

Erie County CCAP Transportation Chapter - Goal:

A safe, equitable, and affordable multi-modal transportation system that enhances mobility and access, phases out fossil fuel dependency, connects communities, supports a resilient supply chain, and decreases GHG emissions. - June 23, 2022

For thousands of years before European settlers arrived, the Haudenosaunee and other Indigenous people of North America understood the western New York geography as critical to the movement of people and trade throughout the region. The location and geography of what is now called Erie County remains important to the efficient transportation of people, goods and services locally, regionally, and throughout North America.

Unfortunately, the rise of the automobile and reliance on fossil fuels have resulted in a wide range of adverse environmental, social, and economic impacts. Decades of “sprawl without growth” have created land use patterns that are increasingly difficult to provide convenient, reliable, and energy efficient transportation options for, leaving our urban, suburban and rural communities disconnected. Sprawl and the expansion of auto-oriented highway and road infrastructure have also resulted in dramatic social, health, housing, and mobility inequities that primarily impact poor and minority neighborhoods.

As the impacts of climate change become increasingly evident in our region. How we choose to transport goods and services, connect people and communities, and promote energy efficient modes of transportation will determine how resilient Erie County is.

New technologies and emerging trends offer unprecedented opportunities to build a transportation system that works better for our environment and our health. Expanded and improved public transportation, electric vehicles, and ride-sharing services, as well as improved cycling and pedestrian infrastructure offer ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, make land use more efficient, and connect people to employment opportunities.

One of the lessons that the COVID-19 pandemic has made clear, is the need for more resilient logistics and supply chain networks. The supply chain is a critical element of our transportation network, and it has a direct impact on our quality of life. Developing a more resilient supply chain requires that we rethink how we integrate our economic and industrial development, workforce development, energy management, agriculture and food systems delivery, and EV infrastructure into land use decisions.

Transportation is what connects our economy, our communities, and our environment. How we develop and use our region’s transportation system is key to reducing GHG emissions and it will allow us to make the most of a seemingly bright but uncertain future.