Consolidated Highway Improvement Program) work, and minor maintenance. To accomplish this the county enters into an overarching annual agreement with each town establishing the labor fringe and equipment rates that the town may charge the county for work completed under the agreement. For equipment, as a relatively neutral standard, state rates are used.

The county has three area managers responsible for all maintenance within their jurisdiction. These managers have a maintenance budget and make decisions about how to accomplish needed work. Depending on the task they have three general options: in-house production, contract with towns, or contract with the private sector.

County In-house Activities. The county does all highway striping for county, city (Rochester) and town roads for no charge. The county highway department also makes signs on request for the city, county, and towns for a fee. The county does not do sign installation for towns. The county also provides traffic engineering assistance/functions to the towns without a charge.

Winter Maintenance. The county contracts out all snow and ice control on county roads to town departments. Snow and ice control is reimbursed on a per mile “lump sum” basis. The county enters into a 10 year contract with towns with annual cost adjustments for labor, de-icing materials and equipment.

Routine Summer Maintenance. The annual contract calls for the towns to do all mowing, sweeping, dead animal pickup, and roadside pickup of trash. These tasks are reimbursed based on a standard formula per mile. For other summer “service request” work the county issues a work order to the town and compensates separately. The county’s three area managers each have a budget for maintenance within their area. The area manager assesses his needs and decides who might best do the project . He can ask the town to do the task through work order, accomplish it in-house or contract with a private vendor.

Other Summer Maintenance. Non-routine summer maintenance is reimbursed on a time and materials basis. Routine summer maintenance is reimbursed on a lump sum basis using a lineal foot or mileage based formula. The county contracts out much of its summer construction to towns on a time and materials basis. Rehabilitation work is contracted to towns. For work that appears to be beyond the capability of towns (inadequate equipment, skills or time) the county will contract with private vendors (e.g. milling and repaving). Any county project work to be completed in a particular town is offered to the town department on a right of first refusal basis. If the county believes that the capability in a particular town is thin, it will suggest a team relationship with another town to do the project. If this cannot be achieved the county will contract the project out to the private sector. About 50% of the town highway superintendents in the county are appointed.

Equipment Sharing. All the highway departments in the county have a mutual equipment lending agreement.

The county has roughly 11 highway maintenance employees in-house for county road purposes. These people are assigned to drainage projects, urban projects, an extensive hot patch program, truing/leveling work, etc.

Bridges: The county maintains most bridges over 20 feet in length on town roads (the towns have chosen to maintain some themselves). The county also provides technical assistance on bridge repair and construction.

2. Jefferson County: Decentralization of Service Delivery

Jefferson County (2010 population 116,229) covers 1,300 square miles of territory and has 1215 centerline miles of local roads. About 539 (32%) are county roads with the remaining 1,216 miles owned by towns, villages and the City of Watertown. The county maintains over 400 bridges.

In the early 1970s, Jefferson County began contracting with towns for road improvement projects on county roads. This practice has grown to the point where the county contracts portions of all major reconstruction and rehabilitation projects with town highway departments in the county. While the role

varies, all of the 22 towns in the county participate in some form of agreement to help with county road projects.

Road improvement projects are only a part of this cooperative town-county relationship. The county Public Works Department contracts with town highway departments for all routine summer and winter maintenance on county roads. At this time about one third of the county highway budget is returned to towns through these contracts for road projects and for maintenance activities on county roads.

Reduction in County Forces. Contracting out a broad range of highway work has allowed the county to downsize their workforce and equipment inventory. Since this has been a gradual process there has not been an attempt to closely measure the impact of downsizing over time. Current and former county highway staff estimate that the highway workforce has been reduced by 20-30 positions since the early 1990s, and overtime costs reduced from \$90,000 to \$30,000 during the 1990s. These reductions were achieved through continued “tinkering” with service changes and adjusting contractual arrangements with the towns. The county workforce has remained stable at about 60 employees since the late 1990s. The 2010 budget called for an additional reduction in force because of the economic downturn. The county highway department currently has 3 crews: one for summer maintenance, one for construction and one for bridge repair.

Construction Projects. The county highway department contracts out a large portion of its road construction projects and some of its bridge projects to town highway departments. The contractual relationship between the county and towns varies based on project needs and available town capacity and resources. Town involvement takes three basic forms:

- A. Predefined project work done by the Town on a unit cost basis, with *project supervision provided by the Town* under the oversight of the County Highway Department.
- B. Predefined project work to be completed by the Town on an hourly reimbursement basis at standard rates with *project supervision and oversight provided by the County Highway Department*
- C. As needed project work to be completed by the Town on an hourly reimbursement basis at standard rates.

These basic options provide flexibility to both the town and county in arriving at a level of project involvement by the town highway department that is acceptable to both. A key difference between “A.” and “B.” type agreements is “who” provides project supervision. In “A.” type agreements it is the town; in “B.” type agreements it is the county. This flexibility allows for differences in the availability of town forces and equipment, and differences in the experience and skills of the town highway superintendent and other town personnel.

Road Maintenance. Jefferson County also contracts all basic winter and summer maintenance on county roads to towns. In general town highway departments do maintenance work on county road mileage within the town. This includes: snow plowing and ice control, roadside mowing, brush cutting, pothole patching, ditching, and paving. County department leadership believes that contracting most basic road

services to the towns has real “deployment” advantages in conducting road maintenance. The proximity of town garages to county road mileage within the town provides much closer access and quicker response times than the deployment of county crews out of centralized facilities. It is assumed that this difference in getting manpower, equipment and materials to the job site results in significant savings. In addition, problems on county roadways within the towns are spotted earliest by town employees that travel the roads frequently. Town departments field most requests and complaints regarding county roads in their area.

County officials believe that the contracting arrangement has helped build better staffed, housed, and equipped town highway departments and, of course, increased the level of financial resources available to them. Some comparative work in the 1990s demonstrated that towns in Jefferson County had higher levels of resources per mile of road served in comparison to similar sized towns in nearby counties.

Single Contract. A contract is signed with each of the county’s 22 towns covering relevant work in each of three areas: road and bridge maintenance, winter road maintenance (sanding, snow and ice removal), and construction and reconstruction of county roads and bridges.

Contract Cost Arrangements. The contract template used by the county clearly lays out cost reimbursement guidelines. These guidelines indicate clear rules for reimbursing for personnel and equipment used to do county work. Personnel costs are reimbursed at the actual hourly and fringe benefit rate for personnel working on county projects. Equipment rates are set at levels specified in the NYS DOT schedule, or at 90% of those levels. Materials costs are directly paid by the county. The cost arrangement specified is a direct fee for cost of service rate and does not contain any administrative or fixed overhead reimbursement charges for towns.

County staff members believe the town-county relationship has been useful in promoting improved management and cost saving approaches among the towns. For example the contract template calls for the towns to, where possible, “minimize overtime pay by use of a shift work system” to achieve cost savings for snow and ice removal. The concept of increasing shift work during winter months to reduce overtime hours was already being practiced in some towns. By raising this issue through group contract discussions with the towns, board members from other towns were stimulated to look into this option. Shift work during the winter has the potential of reducing overtime costs in both town and county expenditures.

Maintenance District Concept. Five county highway maintenance districts were created in the late 1990s to regionally deploy county employees and equipment throughout the county. While many counties have satellite facilities located in different areas of the county, this change goes one step further. Each of the county’s maintenance districts was co-located in town highway department facilities. The county negotiated shared facility space with town highway departments in exchange for sharing in facility operating costs (heat, utilities, etc.). County staff also believed that co-locating county and town highway personnel would increase joint and cooperative opportunities and training for town personnel leading to further cost savings. The regional maintenance district concept was abandoned after 2005. New department leadership pulled the regional staffing back in house. A high level of maintenance and project contracting continues based on the model outlined above.

Contracting with the Private Sector. By actively working with the private sector county administrators remain in touch with private sector pricing and can use it as a benchmark in evaluating town contracts, performance and cost estimates.

Contracting and Administration. County staff believe that the practice of contracting out work to towns probably increases the need for some administrative tasks and therefore costs. It is reasonable to expect that it will take both more administrative work as well as a different mix of skills to run a county highway department with a strong focus on maintaining good cooperative relationships and evaluating contracting options. This kind of orientation requires skills in contract monitoring, negotiation, etc. It is thus not a surprise that Jefferson County’s approach was developed by a former deputy public works superintendent that was not an engineer by training but has a background which includes a stint as Jefferson County Comptroller and time in private sector contract management.

Why Decentralize? The initiatives of the Jefferson County Highway Department are counter to the instincts of many regarding how to improve highway services. Many would argue that counties should take a more central role, particularly in highway construction project work. County highway administrators in Jefferson County believe that contracting out county highway work improves the overall maintenance system and helps the county effectively transmit technical expertise in design and road building to town highway personnel. County staff believe that town personnel are often more capable than they realize. By working directly with town employees, county technical expertise can be used to give “on the job” training and expand the kinds of work that town crews attempt and accomplish.

A critical factor is the perspective taken on the road network within a county. One county highway superintendent expressed the belief that county, town and village road mileage should viewed as a total county road system, an interrelated road network (not in the sense that the county government controls the whole system). From this perspective, it is important for all highway departments in the county to work together as efficiently and effectively as possible to maintain that network. Secondly, Jefferson County is geographically very large with lots of roads, lots of bridges and some very remote areas. Recreation and tourism are important to the county’s economy. Good roads that are maintained efficiently are important not only for local residents, but for getting people to and from recreational and tourist amenities. The whole county, town, village road network has to work well together for this to happen. An efficiently and well maintained road and bridge network are an important pre-requisite for economic activity and improvement.

County Only versus County-Town Joint Regional Approaches for Montgomery

The Jefferson County and Monroe County contracting approaches provide examples of regional cooperation to improve highway service in which both towns and the county continue to operate separate but cooperative highway departments. Jefferson County experimented with and then retreated from regionalizing county highway operations. This effort created a regional presence in the county that permitted close contact based cooperation with clusters of towns with differing resources and capabilities. Jefferson continues a strong program of contracting with all towns in all facets of highway operations, but has retreated from a regional multi-town approach to this activity. The Jefferson County and Monroe County approach does not require any significant change in local town administrative structure in highway management.

A second more centralized regional approach has been explored but not been tried in New York State. Several counties have explored an option for towns to contract out highway operations to the county highway department. Under this scenario, all county highway operations would be managed by county staff subject to provisions of town contracts. This approach would permit, if warranted, a reduced number of town highway facilities, including garages, fuel storage and materials storage. Since it has not been implemented in any whole county, there is no precedent for handling the transition of the town labor force and the attendant contract and state labor law issues.

Assuming these workforce concerns could be addressed, towns with elected highway superintendents would have to determine how to address this official's role. At least one town in the state contracts out all highway operations to the county. The salary of the town highway superintendent, in this case, has been reduced to part-time and the elected superintendent serves the board as a contract officer and liaison with the county highway management team. This could be done on a broader basis with each elected town highway superintendent being transition to a part-time contract officer for town highway management.

The approach may benefit from more flexibility in the management and use of a larger fleet of equipment, and a larger group of highway personnel. Specialized crews for particular maintenance and road building activities could be created and may operate more efficiently than current practices. A further step along this path would be the transfer of all town roads to county ownership, virtually eliminating the town's role in highway services. This approach may also benefit from reduced purchasing costs, from a more routine and centralized purchasing operation benefiting from larger purchasing power and more routine multi price purchasing practices.

This approach, while untried in New York State, has some similarities with consolidated county highway systems in other states. While there are examples with comparative cost figures for the Monroe and Jefferson County contracting out approach, there are no similar examples with demonstrated cost impacts for centralizing highway activities.

Combined County Town Regional Options for Montgomery County

A combined county-town regional approach, like Jefferson County, may have merit for Montgomery County. This would involve the utilization of several joint county-town regional facilities for coordination and deployment. By deploying personnel and equipment in regional locations the county may be able to achieve significant savings in the cost of getting personnel to job sites. By combining county staff with town highway employees, it may be possible to increase the volume of work being completed because of increasing crew sizes and the availability of equipment because of pooling highway equipment. This may be valuable because so much town equipment is converted for winter maintenance with plows and materials spreaders on large portions of the town truck fleet.

Road network analysis was done using ARCVIEW’s Network Analyst TM software to assess the potential for savings from county highway staff and equipment being deployed from multiple regional locations. Table 4 summarizes the results of this analysis. This approach basically uses posted road speed limits adjusted for typical travel times to assess the length of time it takes to reach the entire road network starting a given location or set of locations. NYS Route 90 (Thruway) corridor was excluded from the analysis. The “county only” option indicates that 4.4% of the county’s road mileage can be reached within 5 minutes of travel time from the current Public Works facility and almost 97% of the county’s road mileage can be reached or covered within 35 minutes. By adding two additional county locations, collocated with the Town of Palatine and Root Highway Facilities, 100% of the county road network can be reached in 30 minutes from these three sites. By adding four county locations, the highway facilities for the Towns of Canajoharie, Palatine, Amsterdam and Charlestown, 100% of the county road network can be reached from one of these five sites in 25 minutes or less. Finally, if we include all town highway facilities, 100% of all county road mileage can be reached by one of these 11 sites in 20 minutes or less.

Table 4: Four Alternative Regional Options and Associated Drive Time Estimates for Covering County Roads

Drive time in Minutes	Percent of County Roads Covered			
	County Only	Plus 2 Towns*	Plus 4 Towns**	All Towns****
35	96.8%			
30	88.8%	100%		
25	74.4%	95.2%	100%	
20	53.9%	81.7%	92.7%	100%
15	28.4%	54.7%	73.5%	91.8%
10	12.7%	26.5%	42.2%	68.6%
5	4.4%	7.0%	11.6%	23.5%

* Deploy vehicles from County DPW and the Towns of Palatine and Root

** Deploy vehicles from County DPW and the Towns of Canajoharie, Palatine, Amsterdam and Charlestown

***Deploy vehicles from County DPW and all town highway department facilities

It is clear that adding multiple locations can reduce the time spent deploying crews and equipment to county road sites. The four town model (five county sites) significantly reduces the time needed to cover most county roads. For example, over 90% of the county road network can be reached in 20 minutes or less, this is roughly half the time to cover the same percentage from the current county highway site only. These travel times are represented graphically in a set of county maps in Appendix 2.

This road network analysis is an abstraction that does not take into account a number of factors, including, the need to move trucks and specialty equipment among locations or estimate the typical pattern of work site locations on county highways. It can be adjusted for slower travel speeds for highway equipment. The potential savings from deploying at multiple sites has to be balanced against the cost of making these additional sites ready to accommodate county co-location, the annual costs of sharing these sites and the increased cost of county communication and other factors in coordinating across multiple sites.

Among the state's counties, Montgomery is relatively small in area ranking 49th of 57 New York counties with 403 square miles. In terms of density, Montgomery is closer to the middle of the pack, ranking 26th of 57 in persons per square mile. We would expect regional facilities to produce greater reductions in travel time savings in counties that are relatively large and more sparsely populated.

County Highway Department Mobilization Cost Estimate in Dollars

An estimate of travel costs during a 6-month summer maintenance season was calculated to put the potential travel cost savings in context. Developing a useful estimate is very problematic because of the variety of tasks and the flexible combinations of equipment, materials hauling, destinations, etc. that are involved in mobilizing for a typical day's work for summer road maintenance. The estimate was constructed to reflect the cost of getting personnel and equipment to and from work sites for summer maintenance and construction on county highways. Engineering, as well as bridge and sign work mobilization costs are not included in the estimate. The NYSDOT hourly equipment rental rate schedule was used for equipment charges in calculating mobilization costs.

The estimate of travel costs in Table 5, below; assume a fleet utilization rate of less than 50%. The county has approximately 19 larger trucking vehicles (8 tandems, 9 single axle, and two tractor-trailer combinations) that could be driven or transported to one or more job sites in any given day. It is assumed that on average, 8 larger truck vehicles travel to and from job sites in the county daily for summer maintenance and construction. It is assumed that on average 1.5 employees will be transported in each vehicle to job sites. The total number of employees traveling to work sites, included those listed below, is 15 which represents about 83% of the total MEOs, HEOs and laborers in the county highway department's road maintenance portion of the workforce. The county has a total of 11 loaders, dozers, graders and shovels. It is assumed that three of these pieces of equipment will travel on

any given day, going to and from the job site with a single employee as the operator. Other specialized equipment, most often transported by trailer, is excluded in calculating mobilization costs.

It is also assumed that supervisory personnel and their vehicles, pickup trucks and cars, will travel to job sites regardless of location or who is conducting maintenance and construction tasks. As a result supervisory travel costs are not included in the analysis. The calculations assume one round trip per day and 20 minutes of travel time one way. Approximately 50% of the road mileage in the county can be reached in 20 minutes or less and the remaining 50% can be reached in between 20 and 40 minutes (based on the road network analysis above). The average MEO/HEO rate for county employees from the Existing Conditions Report (Table 8) is used and a fringe benefit rate of 47% is assumed. Ten percent of personnel and equipment costs are added as a standard allocation for administrative support.

Table 5: Estimated Mobilization Costs for Summer Maintenance Activities assuming a Six Month Period from April to September
Mobilization Estimates for Equipment and Personnel to and from Job Sites
Road Maintenance and Construction Activities Only

Cost Category	Percent Reduction of Total Current Mobilization Costs				
	1	2	3	4	5
	100%	65%	55%	40%	25%
Total Mobilization Costs	\$69,536	\$ 45,198	\$ 38,245	27,814	\$ 17,384
Equipment	\$33,830	\$ 21,632	\$ 20,392	\$ 13,175	\$ 8,457
Personnel	\$35,706	\$ 23,566	\$ 17,853	\$ 14,639	\$ 8,926
Conversion of Total Mobilization Costs to:					
Personnel Cost in Hours	1,520	1,003	760	623	380
in Weeks	38	25	19	16	10
Personnel in FTE	0.79	0.52	0.40	0.32	0.20

An estimate of total county highway construction and maintenance mobilization costs of \$69,546 dollars is in Column one of Table 5. This is an estimate of the total annual cost of getting county personnel and equipment from the current Montgomery County Public Works Facility to job sites for maintenance and construction on county highways for a six month period. In the section above (Table 4) the potential for time savings from different mobilization options was discussed. If towns were to assume all maintenance and construction work on county highways (All Towns in Table 4), mobilization costs saving could be in the range of 55 to 65 percent.. Columns 2 and 3 in Table 5 show that the estimated costs

savings for this range would be between \$45,198 and 38,245. If the county were to establish a four town regional approach, mobilization costs could be reduced in the range of 25 to 40 percent. Columns 4 and 5 in Table 5 show that the estimated cost savings for this option would be between \$27,814 and \$17,384. Table 5 also breaks total cost savings into equipment and personnel and converts personnel cost estimates into hourly, weekly and FTE figures.

The Costs outlined in Table 5 are a relatively small percentage of total operating costs for these highway purposes, less than 1% of overall county highway costs. These travel cost savings would likely be offset, at least in part, by some of the costs the county would encounter in this alternative deployment strategy. These costs would include, the cost of co-locating at town facilities, increased coordination and communication costs, etc.

Dollar cost savings are not the only feature of mobilization costs. Mobilization cost, as measured here, is travel time to job locations. When the job is to evaluate a reported problem, travel time becomes response time, especially in an emergency. When response time is a critical issue or when the projected job is very limited and/or routine, the county may be able to save significant job costs or greatly improve service for particular jobs by having “closer to the site” town crews respond. As a result there may be opportunities to greatly increase service quality and decrease travel costs for a limited set of highway services on county roads. These services may include: initial response to emergency and complaint calls, sweeping, dead animal pickup, and roadside pickup of trash. Jefferson and Monroe Counties routinely contract with towns this set of services on county roads. The overall budget saving may not be dramatic but the combination of service quality/speed and cost appears to be attractive.

Town supervisors will testify that it’s in their interest to do some of these tasks (for a small fee of course) on county roads in their town. Town road users/voters often don’t know exactly when they leave the town road mileage and enter the county network. When that is true the condition of the whole network reflects on the quality of the job performed by the elected town highway superintendent.

Conversely, travel time costs are an incomplete cost measure. Time travel costs to the site do not capture the reduction in total departmental output that is lost because of shortened workdays due to travel time. This consideration is more complex and possibly a bigger cost concern and has to be a factor in the highway manager’s equation.

In total these results, while not the final word, would indicate limited benefit and potentially higher overall medium term costs from regionalizing county operations. The response time information does indicate that contracting out for emergency response to highway concerns to town highway departments may have the benefit of reducing travel costs and an increasing critical response times.

Improving Service Cost and Performance Information to Improve Management Decisionmaking

In the long run, efforts to find cost effective changes in service delivery will be hampered by current budgeting and service cost accounting practices that make it difficult to compare the cost of service provision from one municipality or one highway practice to another. Cost of service practices need to be matched with some measures of performance, like average road condition (using a software or

manual system that permits annual or multi-year pavement rating). It would be valuable for local governments in the county to explore changes in these practices to improve the ability to evaluate and compare actual service costs whether budgeted or actual and linked to measures of performance. Montgomery County highway departments are particularly well suited to develop an intergovernmental service cost and performance system. The Montgomery County Information Technology /Data Processing Department has developed an excellent service cost accounting system for the County Public Works Department. This system, initiated by public works leadership, has the capability to identify job costs, service costs and assess a certain level of performance assessment. The Department of Public Works uses this software system to evaluate alternative service approaches to minimize cost and assess performance.

Equally important the county IT department has extensive experience in working with other governments to contract for IT services. Many local governments and other organizations in the county already contract for software services from the county IT department. Given the department's software capability, its experience in developing locally tailored products and its demonstrated capability in contracting with local governments it would be a natural development to create an approach for better highway service cost information for towns and villages in the county.

Several towns have developed somewhat less detailed but valuable approaches along these lines. These town recordkeeping approaches could be used as a starting point in developing a simpler and compatible service costing approach for towns. In many cases there are already adequate record keeping practices in place (e.g. time cards, equipment use logs, etc.) but the information is not aggregated in a manner that is useful for local management and performance purposes. Some towns and villages record information that identifies personnel and other costs associated with services, but they don't summarize this data to evaluate the cost of particular activities. Without this kind of comparable information, it is difficult to identify opportunities to save money through changed practices or contracting out to other highway departments.

There is a general need for improved cost analysis record keeping practices and tools for use by highway departments. Service contracts can provide increased impetus for both sides of the contract to maintain better service cost and performance information. For example, town highway departments keep good project cost records on storm related cleanup activities for the New York State Emergency Management Office (SEMO) and the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) because they must for reimbursement.

Town budgeting practices that allocate a fixed number of highway payrolls to winter snow maintenance is another example of how current record keeping practices frustrate good service costing. Essentially all the other service activities accomplished during those payroll periods are rolled into snow plowing and winter road clearing services. By focusing budgeting and accounting on the costs of particular services provided, budget practices will have to change to provide a better management picture.

A very valuable next phase would examine the opportunity for using existing county software resources (used by the county highway department to measure service cost and performance) to create a simple

approach for improving service cost information for local road managers -building on current practices by some current managers.

A general index of overall pavement or road condition is one key indicator of highway performance. There is inexpensive software available to help local road managers assess the condition of their roads and prioritize investment. The software, available through the Cornell Local Roads Program, is Road Surface Management System or RSMS. It is an inexpensive form of pavement management system. Changes overtime in the municipalities overall condition and the condition of particular roads can provide a valuable index of the overall quality of highway services and improvement in the performance of highway activities. This can be used as an indicator of performance to compare with budgeted resources.

A renewed regional approach with new town-county contracting partnerships could help improve cost and performance information for towns as well as for county managers as both seek to in assess contract options and performance. Montgomery County is uniquely positioned to conduct a pilot activity in this area with several cooperating towns and/or villages.

Regional Options for Specific Municipalities

Town and Village of St. Johnsville

The Village of St. Johnsville’s Public Works facility is located across the road from the village marina and park. The land area near the marina and waterfront is limited. The current public works facility is not an eyesore, but it does not contribute to the overall amenity area created by the park and marina. If the garage could be moved, the area could benefit from a more compatible use on the site and the reduced public works truck and equipment traffic. At the same time, the Town of St. Johnsville highway facility is on the edge of the Village area. If the two public works operations could jointly use this site, it would enhance the marina area and may provide benefit from both departments who could share materials storage, enhanced equipment sharing, etc. This possibility would seem to have enough potential to be worth a discussion of the options by town and village leaders.

A shared salt storage facility at Town of Minden Highway facility with the Village of Fort Plain is also suggested as an effective inter-municipal investment.

Sign Management

In the special conditions report, we noted that many local highway and public works departments did not have paper or electronic sign inventory with all signs catalogued and with data on replacement and compliance. Given the potential liability it would be valuable for all municipalities in the county to have a good inventory created and current sign conditions evaluated and where needed, aggressive sign replacement and placement programs put in place.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The county practice of contracting out for winter snow maintenance has created a mismatch in county highway personnel needs to perform the remainder of the departments road maintenance and improvement responsibilities. The transfer of road mileage from the county to towns appears to help address this problem and address a problem created by historical road policy adjustments. However, given preliminary estimates it would be fiscally disadvantageous to towns under current state aid and county contract arrangements. This option is worthy of further discussion, but does not appear feasible at the current time and does not warrant further work in the implementation report. Other options for regionalization through county contracting out or county centralization of highways do not provide a clear proposal to recommend but may be worth additional assessment. There may be some valuable in a more detailed discussion of implementation of county to town contracting for emergency response. There are simply too many variables and unknowns to countywide centralization of services to pursue implementation issues. The development of a more detailed proposal for the use of county software capability for local service cost and performance would also be valuable as would, sign management and the two identified local project opportunities.



Montgomery County Efficiency Study for Shared Local and County Highway Services

Implementation Plan Report

Submitted to:

Project Steering Committee

April, 2013

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Executive Summary

Implementation Plan Report Summary

Montgomery County Efficiency Study for Shared Local and County Highway Services

In 2012 Montgomery County received an Efficiency and Effectiveness grant from the New York State Department of State. The purpose of the grant was to identify opportunities to reduce cost and improve highway services through intergovernmental service delivery or management changes among the 22 municipalities in the county. This is the third report in this effort. The report will outline needed implementation issues for suggested alternatives.

This report builds on two previous project reports. The first project report provided a detailed summary of existing highway conditions, practices and resources in the county and identified alternatives for change for further investigation. The second report conducted a detailed examination of a group of alternatives for future change recommended in the first project report.

Alternatives for Further Work

In the current environment local leaders are looking for options that reduce cost while minimizing the negative impact on the quality and level of service provision to citizens. In this environment, care has to be taken to avoid short-term strategies that will cut current costs, but undermine long term effectiveness and efficiency. It is important to pursue strategies that will help build the capacity for long-term performance improvement and effective management for healthy attractive communities. In this report guidance on implementation is provided for the four areas listed below.

1. **Montgomery County Infrastructure Coordination Council.** Next year, Montgomery County will change its form of government to legislative districts and an elected county executive. In addition, a new Capital Improvement Plan will become part of the county budget process. As county and local financial resources continue to get more constrained it is important that communities work well together to maximize the effectiveness of infrastructure investments. The creation of a Montgomery County Infrastructure Coordination Council is recommended to work with the Capital Improvement Plan process to coordinate county and local projects and work to address long-term capital infrastructure needs. The Council can also discuss and address core elements of the council's organization, purposes and activities.
 2. **Improving Service Cost and Performance Information to Improve Management Decision-making.** In the long run, efforts to examine changes in service delivery will be hampered by current budgeting and service cost accounting practices that make it difficult to compare the cost of service provision from one municipality or one practice to another. The opportunity for using existing county IT software resources and capability (used by the county highway
-

department to measure service cost and performance) is discussed and a Phase I approach is outlined to create a simple approach for improving service cost information for local road managers. This proposal builds on existing practices by some current managers. It is also suggested that the Phase I effort include the implementation of low cost pavement management software to provide a performance benchmark for improved service costing.

3. **Regional options for specific municipalities.** Two specific regional or intermunicipal opportunities are noted and next steps are discussed. The two opportunities are:
 - A shared facility (garage, materials storage, etc.) is suggested for discussion in the Town and Village of St. Johnsville. This option appears to have merit based on the age and location of existing structures.
 - A shared salt storage facility at Town of Minden Highway facility with the Village of Fort Plain is suggested as an effective inter-municipal investment.

4. **Sign Management.** In the projects first report on existing conditions, it was noted that many local highway and public works departments did not have paper or electronic (computerized) sign inventories with all signs catalogued and with data on replacement and compliance. In order to reduce the risk faced by some municipalities and improve safety in the county it is suggested that available training materials be distributed and/or a workshop on this topic be held in the county for both highway managers and governing board members.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Montgomery County Infrastructure Coordination Council	2
MCICC Activities	2
MCICC Structure	3
Examples from Other Counties.....	3
Improving Service Cost and Performance Information to Improve Management Decision-Making	4
Outline of a Phase I Approach for Improving Service Cost Information	5
Review Current Record Keeping Practices by Highway Superintendents	5
Identify a Common Set of Service Categories for Cost Collection.....	6
Develop a Recordkeeping Approach for Service Costing and Tracking Road Segment Investments...	6
Technical Support for Developing a Countywide System: Phase I	6
Phase I Year Long Implementation Test and Revision.....	6
Expand the Phase I Effort to a second group of town and village governments in the County.....	7
Pavement Management Implementation for Performance Measurement	7
Regional Options for Specific Municipalities	7
Town and Village of St. Johnsville	7
Town Minden and Village of Fort Plain	8
Sign Management	8
Appendix	9

Introduction

The county's intermunicipal road system serves a number of core public purposes including public safety and economic wellbeing. For commuters, school children, local businesses, tourists and others --good roads that are maintained efficiently are important for direct daily needs. The county intermunicipal road network, including county, city, town, and village roads has to work well as a system and in an integrated fashion to properly serve the community. Many, if not most, users don't know when they switch from county to town to state roads as they traverse the network. While the legal responsibilities and constraints of municipal road ownership have to be respected, it is in every Montgomery County local government's interest to work to make the whole road network function effectively. Elected leaders and highway managers, many with direct ties to town government, are in the best position to foster this perspective and provide leadership to achieve this goal.

In this report implementation guidance is provided in four areas from the projects second report on alternatives for change and based on the review and assessment of the project advisory committee. These areas are: (1) creating Montgomery County Infrastructure Coordination Council, (2) an approach for developing improved service cost and performance information for municipal highway and public works departments in the county, (3) next steps for two local projects for joint structures and (4) suggested options for improving sign management and reducing the associated risk exposure for town and village highway departments in Montgomery County.

Montgomery County Infrastructure Coordination Council

The current economic climate has increased the pressure on local government finances. In coping with this stress local governments in New York State have dramatically reduced their infrastructure investment over the last ten years. This reduction reflects the need to trim investment because of local revenue constraints and a simultaneous reduction in state and federal infrastructure spending for local projects. This new fiscal environment makes it even more essential that communities and regions coordinate investments to ensure that critical infrastructure needs are prioritized. Here we outline one approach, an Infrastructure Coordination Council (MCICC), to help communities in Montgomery County work together to maximize infrastructure investments. The activities of the Council can dovetail with the new County Capital Improvement Plan that will begin in 2014.

The purpose of the MCICC is to provide improved communication and coordination of infrastructure investments in the county for the goal of more efficient and effective infrastructure improvements. The council is not a method for increased county control over municipal investments in the county. The council will have balanced representation from municipalities in the county to ensure a level playing field for MCICC recommendations or action.

MCICC Activities

One of the primary activities of the MCICC will be to regularly collect key information on planned infrastructure investments from Montgomery County municipalities and summarize this information. This primary level of data collection and assessment can help identify where multiple community investments are planned that may benefit from some form of project coordination, joint financing or other complementary activity. This regular updating of infrastructure investment plans and available capacity should include: water, sewer, highway, public buildings, parks and any other major investment activity. This investment-planning inventory could also include plans for the purchase of major pieces of equipment (rolling stock and fixed equipment) by municipalities, school districts, fire departments and other public organizations. A county wide equipment inventory could have similar benefits of joint or shared purchasing of specialized equipment or reduced financing cost from combined or fleet purchasing options.

A second important activity of the council, which builds on the infrastructure inventory effort, is the convening or communication with two or more local public organizations where there is perceived potential benefit from some joint approach or plan for investment. This activity could range from simple notification of involved parties, to convening a meeting, or potentially more involved efforts to help support joint planning or grant application activities upon the consent of involved communities and their elected leaders.

A third activity of the MCICC would be to conduct regular communication with surrounding counties on infrastructure investment planning and activities. This is particularly important for highway investment and in some cases water and sewer infrastructure.

MCICC Structure

The structure of the MCICC should be two tiered with an executive committee of municipal members, selected by all participating public organizations. The executive committee would provide leadership in the review of municipal infrastructure plans and the identification of potential joint opportunities with staff assistance from county and municipal professionals. A second tier would include representation from all municipalities and relevant public organizations in the county. The second tier would be informed of executive committee activities via email and regular mail and have the opportunity to respond to the recommended actions of the executive committee. The executive committee should include the county executive and the chief elected officials (town supervisors or city or village mayors) of four or six additional municipalities. Professional staff support for the MCICC should come from the Montgomery County Business Development Center, the Commissioner of Public Works and other staff as needed.

Examples from Other Counties

Other counties have used organizations like the MCICC to help enhance the effectiveness of infrastructure planning and investment for communities in the county. Tompkins County Area Development (TCAD) in conjunction with the Tompkins County Planning Department, utilized a grant from the Department of State to hire a consultant to assess the capacity, availability and needs of all water and sewer systems within the county. This has proven useful to TCAD in knowing where

development capacity exists in working with firms in need of infrastructure access and for other planning needs in the county. Livingston County used an alternative organizational mechanism, a public water and sewer authority. Livingston, like several other upstate rural counties has created a water and sewer authority that does not own water and sewer systems in the county, but provides key support services for planning, financing, administration and licensed operation of municipally owned facilities.

Improving Service Cost and Performance Information to Improve Management Decision-making

In the long run, efforts to find cost effective changes in service delivery will be hampered by current budgeting and service cost accounting practices that make it difficult to compare the cost of service provision from one municipality or one highway practice to another. Cost of service practices need to be matched with some measures of performance, like average road condition (using a software or manual system that permits annual or multi-year pavement rating). It would be valuable for local governments and highway departments in the county to explore changes in these practices to improve the ability to evaluate and compare actual service costs whether budgeted or actual and linked to measures of performance. Montgomery County highway departments are particularly well suited to develop an intergovernmental service cost and performance system. The Montgomery County Information Technology /Data Processing Department has developed an excellent service cost accounting system for the County Public Works Department. This system, initiated by public works leadership, has the capability to identify job costs, service costs and assess a certain level of performance assessment. The Department of Public Works uses this software system to evaluate alternative service approaches to minimize cost and assess performance.

Equally important the county IT department has extensive experience in working with other governments to contract for IT services. Many local governments and other organizations in the county already contract for software services from the county IT department. Given the department's software capability, its experience in developing locally tailored products and its demonstrated capability in contracting with local governments it would be a natural development to create an approach for better highway service cost information for towns and villages in the county.

Several towns in Montgomery County have developed somewhat less detailed but valuable approaches along these lines. These town recordkeeping approaches could be used as a starting point in developing a simpler and compatible service costing approach for towns. In many cases there are already adequate record keeping practices in place (e.g. time cards, equipment use logs, etc.) but the information is not aggregated or summarized in a manner that is useful for local management and performance purposes. Some towns and villages record information that identifies personnel and other costs associated with services, but they don't summarize this data to evaluate the cost of particular activities or projects. Without this kind of comparable information, it is difficult to identify opportunities to save money through changed practices or contracting out to other highway departments.

Service contracts can provide increased impetus for both sides of the contract to maintain better service cost and performance information. Highway managers typically balk at the need to do more record keeping. However, town highway departments, routinely provide detailed expense records for storm cleanup because they have to in order to get outside reimbursement. These departments keep detailed project cost records on storm related cleanup activities for the New York State Emergency Management Office (SEMO) and the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA).

Town budgeting practices that allocate a fixed number of highway payrolls (for five to six months) to winter snow maintenance is perhaps the most pointed example of how current record keeping practices frustrate good service costing. The personnel costs of all the other service activities accomplished during those payroll periods are errantly included as a part of snow plowing and winter road clearing services. By more accurately focusing budgeting and accounting on the costs of particular services provided, town financial practices can change to provide better management information for better decisions.

There is a general need statewide for improved cost analysis record keeping practices and tools for use by local highway departments. For reasons outlined above, Montgomery County would be an excellent location to test and implement a service cost-performance system to improve highway management. The combination of a county highway manager that has developed a detailed computerized costing allocation approach, couple with a county IT department that regularly contracts for application and service with municipalities provides a unique combination of capabilities to address this important need. An investment here may provide a tool and approach to help improve management and cut costs for town-county highway department systems statewide.

Outline of a Phase I Approach for Improving Service Cost Information

While a county wide implementation is the goal of this effort, initial development and testing with a subset of municipalities would minimize the development time and permit working out problems with a subset of municipalities before a full roll out of the costing approach and software with all municipalities in the county. This phased approach would also permit initial development with those municipal staff most likely to support early adoption of the change and providing the best context for effective development of the needed software and approach. Below, we outline the major steps for a Phase I effort.

1. Review Current Record Keeping Practices by Highway Superintendents

Town highway superintendents and village public works administrators and their employees maintain existing records that in their current form or slightly modified can be adapted for better quality service cost information. For example, the Town of Canajoharie's standard employee Work Report form (see Appendix) for hourly reporting could be summarized weekly and monthly to provide personnel costs associated with 24 different highway service functions. The Town of Root also utilizes a similar approach. These provide examples of current record keeping that can be adapted for improved service cost information without substantively increasing current departmental record keeping practices. A very valuable next phase would examine the opportunity for using existing county software resources (used by the county

highway department to measure service cost and performance) to create a simple approach for improving service cost information for local road managers -building on current practices by some current managers.

2. Identify a Common Set of Service Categories for Cost Collection

The review of town and village existing practices should be combined with an assessment of current capabilities for service categories and costing that is available in the county's highway software system. This in turn should be compared with existing service cost and performance approaches for highway services used by other governments in the state.

See for example the service volume and performance criteria used by Schuyler County, NY, included in the Appendix. Schuyler County provides an interesting mix of service work load data (miles of road paved, miles of ditch cleaning, etc.) with criteria that tend toward more performance or outcome data. Criteria that provide both work load data (the counting of activities or work completed) with the cost of the work on a per unit basis moves toward performance criteria that helps assess how work gets done and what might be changed to reduce costs. Pure performance criteria, in the textbook sense is often more difficult to link with work products and more difficult to use for improving management at the operational level.

3. Develop a Recordkeeping Approach for Service Costing and Tracking Road Segment Investments

In consultation with the Phase I local government participants establish a revised local recordkeeping approach that minimizes change to current record collection and permits the effective association of costs with key service categories and road segments. Based on the response from local managers in this study it recommended that the County Public Works Commissioner and his staff be recruited for Phase I participation along with the Town Highway Superintendent for the Town of Root and the Village Public Works Superintendent in the Village of Canajoharie.

4. Technical Support for Developing a Countywide System: Phase I

The project team should include participation from the Montgomery County Information Technology (IT)/Data Processing Department. Using the record keeping review and service cost requirements outlined in the steps above, the project team with IT staff (in possible conjunction with a consultant) can help develop a low cost software-hardware approach to town and village data collection and aggregation to provide needed summary data for improved highway management.

5. Phase I Year Long Implementation Test and Revision

Test the use of the software-hardware approach developed for a one year reporting cycle with the Town of Root and Village of Canajoharie. After testing the software-hardware approach and recording formats should be revise as needed.

6. Expand the Phase I Effort to a second group of town and village governments in the County

Based on town and village testing and revision, additional local governments can be added based on interest and the county’s capacity to add additional governments for the next annual reporting cycle.

7. Pavement Management Implementation for Performance Measurement

A general index of overall pavement or road condition is one key indicator of highway performance. There is inexpensive software available to help local road managers assess the condition of their roads and prioritize investment. The software, available through the Cornell Local Roads Program, Road Surface Management System or RSMS, is free of charge. It is an inexpensive form of pavement management system. Changes overtime in the municipality’s overall condition and the condition of particular roads can provide a valuable index of the overall quality of highway services and improvement in the performance of highway activities. This can be used as an indicator of performance to compare with budgeted resources. The Cornell Local Roads Program helps local governments Implement RSMS software. A county Phase I effort should pursue the implementation of this program in tandem with the development of the service costing approach outlined above. This would provide an additional performance measurement approach to be used in conjunction with the service cost information collected above. The Cornell Local Roads Program effort is called the Pavement Management Summer Intern Project (see <http://www.clrp.cornell.edu/RSMS/RSMS.htm> for more details).

Regional Options for Specific Municipalities

Town and Village of St. Johnsville

The Village of St. Johnsville’s Public Works facility is located across the road from the village marina and park. The land area near the marina and waterfront is limited. The current public works facility is not an eyesore, but it does not contribute to the overall amenity area created by the park and marina. If the garage could be moved, the area could benefit from a more compatible use on the site and the reduced public works truck and equipment traffic. At the same time, the Town of St. Johnsville highway facility is on the edge of the Village area. If the two public works operations could jointly use the town owned highway site, it would enhance the marina area and may provide benefit from both departments who could share materials storage, enhanced equipment sharing, etc. This possibility would seem to have enough potential to be worth a discussion of the options by town and village leaders.

This project may have appeal to several state funding sources because it combines the creation of joint or shared public works facility with the enhancement of a village public recreation space that is an amenity for both the community and the canal. There may be real or perceived constraints to this potential idea among town or village leaders. It would be valuable to, at a minimum, convene a meeting of town and village leadership, including governing board members and public works/highway staff, to consider potential barriers and constraints and explore options to overcome them. Mutual agreement by the two municipalities on the value of at least exploring several options for the concept would be required before any other exploratory planning steps could be taken.

Town Minden and Village of Fort Plain

A shared salt storage facility at Town of Minden Highway facility with the Village of Fort Plain is also suggested as a potentially effective inter-municipal investment. The public works and highway facilities for the two municipalities have close proximity. A shared salt storage facility constructed on the town site could reduce costs for both municipalities without significantly increasing travel time for village trucks in loading materials. A number of other shared materials facilities exist and have developed approaches to fairly managing cost, use and maintenance arrangements.

This is a project that may be eligible and attractive to state funding sources as a share municipal service activity improving efficiency and effectiveness. Shared commitment to this project, and the key conditions necessary for joint approval of such a facility should be discussed by governing board members and highway and public works staff as a pre-condition for taking next steps.

Sign Management

In the projects first report on existing conditions, it was noted that many local highway and public works departments did not have paper or electronic (computerized) sign inventories with all signs catalogued and with data on replacement and compliance. Given the potential liability it would be valuable for all municipalities in the county to have a solid inventory created and current sign conditions evaluated and where needed, aggressive sign replacement and placement programs put in place.

In order to reduce the risk faced by some municipalities and improve safety in the county, it would be valuable for highway and public works officials as well as governing board members to better understand effective sign management and recordkeeping practices. Training materials are available on this topic from the New York State Department of Transportation and the Cornell Local Roads Program. Either the county public works department or the town highway superintendents association should consider an effort to provide materials and/or sponsor a training workshop on this subject for municipalities in the county. Both elected governing board members and highway and public works officials should be the target of this effort.

Appendix

SCHUYLER COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Performance Measures

Program	Performance Measures	2010 Outcomes		2011 Projected Outcomes
ADMINISTRATION Objective: Provide clerical, accounting, contract administration and other related services, to the eight divisions of the highway department. Objective: Review request and issue permits that assure the preservation and integrity of the roadway system and to promote community growth in a conscientious and timely manner. Objective: To record and report all complaints and requests to allow highway personnel to address all issues in a timely fashion.	Grant reporting.	2009 / 2010 \$1,317,611 / \$808,932		\$3,000,300 projected due to 2 bridge replacement projects.
	% of permits issued/denied within 48 hrs.	100% / 100%		Maintain 48 hour target.
	# of driveway permits issued.	12 / 9		Decline due to slow down in new home building
	# of hauling permits issued.	220 / 177		Continue to scrutinize for alternate routes to keep trucks off County Roads
	# of construction permits issued.	3 / 5		Continue to notify utilities of construction schedule, so change can be made during construction, not after.
	Number of complaints/requests received.	101 / 64		Continue with aggressive road maintenance; Remove dead trees, fill potholes, clean ditches, etc. as detected, before complaint is filed.
	% of customer satisfaction to response time of complaints/requests.	99% / 99%		All complaints resolved either with request or alternative that is agreeable & acceptable.
Requests for dead deer removal.	54 / 37		Continue to track MVA's/deer for signage.	
CAPITAL PROJECTS Objective: Retain contracted engineering at or below regional averages of 23% for state or federal projects and seek additional RFP's to maintain lowest percentage for local projects.	Engineering cost of Federal Projects.	\$40,000 / \$83,300		Continue to monitor so expenses do not exceed the Federal limit of 24%
	Engineering cost of Local Projects.	\$48,000 / \$13,710		Continue to maintain or lower the Federal or state construction costs
	% of Engineering Projects completed within budget.	80% / 87%		Continue to monitor Engineers for performance
Objective: Implement 6.1 miles or 5% of reconstruction projects per year to	Cost per lane mile of reconstruction. The national average is \$500,000 per lane	\$100,300 CR 14 - \$267,300		Continue to add projects to our material bids and the prep work done in the Spring and Fall

SCHUYLER COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Performance Measures

Program	Performance Measures	2010 Outcomes	2011 Projected Outcomes
<p>Objective: Traffic Safety includes traffic signs, pavement striping, guiderail, street lighting, also mowing and brush removal to maintain an adequate roadside clear zone of 12 feet.</p> <p>MAINTENANCE cont'd</p> <p>Objective: Drainage includes cleaning, repairing or replacing catch basins & culverts, maintenance of stream channels, ditches, potholes, grading and minor resurfacing of county roads.</p> <p>Objective: To analyze construction cost for paving, snow removal, and inspections for cost comparison of internal verses external services.</p> <p>Objective: Start snow removal after 2" of precipitation accumulates to maintain a safe traveling surface on the county highway system during winter season.</p> <p>MACHINERY</p> <p>Objective: To purchase, maintain, and perform in-house repair and preventative maintenance to a vehicular, construction</p>	# of new signs fabricated.	858 / 1029	<p>Revenue expected from fabricating \$11,000 \$46,000</p> <p>Maintain same level of cost reduction \$2402 in revenues from striping shared services</p> <p>Continue to operate at 34% savings</p> <p>Creating seasonal MEO for mowing has proven successful. Mowing complaints have ceased.</p> <p>Remove trees before they cause a hazard</p> <p>Replace crossover pipes & install driveways</p> <p>Replace catch basins & inlets; add drainage</p> <p>Continue to monitor maintain efficiency</p> <p>Institute one person plowing to reduce cost</p> <p>Maintain efficiency</p> <p>Continue to monitor contiguous counties that contract and monitor their costs</p> <p>Continue to do in-house repairs</p> <p>Equipment is getting older and breakdowns are</p>
	Cost of fabricating signs.	\$52,550 / \$42,249	
	Cost for road striping.	\$44,217 / \$35,100	
	Miles of centerline striping completed.	162.91 / 122	
	Lane miles of edge striping completed.	183.12 / 68	
		2009 / 2010	
	# of lane miles mowed.	1464 / 1464	
	Cost per mile to mow.	\$446 / \$347	
	Cost of tree & brush removal.	\$73,066 / \$99,016	
	Miles of ditches cleaned	23 / 8	
Drainage pipe replaced	2,000 feet		
Cost of maintenance for drainage	\$25,996 / \$26,986		
Cost of filling potholes.	\$31,478 / \$93,790		
% of maintenance cost toward snow removal.	24%		
Cost per mile.	\$2,625		
Cost per mile to contract.	\$4,200 regional average		
% of savings for in-house repairs verses outsourcing.	63%		
% of time spent with "on-site" repairs.	6%		

SCHUYLER COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Performance Measures

Program	Performance Measures	2010 Outcomes	2011 Projected Outcomes
& heavy equipment for highway construction. Also, garage services to all Central Garage fleet vehicles.	% of work orders for major repairs.	51%	Escalating
	% of work orders for preventative maintenance.	47%	Continue to analyze oil samples of internal parts
	% of work orders to outside vendors.	7%	Electrical components are challenging
SHARED SERVICES Objective: To set specifications, purchase, lease, maintain, and sale of all county vehicles through on Central Garage location to reduce the size of the fleet.	Total number of vehicles in the motor pool.	3	Continue to provide rental units to county employees
	% of time vehicles were rented.	51%	55%
	% of time unable to fill requests for rentals.	5%	4%
	Total number of vehicles in the fleet.	80	As county vehicles need service they are added to the fleet
Objective: Concentration of our resources to service multiple departments with a common goal of cost savings.	Reduce cost of Preventative maintenance on all county owned vehicles by using in-house mechanic verses service centers.	Hired F/T Mechanic to handle all repair of all county vehicles Savings estimated \$80,000	Monitor reduction of overall county expenses regarding repair costs in 2010 v 2011
Objective: Build a Shared Service Facility at Highway to reduce capital and operating costs while combining the	Number of projected departments using this facility.	7	To see a savings in operating cost to all departments
	Elimination of duplicate services and	Enhanced offering to	Monitor revenue generated

SCHUYLER COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Performance Measures

Program	Performance Measures	2010 Outcomes	2011 Projected Outcomes
<p>convenience of a one-stop facility for the public benefit. To coordinate communication, staff equipment, etc. To maximize the allocation of all resources.</p> <p>Objective: To provide support and personnel to manage and operate an efficient and professional Shared Fuel Facility to reduce capital and operating cost for equipment and services provided to internal and external agencies.</p>	<p>processes. Overall reduction in operating costs. Increase efficiency. Improve service.</p>	<p>public Needs assessment Central location Maximize benefits</p>	<p>Efficiency of functions Better service to the public Sharing services</p>
	<p>Number of county departments serviced.</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>10</p>
	<p>Number of outside non-profit agencies serviced.</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>3</p>
	<p>% of maintenance cost per year for the facility.</p>	<p>Less than 1% with lower sur-charge</p>	<p>Maintain expenses at a minimal level to lower sur-charge rate</p>
	<p>% of savings over retail purchases.</p>	<p>30%</p>	<p>continue to monitor users</p>
<p>% of management costs.</p>	<p>2%</p>	<p>sur-charge covers all management costs</p>	

Town of Canajoharie: Work Report					Name _____								Payroll # _____			
Hour	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	Work #	Comments
12:00 AM															1. Plowing	
1:00 AM															2. Sanding	
2:00 AM															3. Shop Maint.	
3:00 AM															4. Equip. Maint.	
4:00 AM															5. Patch- Gravel	
5:00 AM															6. Patch- B-Top	
6:00 AM															7. Trees	
7:00 AM															8. Brush	
8:00 AM															9. Ditching	
9:00 AM															10. Culvert	
10:00 AM															11. Draw Sand	
11:00 AM															12. Draw Gravel	
12:00 PM															13. Draw Stone	
1:00 PM															14. Sign Work	
2:00 PM															15. Seal	
3:00 PM															16. Shoulders	
4:00 PM															17. Sick Time	
5:00 PM															18. Vac-Comp	
6:00 PM															19. Check Roads	
7:00 PM															20. Limbs	
8:00 PM															21. Water	
9:00 PM															22. Guide Rail	
10:00 PM															23. Garbage	
11:00 PM															24. Sweep Roads	

Appendix 1: Proposal for Transfer of Roads to Town Ownership

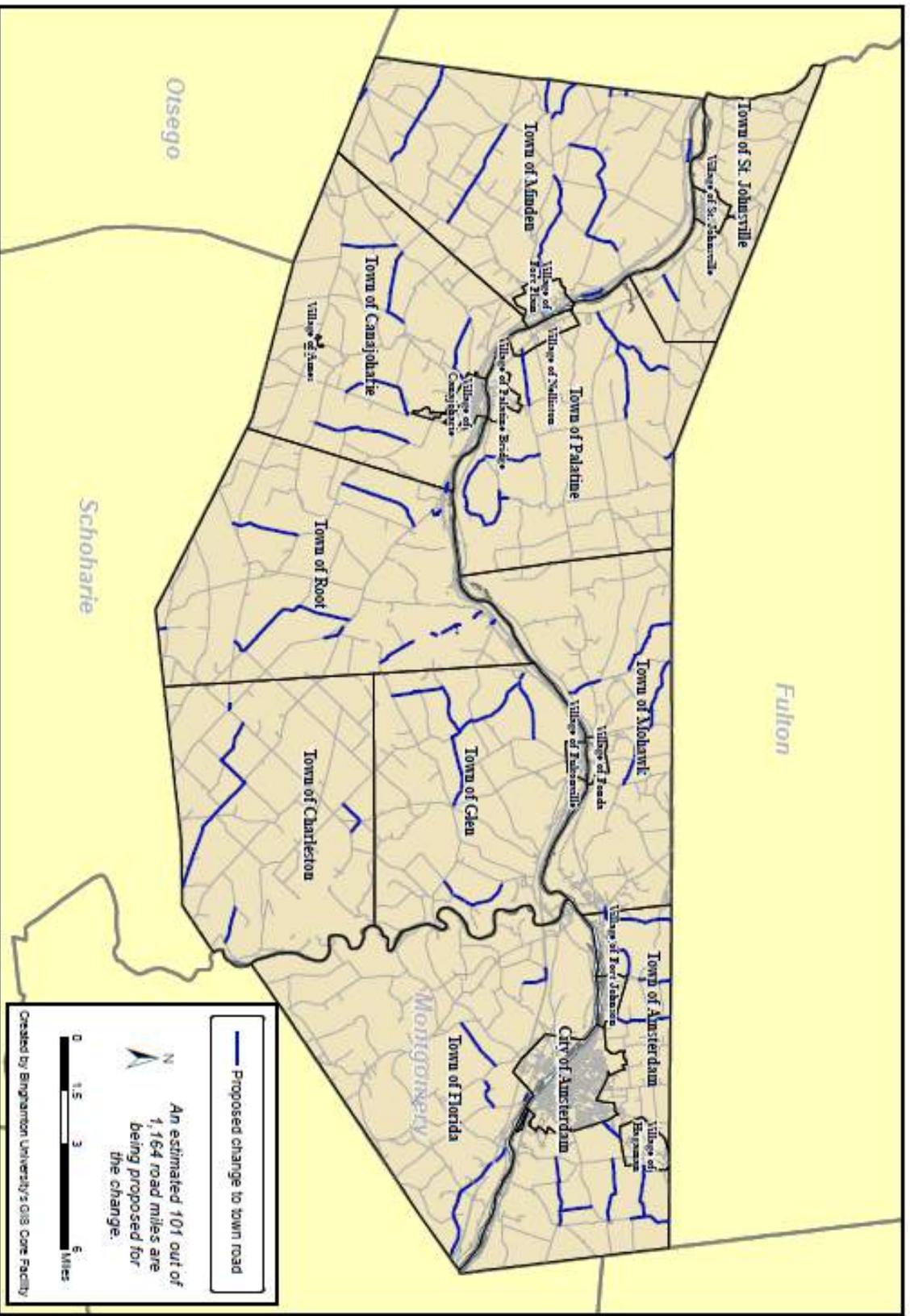
Montgomery County Roads to Transfer to Town Ownership

Town of Amsterdam		
Road #	Road Name	Length-Miles
1	Antlers	1.87
2	Belfance	0.91
3	MacLachlan	1.26
4	Waterstreet	0.71
5	Jones	1.86
6	Hammondtown	1.47
7	Morrow	1.18
8	Northern Blvd.	0.71
9	Lepper	1.62
10	Noonan	0.94
11	Sacandaga	2.02
12	Bendick Corners	0.36
	Total Miles	14.91
Town of Canajoharie		
Road #	Road Name	Length-Miles
1	Buel	1.58
2	Dygart	2.33
3	Seebers Lane	1.93
4	Maple Hill	2.43
5	Blaine	2.80
	Total Miles	11.07
Town Of Charleston		
Road #	Road Name	Length-Miles
1	Esperance	5.77
2	Church Street	0.73
3	Gidley	1.34
4	Charleston St.	0.10
5	Hughes Road Spur.	0.39
	Total Miles	8.33

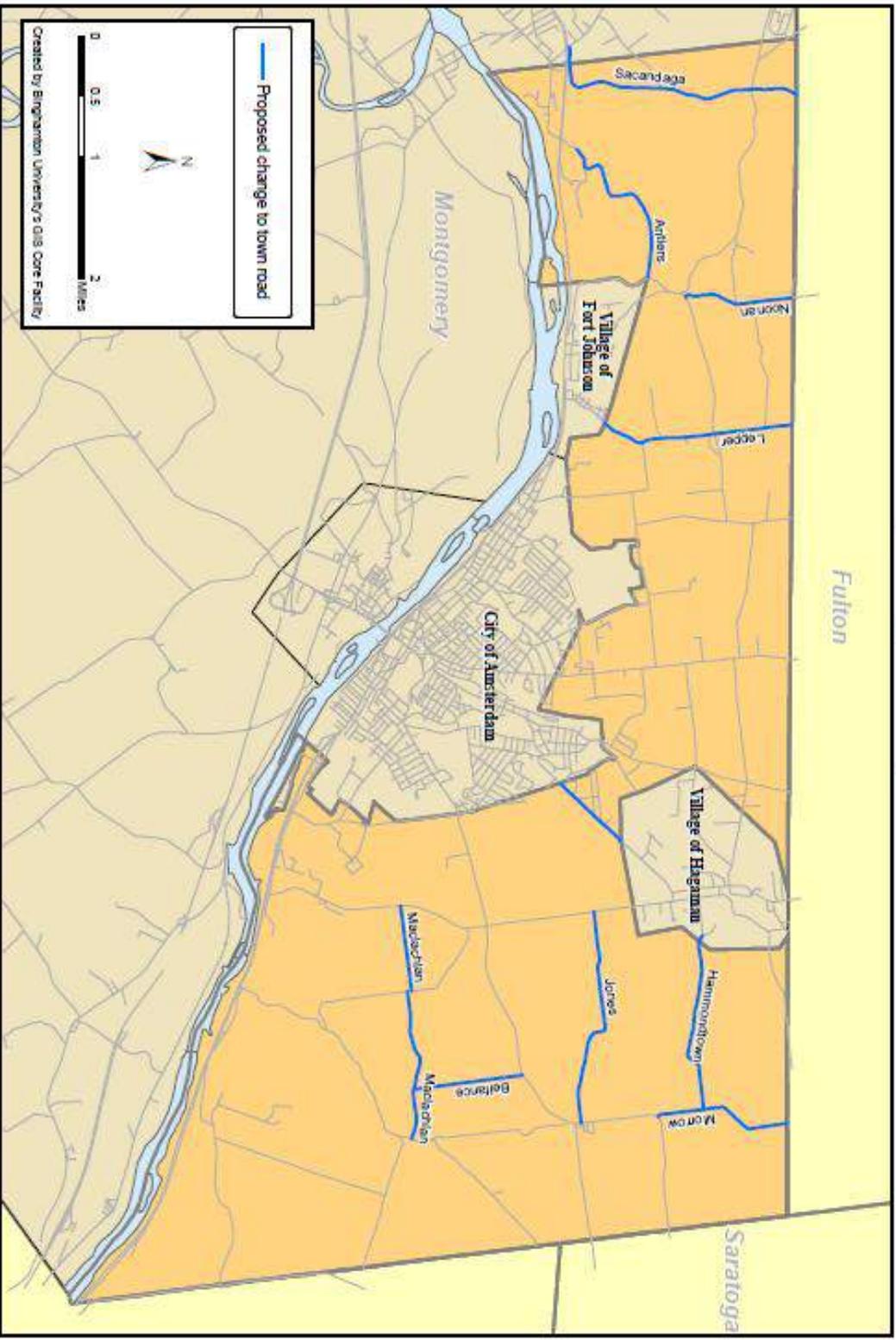
Town of Florida		
Road #	Road Name	Length-Miles
1	Fuller	1.57
2	Peck	1.57
3	Merry	2.10
4	Dunlap	1.38
5	Abraham	1.00
6	Schuyler	0.48
7	Pattersonville	3.85
8	Sager	2.49
9	Cleveland Ave. Ext.	0.12
10	Broadway Ext.	0.33
11	Old Pattersonville	0.07
	Total Miles	14.96
Town of Glen		
Road #	Road Name	Length-Miles
1	Lansing	2.90
2	Lusso	1.73
3	Borden	2.24
4	Fisher	2.78
5	Co-Daugh-Ri-Ty	2.32
	Total Miles	11.97
Town of Minden		
Road #	Road Name	Length-Miles
1	Otsquago	1.10
2	So. St. Johnsanville	0.34
3	Mindenville Drive	0.64
4	Airport	0.82
5	Paries	3.68
6	Pickle Hill	3.35
7	Phillip	1.36
8	Lighthall	0.92
9	Hessville	3.30
10	Starkville	3.00
11	Ripple	0.48
12	Fordsbush Rd. Spur	0.15
13	Clark	0.22
	Total Miles	19.36

Town of Mohawk		
Road #	Road Name	Length-Miles
1	Sacandaga	0.17
2	Old Trail	3.74
3	Wemple Avenue	0.15
4	Martin	1.61
5	Persse	2.11
	Total Miles	7.78
Town of Palatine		
Road #	Road Name	Length-Miles
1	Brower	3.75
2	Caswell	1.62
3	Groff	1.50
4	Nellis	2.32
5	Wagners Hollow	2.95
6	Old McKinley	0.24
7	New Turnpike	0.33
	Total Miles	12.71
Town of Root		
Road #	Road Name	Length-Miles
1	Hilltop	2.52
2	Lynk St.	4.04
3	Mahr	1.93
4	Kilmartin	0.24
5	Anderson	3.44
6	Sprakers	0.26
7	Sprakers Hill	0.69
8	Rural Grove	0.69
9	Old River (113A)	0.12
10	Old River (113B)	0.35
	Total Miles	14.28
Town of St. Johnsville		
Road #	Road Name	Length-Miles
1	Fox	0.86
2	Allen Heights	0.41
	Total Miles	1.27

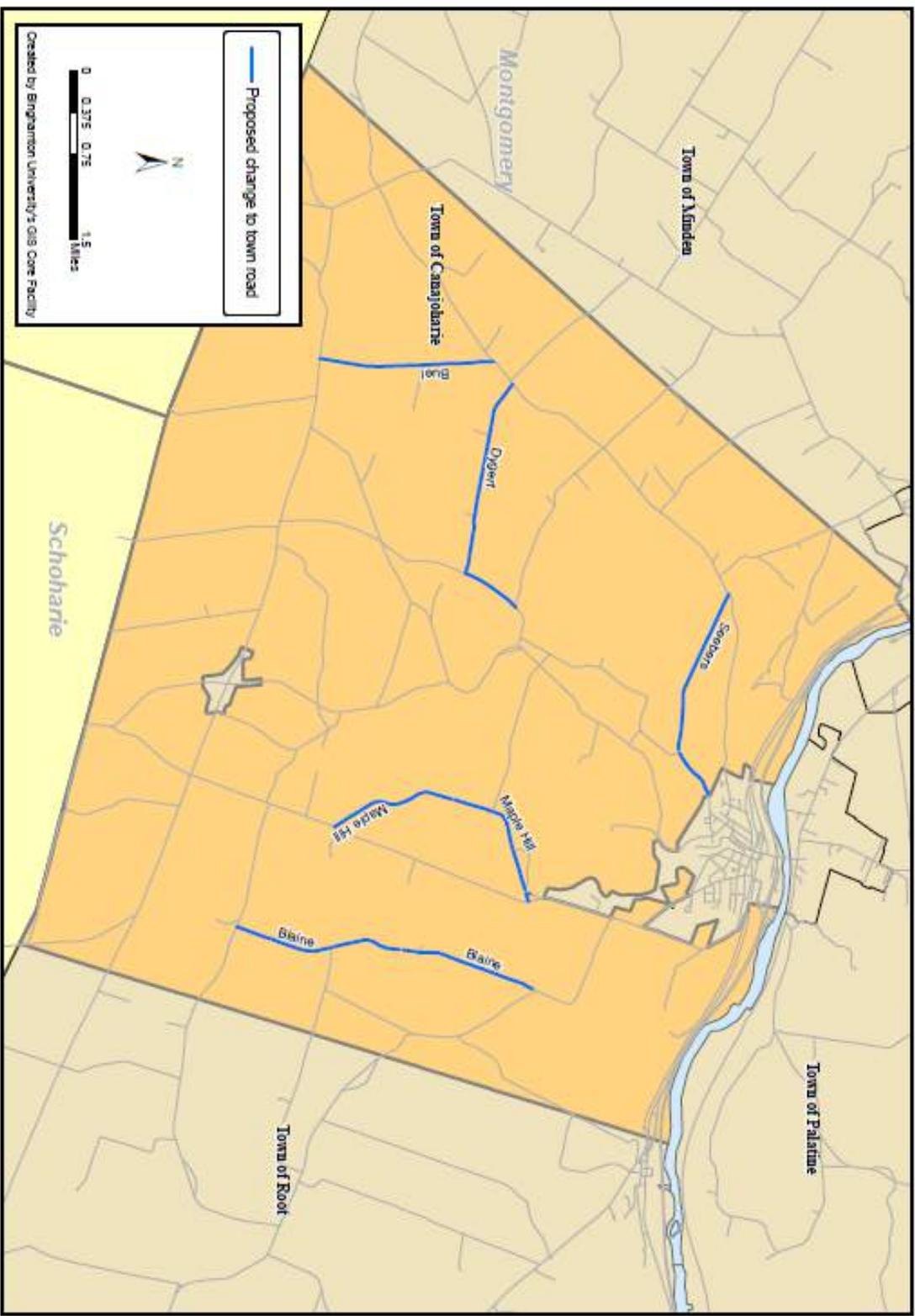
Proposed Road Changes in Montgomery County, NY



Proposed Road Changes in the Town of Amsterdam Montgomery County, NY

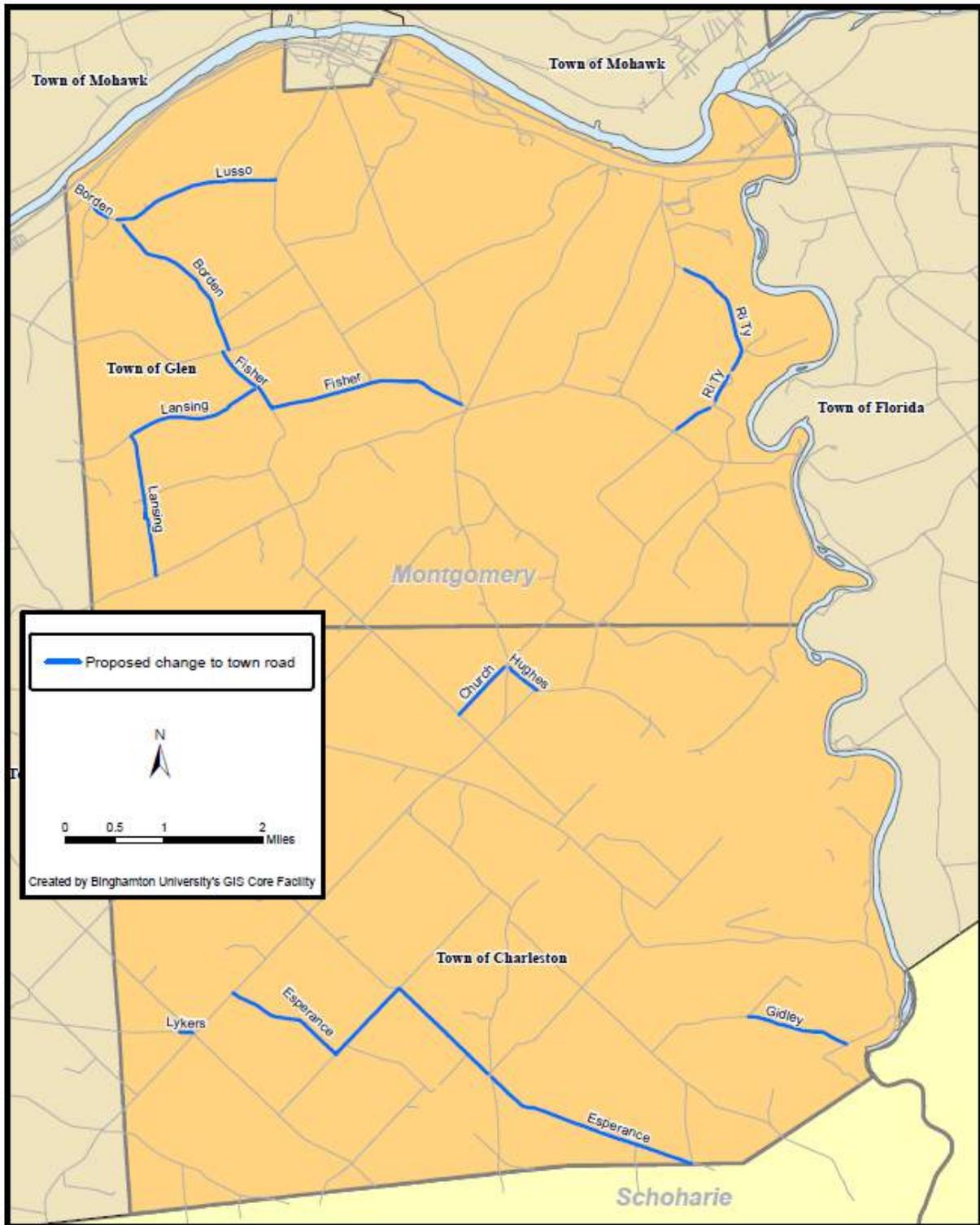


Proposed Road Changes in the Town of Canajoharie Montgomery County, NY

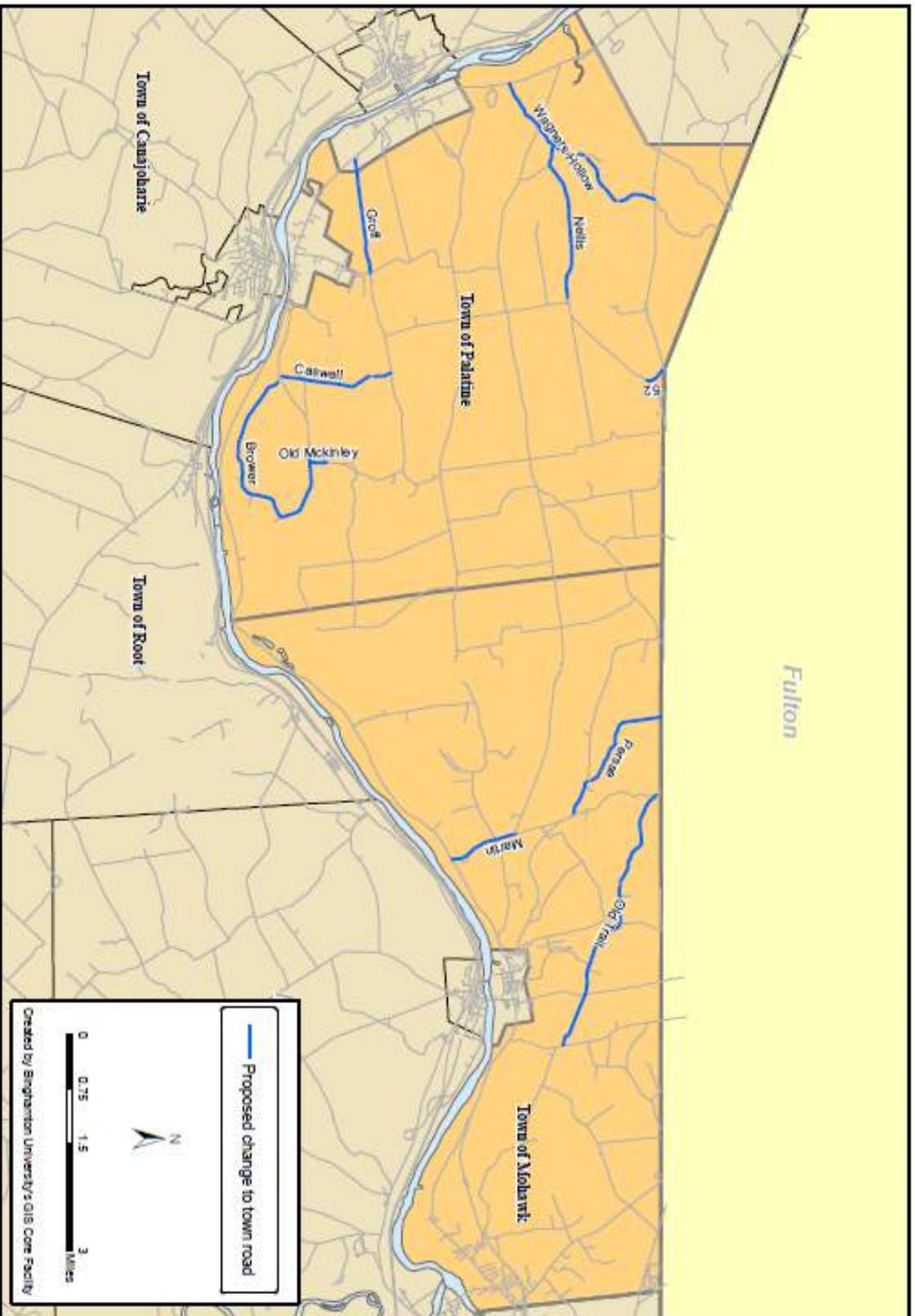


Created by Binghamton University's GIS Core Facility

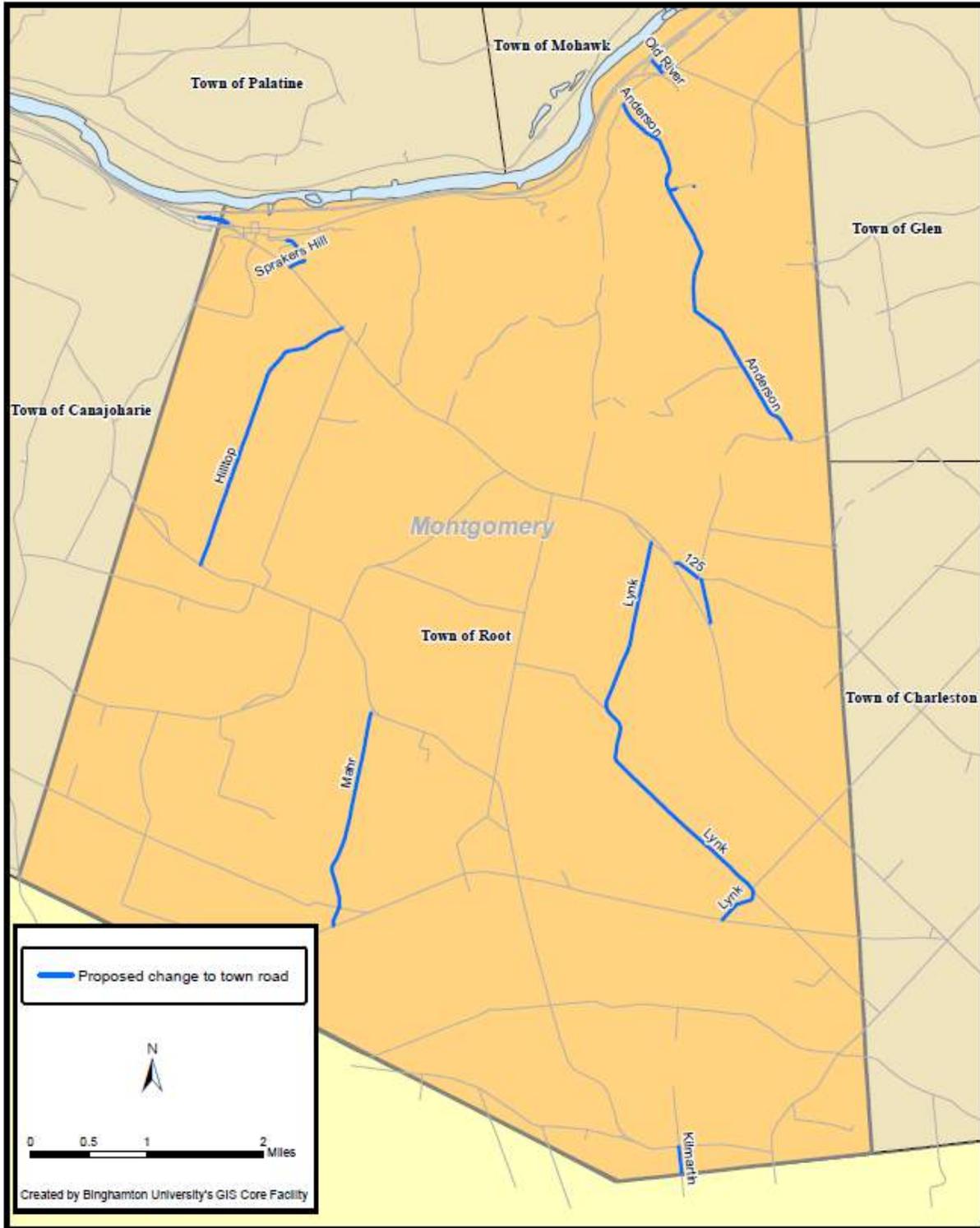
Proposed Road Changes in the Towns of Glen and Charleston Montgomery County, NY



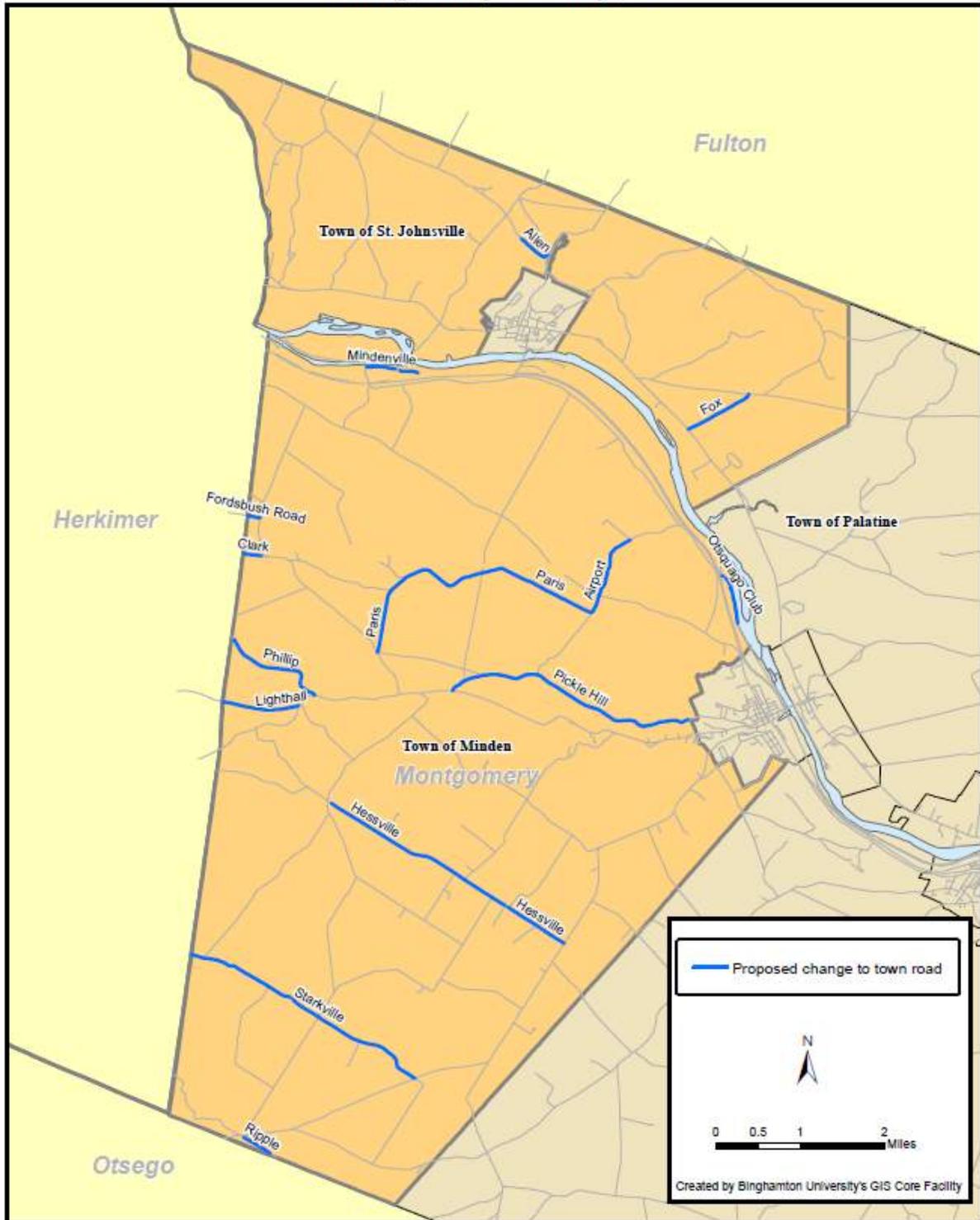
*Proposed Road Changes in the Towns of Palatine and Mohawk
Montgomery County, NY*



Proposed Road Changes in the Town of Root Montgomery County, NY

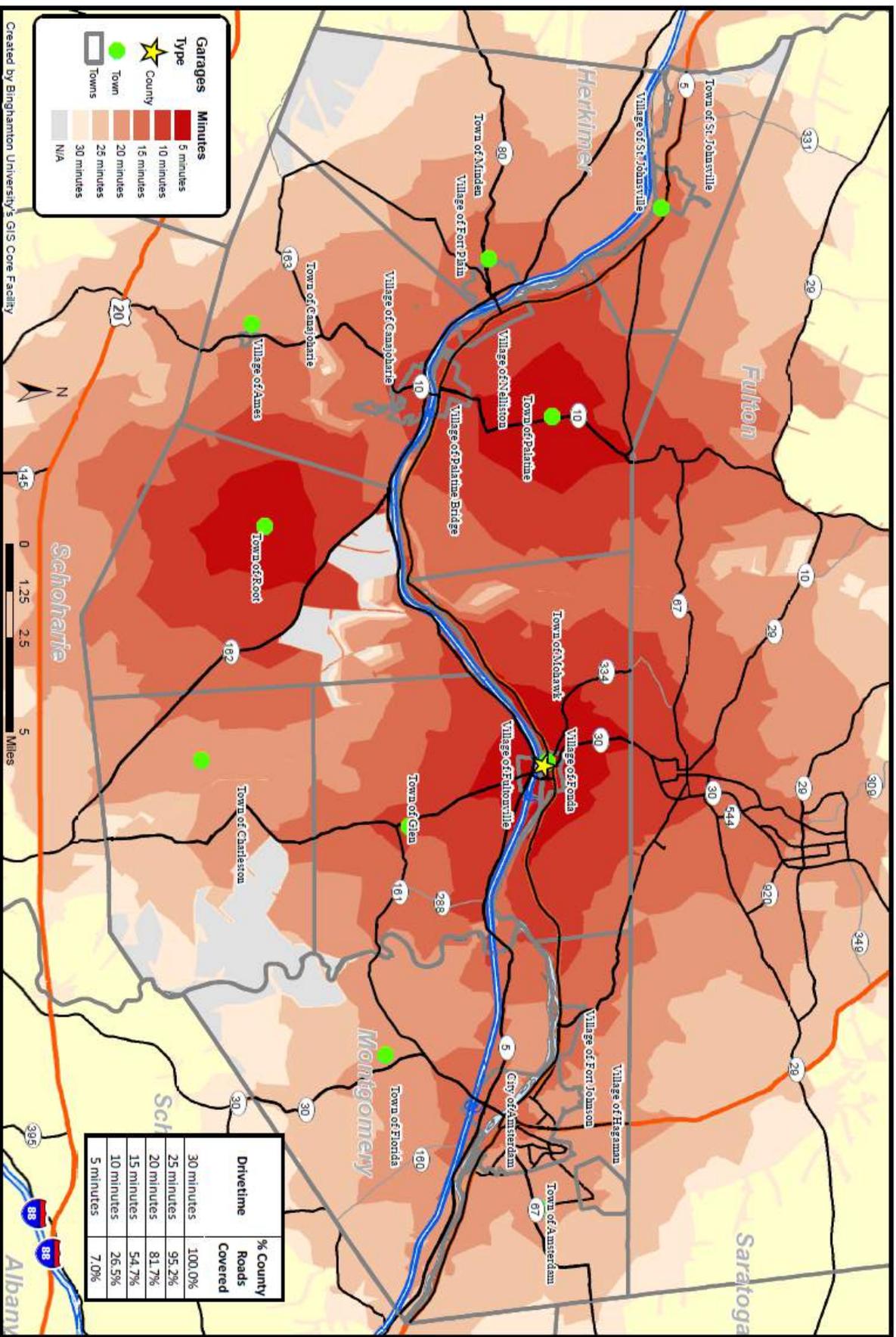


*Proposed Road Changes in the Towns of St. Johnsville and Minden
Montgomery County, NY*

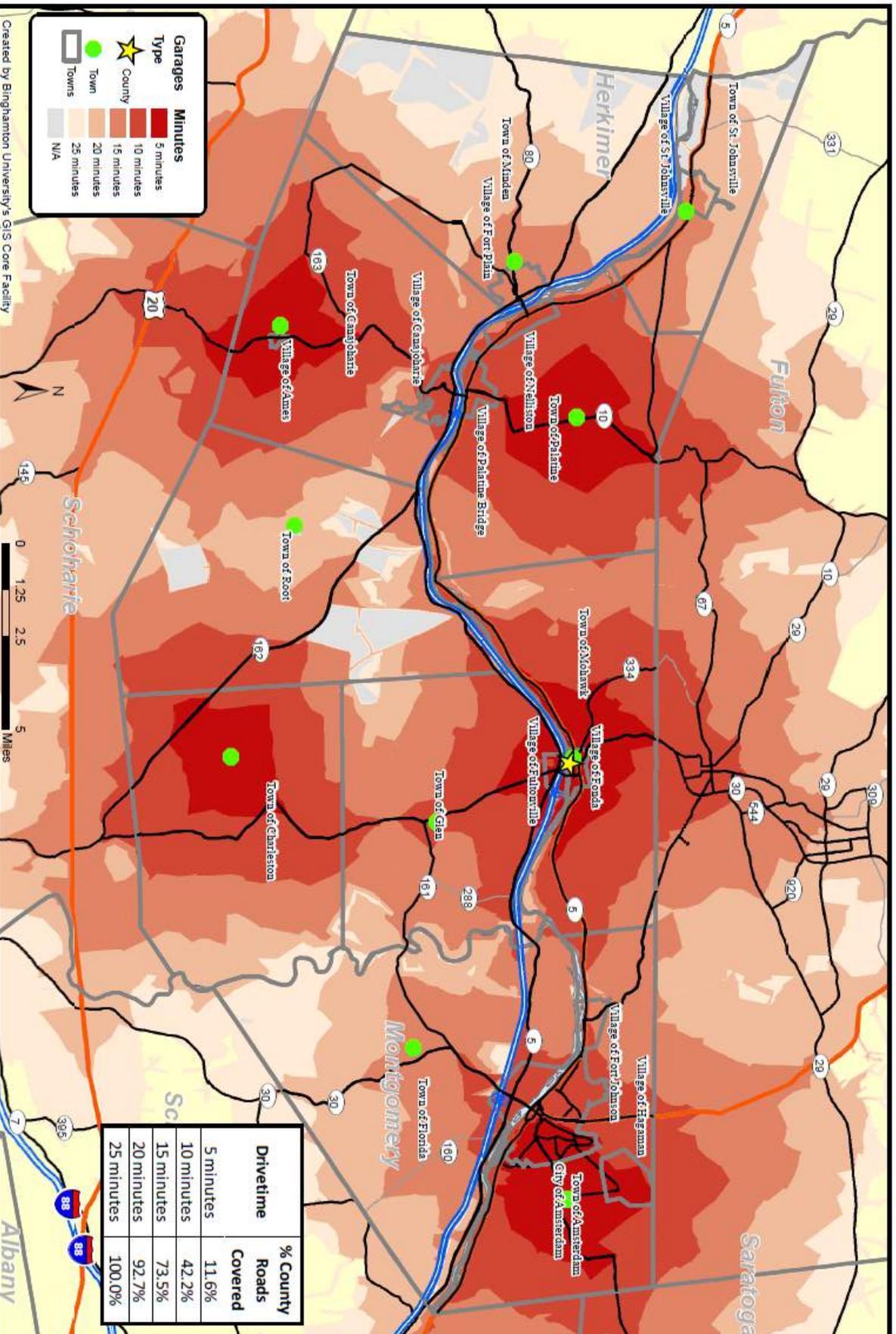


Appendix 2
Drive Time Maps for Montgomery County

Drive Times from County, Root, and Palatine DPW Garages: Montgomery County, NY



Drive Times from the County, Palatine, Canajoharie, Charleston, and Amsterdam DPW Garages:
Montgomery County, NY



Garages

Type

- ★ County
- Town

Minutes

- 5 minutes
- 10 minutes
- 15 minutes
- 20 minutes
- 25 minutes
- N/A

Towns

Drivetime	% County Roads Covered
5 minutes	11.6%
10 minutes	42.2%
15 minutes	73.5%
20 minutes	92.7%
25 minutes	100.0%

Created by Binghamton University's GIS Core Facility



Drive Times from All DPW Garages: Montgomery County, NY

