Goal:

An enhanced Information Technology infrastructure system in Sullivan County that supports the County's broader goals by improving communication, public services and access to technology.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

There is a perception that Information Technology in Sullivan County is not available, however, there is more going on in this field than is realized. An emerging fiber optic network is expanding. The Sullivan County Government has a fiber network that has significant capabilities and is comparable to adjacent counties.

What is missing, however, is a countywide infrastructure system that is inter-connected, supports the Sullivan 2020 goals and establishes a cost effective network that benefits the County and municipalities alike. An IT infrastructure system incorporates software, hardware, the physical components of technology with the essential training and access to data. Creating a regional hub with spokes that reach out to the towns, villages and rural areas of the County can provide the backbone for economic development and the ability to leverage investments made.

There are many gaps throughout the County where connections have not been realized. Access to Information Technology is vital to Sullivan County's changing image, lifestyle and economy. A diversifying economy is desired so the County can attract quality industrial and corporate parks, offices and second home owners, all of whom would be influenced by the availability of a well-developed Information Technology infrastructure. This IT system should provide access to data by the municipalities, organizations and individuals as well as the County. It must be tied to and supported by zoning and other land use practices, economic development policies and techniques, including shovel-ready sites, and open space preservation.

Existing residents will also benefit from an expanded IT infrastructure. Many residents do not have the skills, knowledge and abilities to understand and utilize the opportunities available from the digital world. Residents may need assistance and training to fully access and make use of computer software and technology. Easy access to the internet can offer residents and second home buyers the opportunity to access better paying jobs in the New York metropolitan area while enabling them to benefit from the assets in Sullivan County.

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STRATEGY 3.1

Promote regional cooperation in the formation of an Information Technology infrastructure countywide.

Timeframe

SHORT TERM

INTERMEDIATE

LONG TERM

Steps	Leadership Role (C/M/P)	Status (A/P/C)
Foster partnerships with the private sector, non-profit organizations, government entities, BOCES, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Sullivan County Community College, among others	C/M/P	
Hold a symposium to update Sullivan 2020 strategies to develop a comprehensive Countywide IT system including goals, objectives and action steps to accomplish them.	C/M/P	
Develop a pilot study for connecting IT capabilities of a municipality, such as Liberty, with the County.	C/M	
Provide training sessions to maintain and upgrade computer skills for County and local Employees.	C	
Spread Internet literacy to local citizens through outreach programs to make Information Technology accessible to every household in the County.	C/P	
Set up a virtual business incubator program providing technical assistance and business management advice to home-based and small business startups in each community.	P	
Maintain the IT infrastructure and standards to ensure the feasibility of current and future IT projects and the achievement of common goals with comprehensive solutions.	C	
Provide adequate security options to prevent misuse and ensure a reliable system.	C	

Leadership Role: C – County   M – Municipality   P – Partners
Status: A – Active   P – Pending   C – Complete

Resources

Documents
- ◈ **"Tap the Internet to Build Public Participation"** Planning Commissioner Journal, #51, Summer 2003.
- ◈ **"How the Information Revolution is Shaping Our Communities"** Planning Commissioner Journal, #24, Fall 1996.
- ◈ **"Taking on Telecommunications Planning in Your Community"** Planning Commissioners Journal #27, Summer 1997.
- ◈ **High Speed Internet in Sullivan County: "A Basic Examination of the Possibilities of High-Speed Connections in Sullivan County, NY";** produced by Stephen J. Bachop; March-April 2005.
- ◈ **E-Government**. PAS 525. Maria Manta Conroy and Jennifer Evans-Cowley.

Organizations and Programs
- ◈ *USDA Rural Development* - www.rurdev.usda.gov
  This agency is committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in all of rural America.
- ◈ *Information Technology Association of America* - www.itaa.org
  This association offers a wide assortment of public policy, business development and peer to peer networking programs.

Funding Sources
- ◈ *USDA Rural Development Telecommunications Program*
  www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/index.htm

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STRATEGY 3.2

Expand and upgrade the fiber optic, wireless fidelity (wi-fi), and telecommunications infrastructure to ensure availability in town centers, industrial and corporate parks, motels, resorts and residential neighborhoods.

Timeframe

SHORT TERM

INTERMEDIATE

LONG TERM

Steps	Leadership Role (C/M/P)	Status (A/P/C)
Provide incentives and tax-breaks to fiber-optic companies for expanding their business operations to include Sullivan County's towns, villages and hamlets.	C/M	
Examine ways of using "IT incentives" in the sizing and sighting of future commercial and industrial sites, shovel ready sites, and residential developments.	C/M/P	
Encourage the underground placement of existing wired facilities, thus supporting a more reliable Information Technology infrastructure.	C/M	
Maximize the use of the public rights-of-way and public easements to support multiple system applications including IT facilities.	C/M	

Leadership Role: C – County   M – Municipality   P – Partners
Status: A – Active   P – Pending   C – Complete

Resources

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- ❖ *NYCwireless* - www.nycwireless.net
  A non-profit organization that advocates and enables the growth of free, public wireless Internet access in New York City and surrounding areas.

Funding Sources
- ❖ *USDA Rural Development Telecommunications Program*
  www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/index.htm

Other
- ❖ The **Blackburg Electronic Village** started as an outreach project of Virginia Tech, and serves the local community to develop 21st economic development initiatives. www.bev.net/about/index.php

Goal:

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STRATEGY 3.3

Improve the County Government IT systems to increase effectiveness of agency operations and make services available to municipalities and residents.

Timeframe
SHORT TERM
INTERMEDIATE
LONG TERM

Steps	Leadership Role (C/M/P)	Status (A/P/C)
Identify independent Information Technology needs within County agencies that must be developed simultaneously, such as: • Upgrade the Police Department's communications and reporting systems. • Implement communications and computer systems for public transit. • Develop and enhance the Planning Department's GIS to incorporate web-based applications, such as a centralized real property data and building permit system. • Assist Code Enforcement officers by providing them with computerized records of violations. • Provide computerized scheduling for services by the Department of Public Works.	C/M	
Prioritize needs and support investment in them	C/M	

Leadership Role: C – County   M – Municipality   P – Partners
Status: A – Active   P – Pending   C – Complete

Resources

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