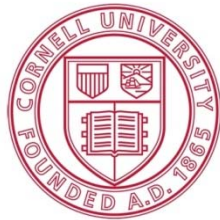


Rural Community Development Consortium



**Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Oneida County**

Rural Community Development Consortium (RCDC) of Central New York

Funded through Cornell University its purpose is to

- Promote local cooperation among rural communities and organizations in the region.
- Build capacity on a local and regional level to advance community development and economic opportunity.
- To provide relevant evidence-based information and technical assistance sessions that will reduce the gap between research and results by providing proven implementation techniques.

Regions

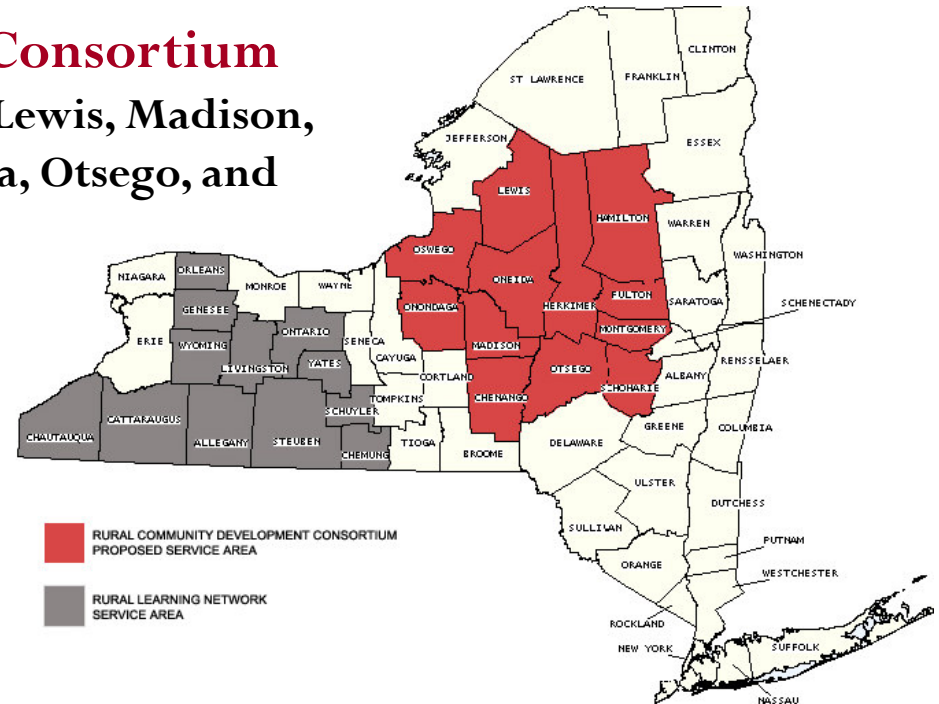
The Rural Community Development Consortium (RCDC) is based on the successful implementation of the Rural Learning Network (RLN) pilot project in the Western / Finger Lakes Region of New York, the Northern Rural Network (NRN) program in England and a series of training opportunities that promote community, rural and economic development.

Rural Community Development Consortium

Chenango, Fulton, Hamilton, Herkimer, Lewis, Madison, Montgomery, Oswego, Onondaga, Oneida, Otsego, and Schoharie Counties

Rural learning Network

Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Chemung, Genesee, Livingston, Niagara, Ontario, Orleans, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, Wyoming and Yates Counties



Rural Community
Development Consortium

Rural Community Development Consortium

Identifying & Planning for Community Keystones

December 2010

What are Community keystones?

Keystones are the unique features in your community that provide a sense of place and identity

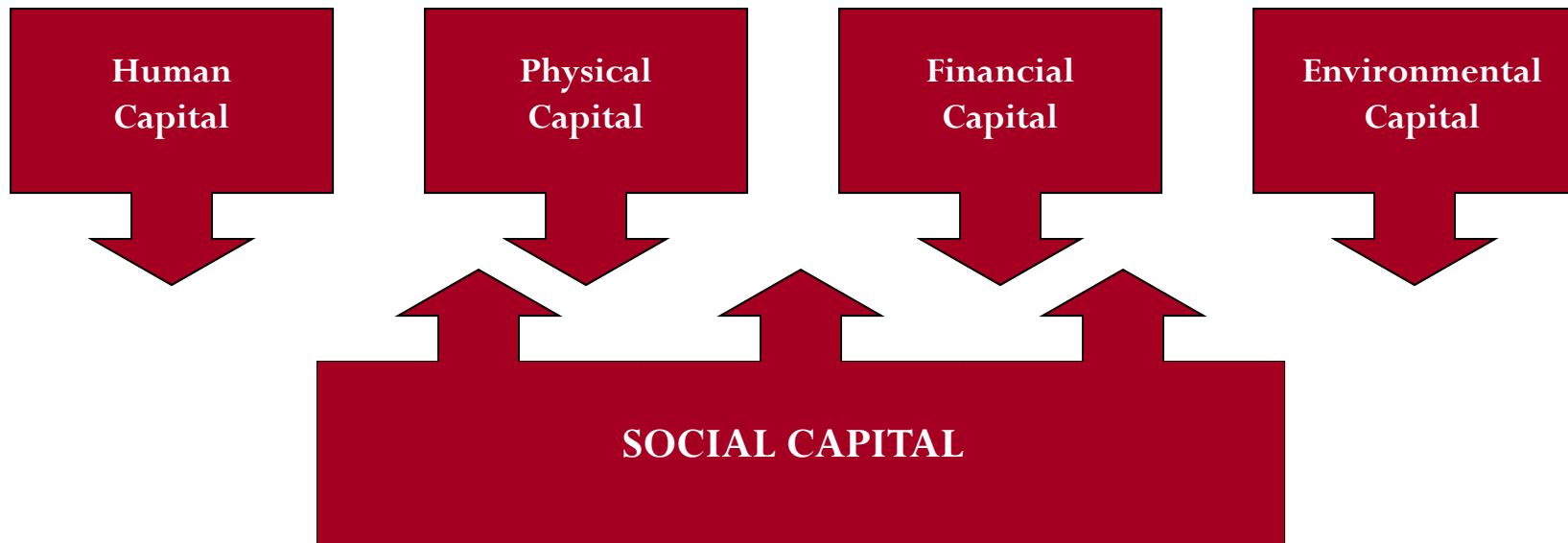
- Physical Infrastructure
- Human Capital
- Economic Resources
- Social Capacities

The reasons that people live, work and visit your community instead of someplace else. They are tied to community identity by

- Honoring the past
- Celebrating the present
- Envisioning the Future

Stakeholders are more actively engaged in co-creating visions of the future if the past and present have been portrayed in meaningful ways.

Capital Assets



Why Identify Keystones?

- Keystones can lead to a *Shared Vision* and commitment
- They are a major part of implementing a *Community Dialogue* on change vs. status quo
- They can affect municipal policy
- It helps focus community resources and efforts
- They can strengthen a sense of identity
- Improve the Quality of a place

Public Interaction

Engaging a diverse public successfully means knowing how to bring together all these different areas:

- **The Appeal of the Real:** Visitors respond most passionately to authentic places and real people. Preserving and interpreting the real is ever more challenging in a theme park culture.
- **Sites that Serve Many Purposes:** Community markers, agents of economic revitalization, entertainment venues, educational resources, "safe places" for civic engagement and public history.
- **No Visitors, No Point:** No matter how much we cherish the ideas and experiences knowing who the visitors are and why they are coming (or not coming) is critical. Keeping it known.
- **Add to the experience:** It is not to fill up empty minds with new ideas, but to strengthen peoples' ability to add our material into the ongoing narratives they are already constructing.
- **Every Local Tale is Part of a Larger Story:** Original local details that links to the peoples' own lives today can make the multi-dimensional quality of the place come alive.
- **Choosing the Right Tool:** Not every story is right for an exhibit or an event. Not every exhibit or event need to happen continuously. Tailor the tool to the experience. Make it special.

Regions that thrive

- Lively neighborhoods with business districts
- Cultural and recreational attractions
- Great sense of place
- Protected natural areas
- Deep pride in local character, products and food
- Collaborative interaction with their citizens.

The Competitive City, Before

- Attract large companies
- Inexpensive locations and a cheap labor force
- People migrated to jobs
- Place mattered little
- Growth based on cheap oil and dirty industries
- Work, home and shopping far apart

The Competitive City, Now

- Human capital is a catalyst of economic growth, not just a result
- Attracting and keeping people is a critical strategy
- Attract wide range of workers, skilled labor, desirable employers
- Quality of life:
 - Lively town centers - things to do
 - Easily accessible
 - Cultural institutions
 - Preservation of natural areas and recreation

Where are Community Keystones?

The Process

- **Getting Started**
 - Use exercises to start gathering data
 - Get input from people from outside your community
- **Community Assessment**
 - Windshield Tour - All Sections of Town
 - Use Digital Camera
 - Community mapping
- **Community Engagement**
 - Determine the life cycle
 - Who will continue the keystone
 - Succession planning
- **Action Items**
 - Assign a task to each keystone that needs support
- **Status**
 - Review the action items to ensure that keystones are maintained

Public Audit Process

1. Go to the keystone sites with your team, group or board.
2. Go through the Place Game Audit together
3. Return to your meeting to discuss your observations
4. Compile the results and attach the data to a map



Keystone Mapping

Raise awareness about a wide range of local resources for both residents and visitors through dynamic interactive maps



Planning for Keystones

- **Comprehensive Planning**
 - Identify the community character
 - Build out scenarios
 - Recommend policies and actions
 - Suggest Land use & protection natural areas
- **Main Street Revitalization**
 - Developing Design Guidelines
 - Supporting Zoning Districts
 - Historical Preservation
- **Economic Development**
 - Market places, events products and food
 - Attract specific types of business
 - Support grant applications
- **Project Development**
 - Direct feasibility studies
 - Promote community programs

Branding & Promotion

- Brochures
- Websites
- Media
- Social Networks
- Advertising



Adoption has been extraordinarily successful...

Niagara Original.

Our regional brand, the positioning and design platform upon which we will express our unique story to the world.

