

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

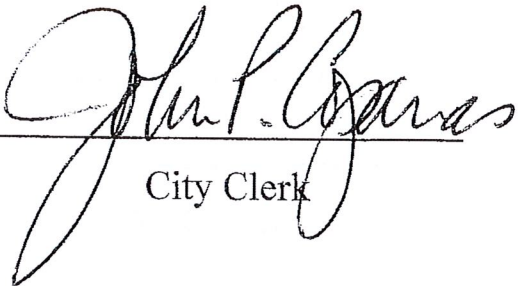
I, JOHN P. COPANAS, City Clerk of the City of Syracuse, New York do hereby certify that the attached is a true copy of an ORDINANCE:

Adopted by the Common Council on

December 2, 2019

Signed by the Mayor on

December 4, 2019

  
City Clerk

TO:

- Mayor
- Assessment Commissioner
- Aviation Commissioner
- Board of Elections
- Bureau of Accounts
- Citizen Review Board
- City Auditor
- City School District
- Code Enforcement
- Neighborhood and Business Development
- Finance Commissioner
- Corporation Counsel
- United States Congressperson
- Governor of New York State
- New York State Senate
- New York State Assembly
- New York State Senator
- Onondaga County Legislature

- Management & Budget Director
- Parks & Recreation Commissioner
- Personnel & Labor Relations Dir.
- Police Chief
- Public Works Commissioner
- Public Works/Bookkeeper
- Purchase Department
- Real Estate Division
- Research Director
- Water Department
- Zoning Administration
- United States Senator
- Department of Engineering
- Finance/Treasury
- Finance (Water Bureau)
- Fire Chief
- Grants Management Director
- Board of Education

**ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE INITIATION  
OF SCOPING FOR THE REZONE SYRACUSE-  
A CITYWIDE ZONING UPDATE- PURSUANT  
TO THE STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
REVIEW ACT (SEQRA)**

WHEREAS, adoption of a ReZone Syracuse Zoning Ordinance and Map (the ‘Project’) is an Action by the Common Council, subject to the approval of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, the Common Council on July 29, 2019, by Ordinance No. 478-2019, designated the Common Council of the City of Syracuse to act as Lead Agency relative to the proposed Project; and

WHEREAS, the Common Council on September 9, 2019, by Ordinance No. 558-2019 adopted a Positive Declaration pursuant to Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law, as amended, the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (the “SEQR Act”) and the regulations adopted pursuant thereto by the Department of Environmental Conservation of the State of New York, being 6 NYCRR Part 617, as amended (the “Regulations”), for the Project; and

WHEREAS, in furtherance of this objective, the Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency (“SOCPA”), acting on behalf of the Common Council as Lead Agency, prepared a draft Scoping Document for the Project (a copy of the draft Scoping Document is attached hereto as Exhibit “A”); and

WHEREAS, the Common Council intends that this document be submitted to the public for comment in accordance with the applicable SEQRA regulations;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED, that, subject to the approval of the Mayor, this Common Council authorizes the distribution of the attached Scoping Document for public comment with comments to be received by the Zoning Administrator in both written and electronic form by January 17, 2020; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that the Zoning Administrator, in coordination with the City Clerk, is hereby authorized to hold one or more public meetings during the aforementioned comment period in the Common Council Chambers to elicit further public comments on the draft Scoping Document; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that the Corporation Counsel, the Zoning Administrator and SOCPA are hereby authorized to take whatever steps are necessary to carry out this Ordinance and to comply with applicable SEQRA regulations and requirements for this Project; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that this Ordinance shall take effect immediately.



**Draft Scoping Document for a Draft  
Generic Environmental Impact Statement**



City of Syracuse  
Onondaga County, New York

SEQRA Lead Agency:  
City of Syracuse Common Council

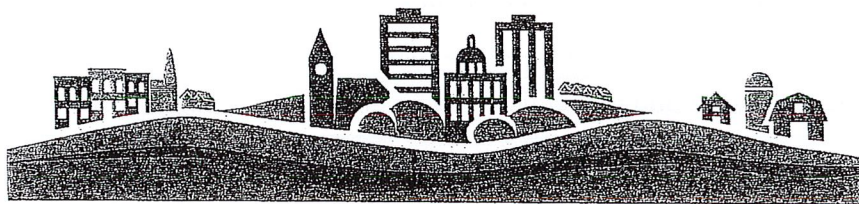
November 2019





**Ben Walsh, Mayor**

**Prepared by:**



**SYRACUSE - ONONDAGA COUNTY PLANNING AGENCY**

**City Planning Division & City Zoning Division**

**City Hall Commons  
201 East Washington Street  
Syracuse, NY 13202**

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declaration under SEQRA. The Common Council further determined that a DGEIS must be prepared.

## 1.2 Purpose of Scoping

Scoping is a required part of the SEQRA process that ensures preparation of the DGEIS focuses on potentially significant adverse impacts and eliminates consideration of those impacts that are irrelevant or not significant. These issues are determined based on a full review of the FEA, the Positive Declaration, Project documents and related plans, and relevant comments received from involved and interested agencies and the general public. Pursuant to 6 NYCRR § 617.8 of SEQRA, a scoping document should include a description of the proposed action, potentially significant adverse impacts, necessary information to address each impact, initial identification of mitigation measures, and reasonable alternatives to be considered. Prior to the issuance of a final written scope, a copy of the draft scope must be submitted to all involved or interested agencies, or interested individuals, and made available for public participation.

This draft scoping document was prepared by the Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency on behalf of the Common Council as Lead Agency under SEQRA and is being circulated for review and comment. Members of the public may provide comments concerning the draft scoping document at a public meeting to be held as follows:

(insert date, time, place)

Written comments may be presented at the public meeting or delivered to the Common Council by \_\_\_\_\_, 2019 at the following address:

(insert contact information for receipt of written comments)

The most recent proposed zoning law can be found on the ReZone Project website: <http://www.syr.gov.net/rezonesyracuse.aspx> or a copy is available at City Hall Commons in the Zoning Administration office: 201 East Washington St., Room 500.



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The ReZone Syracuse project, which includes the adoption of a new Zoning Ordinance and Map (the “ReZone”), is intended to guide the development, improvement and modification of land in the City of Syracuse to create places of specific character and performance consistent with the City’s Comprehensive Plan 2040.<sup>1</sup> While adoption of a zoning law will not result in immediate physical impacts to the environment, it will have long term impacts to the character and performance of development in the City. These long term impacts are to be considered in a Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS), to be prepared as part of the environmental review of the ReZone under New York’s State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) regulations. This draft scoping document will define and inform the content of the DGEIS. Future actions reviewed under the proposed zoning regulations will be subject to environmental review under SEQRA.

A DGEIS is able to evaluate impacts of actions that do not result in direct physical impacts, or those impacts that occur over a long period of time. Adoption of the ReZone is intended to improve the environment overall. Any legislation related to land use may also have an undesirable impact. This scoping process and the development of a DGEIS will seek to discover any unrecognized adverse environmental impacts, and describe the means necessary to mitigate those impacts.

Pursuant to Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law of the State of New York, and consequently the provisions of SEQRA, all agencies are required to “determine whether the actions they directly undertake, fund or approve may have a significant impact on the environment, and, if it is determined that the action may have a significant adverse impact, prepare or request an environmental impact statement.”

### 1.1 State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) Process

In accordance with SEQRA, the City of Syracuse Common Council reviewed the full environmental assessment form (FEAF) prepared for the ReZone, and on July 29, 2019, The Common Council determined, pursuant to 6 NYCRR § 617.4, the ReZone was a Type I action and declared its intent to act as Lead Agency for the purpose of conducting a coordinated environmental review under SEQRA. On August 7, 2019, the Common Council distributed a letter to all involved agencies regarding its intent to act as Lead Agency. No involved agencies objected to its Lead Agency designation, and the Common Council assumed the role of Lead Agency.

On September 9, 2019, the Common Council determined the adoption and implementation of the ReZone may have the potential for an adverse environmental impact and issued a positive

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<sup>1</sup> Available at: <http://www.syr.gov.net/planning.aspx>



## 2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City of Syracuse's first Zoning Ordinance and Map were adopted in 1922, at a time when the concept of regulating land use was first introduced in New York State through its enabling statutes. The City's Zoning Ordinance has been updated several times since then, but updates were typically performed in a piecemeal manner, which has created a document that is not easy to use or administer. The current Zoning Ordinance, with its strict separation of land uses, lack of effective design standards and complex administration, does not reflect the City's vision or current trends in city planning.

As a result, the City undertook a comprehensive project, ReZone Syracuse, to revise and modernize zoning for the entire City and provide the necessary regulatory tools to achieve the community's vision. The end goal of these efforts is a revised Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map that will facilitate implementation of the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan 2040<sup>2</sup> and the Syracuse Land Use & Development Plan 2040 (LUP)<sup>3</sup>.

The specific objectives of the ReZone Syracuse project are to:

- Ensure the new Zoning Ordinance and Map implement the recommendations of the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan 2040, including the Syracuse Land Use & Development Plan 2040 (LUP);
- Transition from the current use-focused, Euclidean Zoning Ordinance to an updated ordinance that incorporates principles of Form Based Codes, Smart Growth, Traditional Neighborhood Development, and Transit Oriented Development, among other current best practices;
- Develop and/or improve standards regulating urban design, urban agriculture, lighting, signage, landscaping, parking, site design, infill development, and vacant land management;
- Promote and facilitate historic preservation;
- Develop sustainable development provisions regarding: climate adaptation, renewable energy infrastructure, green building materials, and green infrastructure;
- Increase protection of natural resources, including open space, water bodies, steep slopes, and trees;
- Streamline the development review process by creating more predictable zoning regulations;
- Update the format and structure of the Zoning Ordinance to be user friendly and include illustrations and graphics;
- Remove inconsistencies, outdated language, and reduce the complexity of the Zoning Ordinance;

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<sup>2</sup> Available at: <http://www.syr.gov.net/planning.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> Available at: [http://www.syr.gov.net/land use plan.aspx](http://www.syr.gov.net/land_use_plan.aspx)

- Facilitate increased public awareness of, and participation in, zoning review and processes; and
- Increase ways to use technology to provide and receive information from the public.

## **2.1 Public Outreach**

This section will describe and summarize the public outreach efforts that have been undertaken. The project team has held approximately 90 public meetings since the beginning of the project in late 2015. These meetings have been held in churches, schools, hotels, community centers, neighborhood clubs, City Hall, libraries, among other locations. These events have provided information about the ReZone, solicited comments and ideas, and more generally provided the public with opportunities to participate in the development of the ReZone.

## **3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING, IMPACT ANALYSIS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

This section of the DGEIS will discuss the environmental setting, the potential impacts associated with adoption and implementation of the Project, and any mitigation measures that have been identified to address those potential impacts. All future projects will undertake their own environmental review for individual impacts.

Set forth below are the environmental factors that will be evaluated in the DGEIS, as well as potential impacts and mitigation measures identified to date.

### **3.1 Land**

#### **Current Status**

The City of Syracuse features a variation of land forms, ranging from rolling drumlins with steep slopes to an extensive flat valley along Onondaga Creek and Onondaga Lake. High resolution land cover data from the Chesapeake Conservancy shows the City's land cover in 2016 was comprised of 38.2% developed land, including structures, roads, and human-constructed surfaces, 30.1% tree canopy, 29.3% low vegetation, and 2.3% open water.

#### **Potential Impact**

The DGEIS will evaluate potential impacts to land associated with the adoption and implementation of the ReZone, which is expected to indirectly result in construction on, or physical alteration of, the land surface within the City of Syracuse through future development and redevelopment actions. The DGEIS will take a broader approach to assessing potential land impacts by identifying areas in the City that will likely experience an increase or decrease in land use intensity with the adoption of the proposed ReZone given expected or potential future development or redevelopment of those areas.

Additionally, the DGEIS will evaluate potential impacts concerning the removal of land from development consideration for the purposes of environmental protection of parks and other environmentally sensitive areas.

#### **Mitigation Measures**

The DGEIS will discuss mitigation measures largely pertaining to the proposed zoning regulations that will minimize impacts to land resources, or have a positive impact on the built environment. Such measures include limitations on lot coverage, the inclusion of new Development Standards, and the role the ReZone will have on avoiding environmental hazards or correcting development that has occurred in hazardous areas.



## 3.2 Flooding

### **Current Status**

There are significant floodplains in the City of Syracuse, especially along Onondaga Creek and within City parks. These areas owned by the City are currently zoned residential. There are other areas of residential development that are also in the floodplain and susceptible to flooding.

### **Potential Impact**

The DGEIS will evaluate potential flooding related impacts associated with the adoption and implementation of the ReZone proposal, specifically with respect to development activities within the floodplain.

### **Mitigation Measures**

The DGEIS will discuss potential mitigation measures and strategies concerning flooding. Such measures include the creation of the Open Space zoning district and protection of those lands from uses other than open space, as well as guiding appropriate development in and around the 100-year floodplain.

## 3.3 Plants and Animals

### **Current Status**

According to data from the NYS DEC, portions of the City may contain plant and/or animal species, or their associated habitats, which have been identified as threatened or endangered species by New York State or the federal government. These species include Midland Sedge, Reflexed Sedge, Glomerate Sedge, Straight-leaved Pondweed, Lake Sturgeon, Peregrine Falcon, Bald Eagle, Indiana Bat, and Northern Long-eared Bat.

The NYS DEC Environmental Resource Mapper shows generalized locations throughout the City where a threatened or endangered species may be present, with the greatest concentrations occurring within Onondaga Lake and the lakefront area and on the east side of the City.

### **Potential Impact**

Adoption or implementation of the ReZone proposal is expected to indirectly result in the loss of flora or fauna within the City of Syracuse through future development and redevelopment actions. However, most new development is expected to occur on previously developed sites. Given the generalized nature of available data, any adverse impacts on plants and animals are also best considered during a project-specific SEQRA review when a jurisdictional determination can be completed for a subject area. Therefore, the DGEIS will not discuss impacts to these resources.



### **Mitigation Measures**

There are no mitigation measures being considered in the DGEIS, though some of the proposed zoning regulations will help to minimize impacts to plants and animals. For example, the new Open Space district is established in the ordinance to provide adequate lands for recreational use and to protect those lands from being used for purposes other than open space. Park lands, wooded areas, and some lands adjacent to Onondaga Creek are proposed to be zoned as Open Space districts which will continue to provide habitat for plants and animals in the City.

## **3.4 Aesthetic Resources**

### **Current Status**

The City currently has limited building and site design standards, and some are only applied in certain areas. While these regulations do affect the built environment, they are not applied city-wide. Adoption and implementation of the ReZone is expected to indirectly result in changes to the aesthetic resources within the City of Syracuse through future development and redevelopment actions.

### **Potential Impact**

While the aesthetic impacts are expected to be largely positive, the DGEIS will evaluate the potential impact to aesthetic resources, and specifically the character of the built environment. The DGEIS will summarize the projected outcome of the new regulations and the differences in permitted land uses for areas that are likely to experience an increase or decrease in land use intensity.

### **Mitigation Measures**

The DGEIS will discuss mitigation measures largely pertaining to the proposed zoning regulations that will minimize impacts to aesthetic resources, or have a positive impact on the built environment. Such measures include the ReZone's new Development Standards that regulate building and site design, such as placement, orientation, materials, architectural detailing, sign standards, screening and landscaping.

## **3.5 Historic and Archeological Resources**

### **Current Status**

The City contains a number of historic and archeological resources that are either listed, or eligible for listing, on the New York State or National Register of Historic Places. Additionally, the Common Council has designated a number of properties and structures within the City to be of local historic significance as Protected Sites. The DGEIS will include a general discussion of those resources, including a map indicating the general location of such resources.

### **Potential Impact**

Adoption and implementation of the ReZone proposal may indirectly impact historic and archaeological resources within the City of Syracuse through future development and redevelopment actions. The DGEIS will compare current and proposed zoning regulations relating to proposed land uses and related impacts on the preservation of historic and archaeological resources.

### **Mitigation Measures**

The DGEIS will evaluate mitigation measures contained within the ReZone, including standard procedures and rules applicable for the review of all development and/or preservation applications, the purpose of which is to preserve and protect historic and archaeological resources.

## **3.6 Transportation**

### **Current Status**

The transportation structure of the City supports pedestrians, bicyclists, motor vehicles and rail. The DGEIS will describe the City's current transportation infrastructure, including as it relates to infrastructure and services available from public sources.

### **Potential Impact**

The DGEIS will evaluate potential impacts to transportation associated with the adoption and implementation of the ReZone, specifically with respect to changes that may occur to existing developed infrastructure from future development activities to be governed by the ReZone.

### **Mitigation Measures**

The DGEIS will evaluate mitigation measures associated with the adoption and implementation of the ReZone. Such measures include the following: zoning neighborhood business corridors in a manner to promote walkable, mixed-use business corridors adjacent to residential neighborhoods; the ability to reduce onsite parking requirements in some zoning districts; new onsite bike parking requirements; and site design standards to improve site performance and safety for all users.

## **3.7 Consistency with Community Character**

### **Current Status**

The City of Syracuse consists of a diverse array of neighborhoods, business and commercial developments, abundant parks and open space, a rejuvenated downtown, major education and health care institutions, and significant historic architecture, all located in an area with dramatic topographical changes.

### **Potential Impact**

There are no anticipated adverse environmental impacts with regard to community character. The DGEIS will discuss the potential impact to community character that may result from the adoption and implementation of the ReZone.

### **Mitigation Measures**

The DGEIS will discuss mitigation measures and strategies concerning impacts to community character. Such measures include maintaining a degree of continuity in the ReZone to maintain well established patterns of development for the majority of the City and minimize the number of parcels affected by the ReZone. The DGEIS will discuss proposed new building and site design standards that will positively affect community character and provide guidance on lighting, landscaping, site layout, building placement, storage of refuse, location of parking and loading facilities, and build-to and lot coverage requirements.



## 4.0 ENVIRONMENTALLY INSIGNIFICANT ISSUES

This section provides a brief summary of the various issues that were evaluated and deemed irrelevant or environmentally insignificant and are therefore not included among the issues to be evaluated in the DGEIS.

### 4.1 Geological Features

#### **Current Status**

The underlying geology in the City of Syracuse varies from deep unconsolidated material to bedrock outcrops. The land form varies as well and includes rolling drumlins with steep slopes to an extensive flat valley along Onondaga Creek and Onondaga Lake. The history of geology and the raw industrial resources mined in the region is interesting and has had a significant impact on land use and the environment. But those industries utilizing salt, salt peter and other minerals are no longer active. Limestone quarries are still active in the region, but not within City limits. There are no geologic features listed as a registered National Natural Landmark within the City limits.

#### **Potential Impact**

Adoption or implementation of the ReZone ordinance and zoning map is not anticipated to have an adverse impact on geological features. Therefore, the DGEIS will not discuss impacts to these resources.

#### **Mitigation Measures**

There are no mitigation measures being considered. Development projects will consider specific geologic impacts during project review, and a project specific SEQRA review.

### 4.2 Surface Water

#### **Current Status**

The City of Syracuse has numerous small streams and lakefront on Onondaga Lake. Most of the City drains to Onondaga Lake via Harbor Brook, Onondaga Creek and Ley Creek with the exception of a portion of the southeastern part of the City that drains to Meadowbrook, a tributary to Butternut Creek. Butternut Creek is a tributary of Chittenango Creek, which flows into Oneida Lake north of the City. The City of Syracuse is entirely in the Great Lakes watershed, specifically Lake Ontario. Many of the streams in the City are physically altered near Onondaga Lake where development is less residential and more intense. Combined Sewer Overflows along Onondaga Creek have historically caused catastrophic pollution of the creek and Onondaga Lake.

Despite historic pollution, the City operates extensive parkland along Onondaga Creek, and efforts to restore the creek have been succeeding. Harbor Brook, although not visible for



long stretches, is fishable and is stocked with trout. Continuing efforts to restore these urban streams will complement new development supported by ReZone.

Like the City's urban streams, Onondaga Lake has a significant history as a polluted waterbody. The cleanup of the Lake is substantially complete, and new public uses along the lake are significant. New development proposals are anticipated in the southwest corner of the lake in the City, which will be complemented by the lake.

### **Potential Impact**

Adoption or implementation of the ReZone proposal is not anticipated to have an adverse impact on surface water resources. The DGEIS will not discuss impacts to surface water.

### **Mitigation Measures**

There are no mitigation measures being considered in the DGEIS. Development projects will consider specific surface water impacts during project review, and a project specific SEQRA review. Although ReZone does not specifically require stream setbacks, the overall strategy of intensity of development does favor areas generally away from stream corridors.

Other state and local agencies have existing policies that help to minimize surface water impacts of development projects. The Onondaga County Department of Water Environment Protection operates a Save the Rain program, which is not part of zoning, but involves coordination during the project review process. The Save the Rain program seeks to strategically reduce, protect and treat stormwater runoff to streams and Onondaga Lake. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) has additional regulations for stormwater, which would also be considered during the project review process.

## **4.3 Groundwater**

### **Current Status**

The current status of groundwater resources in the City of Syracuse is unclear. The streams that exist are perennial, which means there is clearly a baseflow from groundwater. Because the City is fully served by municipal water with distant Skaneateles Lake as a primary source, there are few if any wells to give an indication of what groundwater resources exist and what their status is.

### **Potential Impact**

Though the City water supply comes from Skaneateles Lake, any primary or principal aquifers underlying the City limits may potentially be impacted by future development or redevelopment actions. However, these future groundwater impacts are best assessed at the time of the proposed action to allow for consideration of project- and site-specific details.

Adoption or implementation of the ReZone proposal is not anticipated to have an adverse impact on groundwater. The DGEIS will not discuss impacts to groundwater. Any development that occurs after adoption will be evaluated individually for groundwater impacts.

### **Mitigation Measures**

There are no mitigation measures being considered in the DGEIS. There are no land uses allowed that are anticipated to have a significant impact on groundwater resources. Much new development is expected to occur on previously developed sites. The ReZone ordinance does include some lot coverage limits which will potentially allow for groundwater recharge, landscaping standards to improve impervious surfaces, and the ability to reduce onsite parking requirements in some zoning districts that may also reduce impervious surfaces in the City.

Additionally, the Onondaga County Department of Water Environment Protection operates the Save the Rain program, which seeks to reduce, protect and treat stormwater runoff to streams and Onondaga Lake, and the NYS DEC regulates other stormwater flow during the development approval process.

## **4.4 Air**

### **Current Status**

Onondaga County is currently in attainment for all standards of the criteria air pollutants. The Clean Air Act (CAA), as amended in 1990, defines non-attainment areas (NAA) as geographic regions that have been designated as not meeting one or more of the U.S. National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). NAAQS are set for six common air pollutants, or “criteria air pollutants,” and designate the maximum allowed measurement at which each pollutant may be present in outdoor air.

When an area is designated as non-attainment by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the state is required to develop and implement a State Implementation Plan (SIP), which delineates how a state plans to achieve air quality that meets the NAAQS under the deadlines established by the CAA, and then maintain attainment status once the area is in attainment.

In 1993, the EPA re-designated the Syracuse area of Onondaga County as a maintenance area for carbon monoxide (CO). The 20-year CO air quality maintenance period for Onondaga County concluded on September 29, 2013.

### **Potential Impact**

Adoption or implementation of the ReZone ordinance and map is not anticipated to have an adverse impact on air. Therefore, the DGEIS will not discuss impacts to these resources.



## **Mitigation Measures**

There are no mitigation measures being considered in the DGEIS, partially because there are no land uses allowed that will exacerbate the City's current impact on air quality. Adoption of the ReZone ordinance and map is expected to have a moderately positive effect on air quality in the City. The Open Space district is established in the new ordinance to provide adequate lands for recreational use and to protect those lands from being used for purposes other than open space. Preservation of park lands and wooded areas in the new Open Space district, along with new development standards that encourage the preservation or addition of trees and shrubs, can help to reduce air pollutant concentrations throughout the City.

Other local efforts, such as ReLeaf Syracuse, provide greater opportunities to mitigate air quality impacts than zoning. The ongoing 2018 initiative, ReLeaf Syracuse, is a collaborative effort by the City's Forestry Division, Onondaga Earth Corps, and a steering committee to develop an urban forest master plan with 5- and 20-year tree canopy goals for the City. Expansions in urban forest cover can remove pollutants from the air and reduce fossil fuel consumption and resultant pollution emissions by shading buildings.

## **4.5 Agricultural Resources**

### **Current Status**

The City of Syracuse is largely developed with minimal land areas currently being used for agriculture. High resolution land cover data from the Chesapeake Conservancy shows the City's land cover in 2016 was comprised of 38.2% developed land, including structures, roads, and human-constructed surfaces, 30.1% tree canopy, 29.3% low vegetation, and 2.3% open water. While the low vegetation class includes areas such as tilled fields, it is far more likely to be dominated by lawns and natural ground cover in the City given the existing pattern of development.

Agricultural resources in the City are more common on a much smaller scale and include a number of community gardens, personal gardens, and even a 6-acre urban farm. The City's current and proposed Zoning Ordinance does not include an agricultural zoning district, and no lands in the City limits are enrolled in a NYS-certified Agricultural District. There are a number of local organizations and programs, such as the Greater Syracuse Land Bank's Green Lots Grant Program, and Syracuse Grows, which work to support urban food production.

### **Potential Impact**

As there are limited agricultural resources within the City limits and in the immediate surrounding area, as well as a limited amount of undeveloped land available for cultivation, adoption or implementation of the ReZone ordinance and map is not anticipated to have an adverse impact on agricultural resources and will not be discussed in the DGEIS.

However, the proposed Zoning Ordinance includes regulations to encourage urban agriculture which would presumably have a positive impact on agricultural resources by better supporting existing operations and encouraging more small-scale agricultural uses within the City.

### **Mitigation Measures**

There are no mitigation measures being considered.

## **4.6 Open Space and Recreation**

### **Current Status**

The City has many areas of public open space, wooded areas, parks and recreational areas. Many of these areas are currently zoned residential as there is no open space or recreational zoning district in the current zoning ordinance.

### **Potential Impact**

The ReZone proposal designates all City Parks and other publicly owned open space and recreation areas in a new Open Space zone. The purpose of this zone is to create zoning regulations that fit the uses found in these places. The new zone takes into consideration both public and private uses that occur in parks, and the facilities that support them and other open space uses.

Adoption or implementation of the ReZone proposal is not anticipated to result in a loss of recreational opportunities or a reduction of an open space resource due to the creation of a specific Open Space zone. The DGEIS will not discuss impacts to open space and recreation resources.

### **Mitigation Measures**

The DGEIS will not discuss mitigation measures, as the proposed zoning regulations are anticipated to have either no or positive impacts on open space and recreational resources. The Open Space district is established in the ordinance to provide adequate lands for recreational use and to protect those lands from being used for purposes other than open space. Park lands, wooded areas, and some lands adjacent to Onondaga Creek are proposed to be zoned as Open Space districts which will continue to provide recreational areas, habitat for plants and animals, and open space for public use.

## **4.7 Critical Environmental Areas**

### **Current Status**

There are no Critical Environmental Areas (CEA) in the City of Syracuse. Critical Environmental Areas are a function of the State Environmental Quality Review Act where a local jurisdiction recommends a mapped area as a CEA to the Director of the NYS DEC. The Director then approves or disapproves the CEA designation.



### **Potential Impact**

Adoption or implementation of the ReZone proposal will not have an adverse impact on any CEAs. Therefore, the DGEIS will not discuss impacts to CEAs.

### **Mitigation Measures**

No mitigation measures are necessary.

## **4.8 Energy**

### **Current Status**

Energy use in Syracuse is a typically complicated mix of residential, commercial and institutional demand for heating and cooling as well as energy demands for transportation. The electrical grid is owned and managed by National Grid. The region is served by a variety of power generating facilities including a natural gas cogeneration facility in the City, a defunct natural gas cogeneration facility just outside the City in East Syracuse, and nuclear power plants in Oswego. There are a growing number of solar facilities in Onondaga County, but a limited number of passive solar installations related to specific buildings within the City. There are no significant wind energy installations in the City or Onondaga County, but there are large wind energy facilities in the region. Hydropower stations are located in the region most significantly along the Oswego River north of the City. Just over the City border in the Town of Onondaga there is the Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency which recycles waste and incinerates what cannot be recycled. The incineration process powers steam turbines to generate electricity.

### **Potential Impact**

Adoption or implementation of the ReZone proposal is not anticipated to have an adverse impact on energy resources. The DGEIS will discuss impacts to energy in order to identify existing and potential mitigation measures related to zoning. There are no indications that the region may experience trouble meeting the demand of energy due to the policies represented in the ReZone proposal. Nor are there any anticipated issues with the capacity of transmission facilities that import or export energy to the City and region.

The impacts that the ReZone proposal could have are related to the type of development allowed (mixed-use versus single-use buildings, one-story versus multiple-story buildings etc.) and transportation related to future development patterns (reliance on automobiles, patterns of development that deter transit options, excessive surface parking, etc.).

### **Mitigation Measures**

The proposed zoning ordinance contains regulations that will positively affect energy usage in the City. These include zoning neighborhood business corridors in a manner to promote walkable, mixed use business corridors adjacent to residential neighborhoods, which may reduce vehicle miles traveled and carbon emissions. Further, considering the age of many City buildings, the proposed ordinance encourages energy conservation and the

conservation of natural and material resources through the rehabilitation and reuse of the City's existing building stock and infrastructure. The encouragement of multi-story buildings is not only following tradition. Multi-story multiple use buildings are vastly more energy efficient than single story, single use buildings.

## 4.9 Noise, Odor, and Light

### **Current Status**

The regulation of noise, odor and light is not limited to the zoning ordinance. Generally the City's Noise ordinance would control noise, and light and odor may be controlled by both the NYS building code and the zoning ordinance.

### **Potential Impact**

Adoption or implementation of the ReZone proposal is not anticipated to have an adverse impact on Noise, Odor or Light. The DGEIS will discuss these impacts in order to identify existing and potential mitigation measures related to zoning.

### **Mitigation Measures**

The proposed zoning ordinance includes design standards for site lighting, and other development standards controlling the storage of refuse and separation of incompatible uses. The ReZone proposal also includes extensive design standards which seek to regulate the impact that new buildings have on existing buildings.

## 4.10 Human Health

### **Current Status**

The urban renewal period had devastating impacts on many upstate cities, especially downtowns. Syracuse is no exception to the substantial impacts of urban renewal and the auto-oriented suburbanization of our cities. Syracuse's downtown is a walkable generally people-friendly environment. This is largely through preservation of the street grid and the many historic buildings in the downtown core. Over time buildings have been taken down with only a surface parking lot to remain, but Syracuse's downtown is overall a very walkable, pleasant and vibrant urban core. The orientation of the buildings to the sidewalk with regular public spaces and parks, well-maintained sidewalks, and street trees maintains a more traditional fabric that is ultimately a benefit to human health, and helps to explain why downtown is experiencing significant residential development.

The other "main street" areas in the City have the same human-scale development that serves nearby neighborhoods, and contributes to a fabric of community in the City that is unique. Eastwood, Westcott, South Ave, South Salina, West Genesee, Tipperary Hill, North Salina, and Butternut all have their own unique character and increase livability in the City.



### **Potential Impact**

Adoption or implementation of the ReZone proposal is not anticipated to have an adverse impact on human health. The DGEIS will discuss impacts to human health in order to identify existing and potential mitigation measures related to zoning.

Because ReZone is intended to be a full replacement of the current zoning ordinance, the potential impact of this legislation on human health should be discussed. A critical evaluation of the mitigation measures included in the law should be examined. The reason this is critical is to recognize the possibility that adoption of a new zoning ordinance can very easily result in impacts to human health. In fact, legally, zoning is considered one of the “police powers” that are necessary to insure the “health, safety, and welfare” of the public and granted to states by the 10<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

### **Mitigation Measures**

The proposed zoning ordinance contains regulations that will positively contribute to public health in the City, which will be described more fully in the DGEIS. These include zoning neighborhood business corridors in a manner to promote walkable, mixed use business corridors adjacent to residential neighborhoods. Additionally, the Open Space district is established in the proposed ordinance to provide adequate lands for recreational use and to protect those lands from being used for purposes other than open space. Park lands, wooded areas, and some lands adjacent to Onondaga Creek are proposed to be zoned as Open Space districts which will continue to provide recreational areas, habitat for plants and animals, and open space for public use.

## **4.11 Consistency with Community Plans**

### **Current Status**

The ReZone project was initiated by adoption of the Comprehensive Plan 2040 and has accomplished its project goals to:

- Ensure the new Zoning Ordinance and Map implement the recommendations of the City’s adopted Comprehensive Plan 2040, including the Syracuse Land Use & Development Plan 2040 (LUP);
- Transition from the current use-focused, Euclidean Zoning Ordinance to an updated ordinance that incorporates principles of Form Based Codes, Smart Growth, Traditional Neighborhood Development, and Transit Oriented Development, among other current best practices;
- Develop and/or improve standards regulating urban design, urban agriculture, lighting, signage, landscaping, parking, site design, infill development, and vacant land management;
- Promote and facilitate historic preservation;
- Develop sustainable development provisions regarding: climate adaptation, renewable energy infrastructure; green building materials, and green infrastructure;



- Increase protection of natural resources, including open space, water bodies, steep slopes, and trees;
- Streamline the development review process by creating more predictable zoning regulations;
- Update the format and structure of the Zoning Ordinance to be user friendly and include illustrations and graphics;
- Remove inconsistencies, outdated language, and reduce the complexity of the Zoning Ordinance;
- Facilitate increased public awareness of, and participation in, zoning review and processes; and
- Increase ways to use technology to provide and receive information from the public.

The adoption of the ReZone ordinance and map will further many goals in the community and have a positive impact overall. It is important to view this as one step in achieving a great variety of goals in the City.

### **Potential Impact**

Adoption or implementation of the ReZone proposal is not anticipated to have an adverse impact on the goals set out in various community plans. The DGEIS will not discuss impact to community plans but will discuss the consistency of the document with plans overall.

### **Mitigation Measures**

There are no mitigation measures necessary.

## **4.12 Climate Change**

### **Current Status**

Though climate change is not directly identified within Part 2 of the Environmental Assessment Form, the Lead Agency finds impacts to climate change to be an important item for consideration as part of this scoping document.

The Sustainability Plan<sup>4</sup> is one component of the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan 2040,<sup>5</sup> which "identifies recommendations for improving the sustainability of municipal operations, and for ensuring the resilience of the Syracuse community." The plan was developed as part of a larger sustainability initiative to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and reduce the City's energy consumption in an effort to mitigate the City's impact on the climate.

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<sup>4</sup> Available at: [http://www.syracuse.ny.us/uploadedFiles/Departments/Planning\\_and\\_Sustainability/Content/Sustainability%20Plan%2009-29-12.pdf](http://www.syracuse.ny.us/uploadedFiles/Departments/Planning_and_Sustainability/Content/Sustainability%20Plan%2009-29-12.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Available at: <http://www.syr.gov.net/planning.aspx>

A greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory was completed by the City in 2010, as part of the larger sustainability initiative, and compared to a previous inventory from 2002. Results of the inventory showed 2% (community) and 20% (municipal operations) reductions in carbon dioxide emissions from 2002 to 2010.

The ReZone Syracuse project is being funded by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). The project will promote and encourage development and appropriate density along existing transportation corridors within the City. This is expected to reduce the vehicle miles traveled in the City, and subsequently reduce GHG emissions in the City.

### **Potential Impact**

No increase in the City's existing impact on climate change is expected with adoption of the ReZone ordinance and map. Moreover, the proposed zoning regulations and resultant pattern of development are anticipated to provide positive benefits to the City, which will help to reduce GHG emissions and energy consumption, and improve the resiliency of the community. The proposed zoning regulations that are likely to help minimize the City's impact on climate change will be described in the DGEIS.

### **Mitigation Measures**

As the ReZone proposal is expected to have a positive impact on climate change, there will be no mitigation measures discussed in the DGEIS.

## **5.0 REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES**

The DGEIS will include a description and evaluation of the range of reasonable alternatives to adoption of the zoning law created from the ReZone project. The following alternatives will be evaluated:

- 1) No action.
- 2) Partial adoption.

## **6.0 CRITERIA FOR FURTHER EVALUATION**

The DGEIS will establish criteria for any subsequent SEQRA review of future actions that will be undertaken within the City of Syracuse. Future SEQRA review of a particular project may be restricted to issues that were not assessed or are site specific and which were not fully evaluated in the DGEIS.