

## City of Cortland Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting October 29, 2007

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The Steering Committee contributed to the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis at the outset of the planning process. Identifying these particulars is an introduction to a broad range of issues that can be studied in greater detail within the comprehensive planning process. The SWOT Analysis technique guides the direction of some key focal points within the plan. The items identified below serve as a preliminary foundation for further investigation and potential future action in the community.

### SWOT Analysis Results:

#### *Strengths:*

1. Good downtown: stores, shops, character, atmosphere
2. Housing affordability
3. Central location within New York State: easy access to other areas, and easy commutes
4. Friendly, helpful people; hometown atmosphere
5. Cultural events
6. Parks for children; well maintained
7. Safe
8. Schools
9. SUNY Cortland and their presence downtown, as well as TC3's presence
10. Low amount of traffic
11. Medical services
12. Four seasons / climate
13. Geography: Finger Lakes, Greek Peak
14. Human services and human resources
15. Historic district
16. Library
17. Staying power
18. Recreation opportunities: golf, river, skiing, other outdoor opportunities
19. Interstate 81 and transportation network
20. Employment opportunities
21. Local newspaper
22. Community cooperation: neighbors, human services, government
23. Fire and police departments
24. Airport
25. Railroad
26. Public transportation

*Weaknesses:*

1. Landlocked: limited growth potential
2. Taxes: shrinking base, percentage of tax exempt properties
3. Gateway and neighborhood appearances
4. Sidewalks
5. Lack of shopping
6. Town development takes away from city
7. Dilapidated housing: maintenance, absentee landlords
8. Rental housing sprawl
9. Housing choices
10. Aging infrastructure / aging downtown
11. Lack of community pride
12. Parking, not only downtown, but city-wide
13. Lack of bicycle paths
14. Handicap access
15. Transient population
16. Department of Social Services leniency
17. Wages and benefits don't keep pace with inflation / lack of higher paying jobs
18. Public transportation
19. Trains and railroad operations in neighborhoods and stopping traffic
20. Interstate 81 and its link to bringing illegal activities to Cortland
21. No homeless shelter
22. Crime; drugs, gangs, substance abuse
23. Lack of senior housing
24. Quality day care, insufficient quantity, and affordability of both running facility and enrolling child
25. Lack of judicial support with code enforcement

*Opportunities:*

1. Upper floors in downtown
2. Railroad and possibility of passenger service
3. Vacant areas and buildings in the City
4. Different housing options, more opportunity for empty nesters
5. Cooperation for better housing
6. Changing zoning; housing court
7. DESTINY development in Syracuse presents regional opportunities
8. Recreation tourism because of geography and climate
9. Tap into college resources; civic engagement
10. Rezoning for more commercial development
11. Examine city revenue stream
12. Annexation
13. Upgrade housing stock
14. Market Cortland's assets
15. Define and promote a community image
16. Energy co-op
17. Shared municipal services / consolidation
18. Creating fire districts
19. Water district

20. Town/gown relationships – intellectual capital
21. Bring South end into one unified Main Street district
22. Promote quality of Cortland schools

*Threats:*

1. Loss of ratable property, tax exempt properties
2. Loss of young people: failure to recruit
3. Deteriorating neighborhoods: families are leaving the City
4. Sprawl of student housing into stable neighborhoods
5. Neighborhood rowdiness: alcohol consumption
6. Lack of R-1 zoning
7. Water pollution
8. Social intolerance
9. Creeping crime concerns
10. Dysfunctional State legislature / NYS taxes, medical costs, state mandates
11. Energy costs
12. Loss of downtown retail
13. Department of Social Services
14. Vacant and marginally used properties
15. Delinquent taxes
16. Consolidation: loss of local control
17. Declining population
18. Future leadership with loss of younger people
19. People hanging around: poor image
20. Lack of vision by downtown store owners – hours of operation
21. College keeping kids on hill