

# TRANSFORMATIONAL

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LEADING THE ECONOMIC RENAISSANCE OF NEW YORK'S SMALL CITIES AND RURAL COMMUNITIES  
NORTH COUNTRY REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL  
STRATEGIC PLAN



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# I

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Executive Summary

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# THE VISION

The North Country Will Lead The  
Economic Renaissance Of New York  
State's Small Cities And Rural Communities.

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**WE WILL**

*ENERGIZE OUR MICROPOLITAN CITIES, BUILDING ON GROWTH IN THE AEROSPACE, TRANSIT EQUIPMENT, DEFENSE, BIOTECH, AND MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES.*

*ATTRACT AND NURTURE ENTREPRENEURIAL PIONEERS TO CULTIVATE INNOVATIVE CLUSTERS IN OUR RURAL COMMUNITIES.*

*MOBILIZE THE CREATIVITY AND CAPACITY OF THE GRADUATES OF OUR OUTSTANDING PLACES OF HIGHER EDUCATION.*

*CATALYZE THE HIGHEST PER CAPITA RATE OF SMALL BUSINESS START-UPS IN THE STATE.*

*ELEVATE GLOBAL RECOGNITION OF THE REGION AS ONE OF THE SPECIAL PLACES ON THE PLANET TO VISIT, LIVE, WORK AND STUDY.*

*ACTIVATE TOURISM AS A DRIVER TO DIVERSIFY OUR ECONOMIES.*

*PROPAGATE AN AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION AS WE HELP FEED THE REGION AND THE WORLD.*

*CREATE THE GREENEST ENERGY ECONOMY IN THE STATE.*

## ***New York State's Economic Renaissance***

■ NEW YORK STATE'S ECONOMIC RENAISSANCE depends as much on the vibrancy of its small cities and rural communities as it does on its large cities. The North Country Regional Economic Development Council (NCREDC) is prepared to lead a rural renaissance, leveraging its own natural and human capital with State and private investment. The region is geographically the largest in New York with a relatively low population density, making it the perfect location for investments that will result in transformational returns. With the combination of a much-sought-after quality of life, a rich and abundant natural resource base and entrepreneurial and talented people, the North Country is ripe for the kind of thoughtful and targeted investment that will secure its local economies for generations and help re-establish the Empire State's role as a global leader.

In addition to the two micropolitan hubs of Plattsburgh and Watertown, which anchor the east and west sides of the region, the North Country has access to unique resources that will attract people and private investment to the region. The tourism industry, with its potential market of 120 million people within a day's drive, the 200 miles of international border connecting New York's North Country and Canada, the large military presence at Fort Drum, the growing clean energy industry and long-standing agricultural businesses, the growth of manufacturing along the I-87 and I-81 corridors and innovations at the region's ten institutions of higher learning will, collectively, serve as the catalyst to drive economic development in the North Country. They will also, in turn, continue to transform North Country communities into great places to live and visit and attract the additional public and private investment that will diversify the economy and spur job creation.

Actualizing this Vision will create family-sustaining jobs and build an innovative economy,

capitalizing on our abundant natural capital – pristine waters, productive forests and agricultural lands, the splendor of the Adirondacks, and our dynamic international border.

### ***Three Macro Strategies***

■ THREE MACRO STRATEGIES will guide the Council on the pathway to attain its Vision. First, we will increase and retain jobs in industries that export products and import dollars, including traditional value-added manufacturing and agricultural jobs as well as jobs in sectors including tourism, biotech and renewable energy. Second, we will build wealth in the region by strengthening existing resources, building capacity and fostering entrepreneurial opportunities. Third, we will leverage the North Country's economic development strategy in order to contribute a significant portion to the resurgence of New York State's economy through increased jobs and the tax revenues the newly created jobs will generate.

### ***Achieving the Vision***

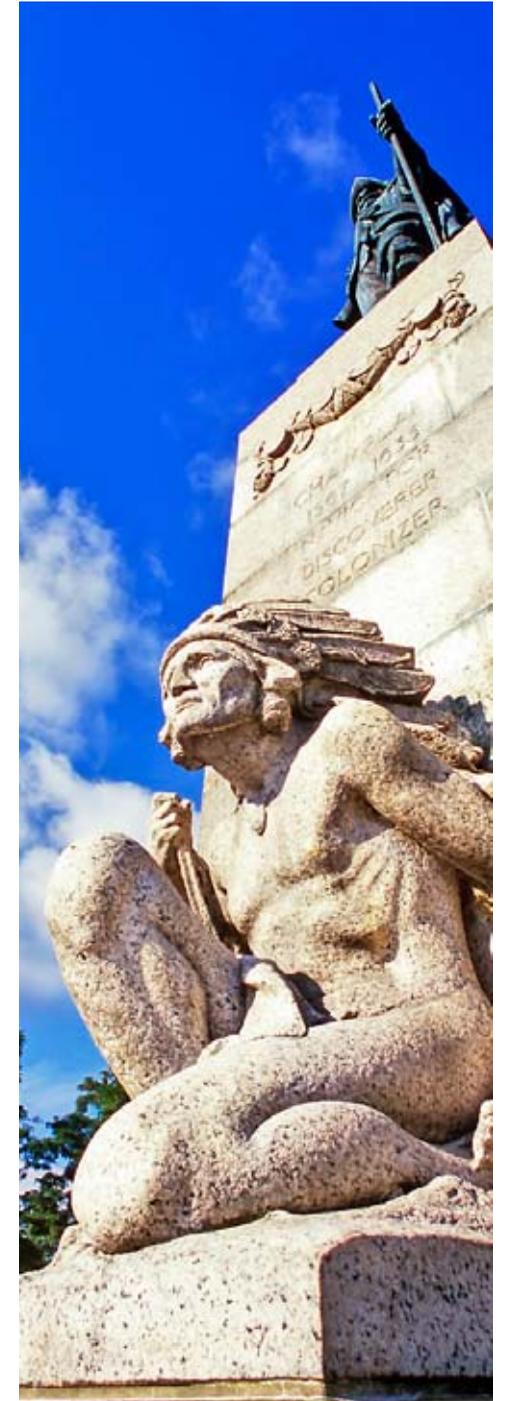
■ TO ACHIEVE ITS VISION, the Council's work will capitalize on the region's shared assets: the iconic 1000 Islands and Adirondacks; the opportunities presented by the border with Canada; some of the best clean water resources in the Northeast; significant agricultural and forest reserves; abundant "clean" energy; incomparable four-season recreational opportunities and its talented labor pool and entrepreneurial population.

Throughout the planning process, in meetings with hundreds of North Country residents, leaders and representatives of diverse organizations, the NCREDC confirmed that the opportunities for economic growth as well as the challenges are similar throughout the seven counties that crown New York State. Recognizing and building on the North Country's shared assets, the NCREDC acknowledges that there are also shared challenges across the region and has addressed them in its Strategic Plan. Because of its smaller popu-

lation, the impacts of job loss, population shifts, and declines in manufacturing and changes in the agricultural economy are exacerbated. The State's regulatory burden also serves as a disproportionately harsh deterrent to business development in the communities of the North Country, which often do not have the resources necessary to assist would-be developers or entrepreneurs. Aging infrastructure or infrastructure that cannot support additional development; the seasonality of many businesses; lodging, amenities and the visual appearance of many communities not up to the most modern standards; transportation challenges and lack of broadband and cell phone coverage in some places are key impediments to business development and progress in the North Country.

The NCREDC's Vision and strategies put into place the mechanisms to attract private investment to revitalize and diversify communities and to create a climate that will allow entrepreneurs to flourish. The NCREDC has examined future employment trends and sees opportunities to improve the job prospects of its residents in the areas of manufacturing, biotech, defense, tourism, higher education, clean energy and agriculture. These opportunities need to be carefully considered so that the strategies adopted have the power to actualize the regional Vision, while preserving the unique character of North Country communities, which is a key to attracting future private investments, visitors and residents.

Because of the many scattered small communities and areas of sparse population that characterize the North Country region, it will be critical to employ strategies that promote and facilitate connectivity between communities. Not all communities will be able to offer every service and product to support business ventures, but by developing and emphasizing intelligent connections between communities, the Council believes it can create a critical mass that entices private investment.



## Strategies

■ THE NCREDC HAS OUTLINED an array of comprehensive strategies to achieve its Vision, guided by broad-based public participation and driving towards a transformed economy in the North Country.

Workforce development supporting the needs of targeted small, medium and large business clusters, expansion of the vendor base for manufacturing facilities, assuring the long term viability of Fort Drum as a premier national defense asset and fostering the development of small businesses based on regional resources are included in the proposed strategies to support business investment and growth in our smaller and larger communities.

Generating incentives for collaborative re-

petitive sports destination will enable the region's large tourism industry to spawn business investment and entrepreneurial spin-offs.

Expanding processing, storage and distribution capacity in the food economy, expanding direct marketing by local farmers to restaurants, institutions and other outlets and offering technical education and business training to both young and seasoned farmers to increase the quantity and diversity of agricultural products are among the tools that will drive the region's agricultural revolution.

Building energy networks to better link clean energy sources to the grid, encouraging adaptive reuse of existing structures and new residential construction in and near villages and hamlets, launching energy efficiency programs

housing options, fostering a vibrant arts culture, improving efficiencies in local governments and transforming regional self perceptions.

## Implementation Plan

■ THE NCREDC HAS DEVELOPED a regional implementation agenda based on a comprehensive public participation process. This includes a prescribed and detailed plan for considering, selecting and funding priority projects in an objective and timely manner and developing a pipeline of worthy projects for future consideration. The Council has also adopted a plan to evaluate and endorse Consolidated Funding Applications (CFAs), including procedures to deal with potential conflicts of interest on the

ects can also be considered as soon as they are ready.

A Priority Project Selection Committee, appointed by the NCREDC's co-chairs, evaluates and prioritizes a list of potentially transformational projects based on project submissions made to the Council's Executive Director. These projects are listed in Section V of this Plan.

Additionally, the Council adopted a three-tiered performance measurement system that uses recognized databases and data to evaluate the progress the Plan's strategies have made toward achieving the NCREDC Vision. ■



search and entrepreneurial activity between the North Country's educational institutions, attracting students from around the world and ensuring diverse career path opportunities for graduates are the primary underpinnings of the increased role of the North Country's institutions of higher learning in achieving the Vision.

Creating and implementing a transformational brand that powerfully communicates the assets and opportunities in the North Country, adds value to its products and develops place-specific plans for economic development and marketing across our communities will elevate global recognition of the region.

Increasing world-class tourism infrastructure across the region and building on the North Country's international image as a recreational and com-

to reduce total housing and energy costs and investing in large and small clean energy technology businesses, including biomass, will engender the cleanest energy economy in the State.

And finally, the NCREDC has outlined key elements that need to be in place to set the stage for this growth. Those elements include actively and aggressively broadening and deepening its already powerful economic relationships with Ontario and Quebec; supporting State and regional efforts and initiatives to plan, design and fund long-term federal projects; strengthening local communities through downtown development and hamlet revitalization, encouraging young people to choose the North Country, providing diverse affordable

part of Council members. This five-year Strategic Plan will be reviewed annually and revised, as needed.

## The Projects

■ PROPOSED PROJECTS are scored based on their alignment with the Plan, with an eye to positive regional outcomes. In order for a project to win Council support as a priority project, the project will need to address the Council's guidelines for transformative and transformational projects and demonstrate how it advances the regional Vision. Although an initial priority projects list is included as part of this Plan, it is the Council's intention that a project could also rise from a lower priority to a higher priority if circumstances change and that new proj-





# III

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## Where Are We Now?

*Regional Assessment of Existing Conditions  
& Economic Opportunities*

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### ***What is the North Country?***

■ THE NORTH COUNTRY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REGION is geographically the largest region in the State, consisting of seven counties (Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence) covering 11,420 square miles. The region stretches across northern New York from the eastern shore of Lake Ontario to the western edge of Lake Champlain, and from the international border with Canada in the north through the Adirondacks in the south.

The North Country is home to 238 communities (including towns, villages, cities and unincorporated hamlets) with populations ranging from the approximately 125 year-round residents on Wellesley Island on the St. Lawrence River, to 27,023 residents in the City of Watertown (2010 Census). Unlike other regions in the State, the North Country does not include a major population center or dominant metropolitan city. Rather, communities scattered throughout the region such as Canton, Lake Placid, Massena, Lowville, Plattsburgh, Saranac Lake and Watertown, serve as micropolitan hubs of population, culture, industry and commerce, offering many of the business attractions and community amenities of their larger counterparts. However, like regions with a dominant metropolitan region, diverse and vibrant manufacturing, farming, education, ecotourism and retail activities can be found in many of the villages, towns and hamlets dotting the seven county region. ■

## Unique natural features

■ The region is internationally recognized for four unique natural features: the Adirondack Park, the 1000 Islands/St. Lawrence River, Lake Champlain, and Tug Hill Plateau.

### THE ADIRONDACK PARK

■ The Adirondack Park is the largest publicly protected area in the contiguous United States. It has been a mecca for visitors, four-season recreationalists and those seeking a unique lifestyle for well over a century. Approximately six (6) million acres in size, the Park is comparable in size to the entire State of Vermont.

Forty-eight percent of the land inside the Adirondack Park belongs to the people of New York and is constitutionally protected to remain a “forever wild” forest preserve. The remaining 52% is private land that includes family homes, businesses and farms as well as settlements, and timber lands.

The Adirondack Park is home to world famous Lake Placid; the only community in the State to twice host the Winter Olympic Games (1932 and 1980). Olympic facilities include downhill skiing at Whiteface Mountain, which has a vertical drop of 3,430 feet; the greatest vertical drop east of the Rockies. Continued investments in Lake Placid’s Olympic training facilities have allowed the region to remain at the forefront for national and international sports training and competitions.

### THE ST LAWRENCE RIVER

■ The St. Lawrence River flows along the northern shore of the region and serves as a critical recreation, transportation and hydropower resource. Flowing between the shores of New York and the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, the river is home to the 1000 Islands vacation destination and serves as the shipping corridor for vessels traveling between the Great Lakes and the Atlantic Ocean.

As a managed river, the St. Lawrence also generates hydropower at a New York Power Authority facility in Massena, producing over 900,000 kilowatts of electricity annually. This abundance of competitively-priced, renewable and non-polluting energy is the cornerstone of the Vision of the region to lead the State in developing additional renewable energy resources.

### LAKE CHAMPLAIN

■ Often referred to as the “sixth Great Lake,” Lake Champlain straddles the New York/Vermont border and stretches 125 miles north-to-south. It has been a vital transportation link, as well as an important historical, cultural and recreational asset in the North Country for 400 years. Several key ferry and bridge crossings provide access to Burlington, Vermont and points east.

### TUG HILL PLATEAU

■ Situated between Lake Ontario and the Adirondacks, the Tug Hill Plateau encompasses roughly 2,000 square miles, and includes areas of Jefferson and Lewis Counties. The Tug Hill Plateau’s elevation and position with respect to Lake Ontario results in an average annual snowfall in excess of 200 inches - the greatest amount of snowfall east of the Rocky Mountains. Due to this dramatic winter weather, Tug Hill is a popular snowmobiling destination and offers an extensive seasonal trail system. Tug Hill’s proximity to Lake Ontario has also created contiguous areas of Class 3 winds, and has led to the development of the Maple Ridge wind farm facility, the largest commercial wind project in New York State.

## Native American Communities

■ The North Country is also home to two Native American settlements, one of which is state and federally-recognized. The St. Regis Mohawk Reservation, known by its residents as Akwesasne, is home to approximately 8,200 persons. The US-Canadian international border runs through the reservation, which includes land in Franklin County, and the Canadian provinces of Ontario and Quebec. The portion of the reservation in New York totals more than 14,000 acres, and the Tribe’s US population is approximately 4,500.

Ganieneh is a Mohawk community situated on 600 acres at Miner Lake, outside the Town of Altona in Clinton County. In 1977, the State of New York granted use of the land to this Mohawk community through an intermediary trust. Unlike the ten native reservations in the State, the jurisdictional relationships between the tribe and New York have not been defined at this territory.

## Economic Profile

■ The North Country region is the least populous of the State’s 10 economic development regions with 433,193 residents, and benefits from the lowest population density of any other region in the State. Despite its small population base, the region remains a desirable area in which to settle. The region has experienced a nearly 2% increase in population since 2000 when many other regions of New York lost population or had population growth that remained flat.

In 2009, residents between the ages of 5 and 19 years old represented the largest age cohort in

the region. The region benefits from a fairly high influx of young adults to both Fort Drum and to its ten colleges and universities. This infusion of youth means that the region is the second youngest of New York State’s 10 economic development regions in terms of average age of residents.

### A RESILIENT LOCAL ECONOMY

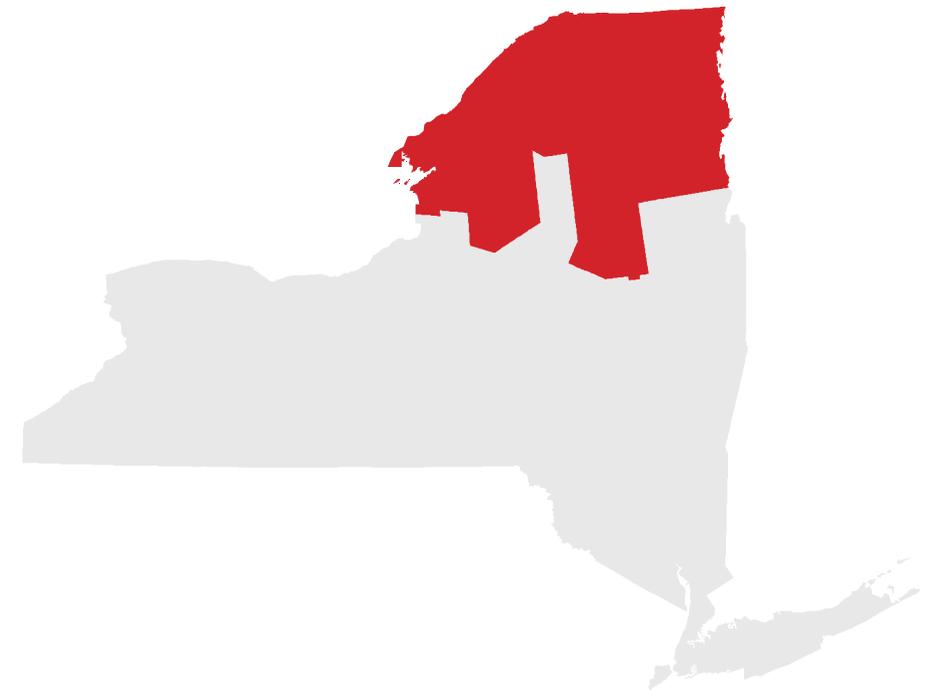
■ The presence of a strong agricultural base and the highest per capita number of small businesses in the State has helped make the region somewhat resistant to the economic turmoil that has gripped much of the rest of the State and the country in recent years. The residents tend to be both pragmatic and resourceful and demonstrate a strong entrepreneurial spirit.

Given the nature of start-up/small business development and the above average employment in resource-based and farm economies, American Community Survey (ACS) data for the region also reveals that:

- Average household income is \$54,318, the lowest of all regions in the State;
- Per capita income is \$21,211 – the lowest of all regions in the State at 69% of the per capita income for New York State as a whole (\$30,634);
- 14.8% of the population (58,181) lives below the poverty level, the third highest regional figure in the State, following the Southern Tier (14.9%) and New York City (18.6%).

### COST OF LIVING

■ However the aggregate income of the region remains high relative to the opportunity to spend it and, in general, the cost of living compared to many other regions in the State remains relatively low. The average median existing home purchase price within the region (\$116,400) is about \$100,000 less than the statewide median. Likewise, four counties in the region ranked in the top 10 for having the lowest per capita tax collection rates in the State.



## Existing Infrastructure

### BROADBAND

Broadband access is generally available in the population centers of the region, but less so in the more rural areas.

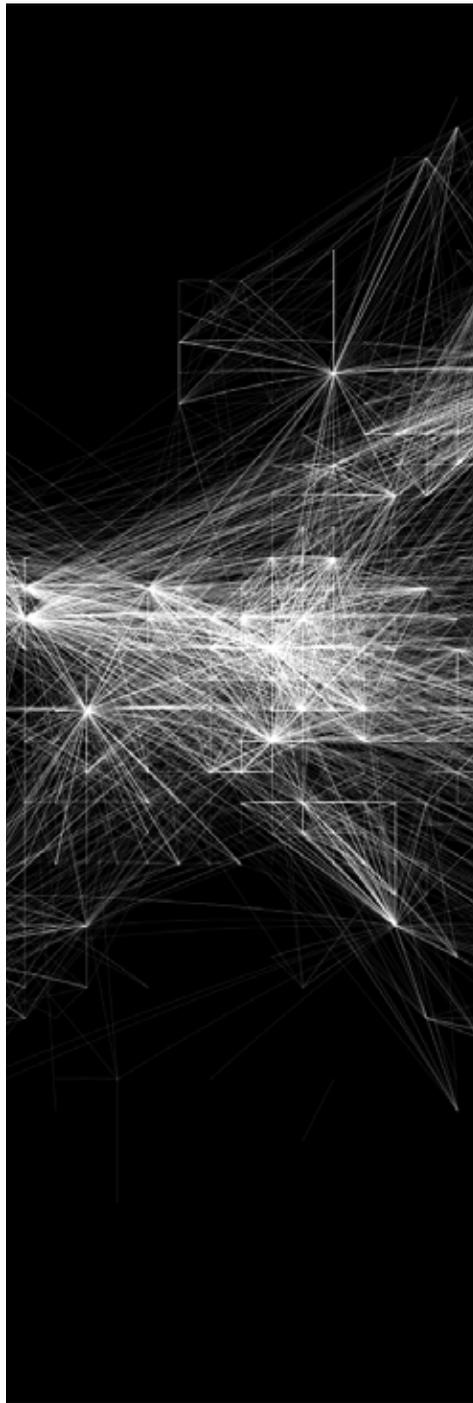
In 2011, the Development Authority of the North Country (DANC) received federal funding to provide redundancy to its open-access telecom network (OATN) from Lowville to Utica and back to Syracuse, and to extend the existing network to Franklin, Clinton and Essex Counties. When complete, the OATN will consist of over 1,000 miles of fiber network backbone and will include 19 central office locations. Last mile build-outs on this backbone are being done by a variety of broadband service providers. Despite the existing network, broadband availability remains an impediment for several less populated areas.

### TRANSPORTATION

The North Country Region, with its over 11,420 square miles of land, is a vast area in which to live and conduct business. Due to its location at the northern edge of the State and its rural nature, extensive travel is required to conduct daily business. As a result, a robust transportation infrastructure is both necessary and, in many areas, present.

### ROADS

Currently, the region's existing road network is one of the most heavily used transportation system for moving people and goods in New York. US Highway 11 bisects the region, traveling southwest to northeast through four of the seven North Country counties (Jefferson, St. Lawrence, Franklin and Clinton). Two north-south Interstate corridors exist on the western and eastern edges of the region. Interstate 81 travels through Jefferson County, and terminates at the 1,000 Islands International Bridge, which crosses the St. Lawrence River into Canada. The Canadian equivalent of the Interstate series highway, the 401, connects to the bridge in Canada. Interstate 87 is a multi-lane divided highway through Clinton and Essex Counties that terminates at the Ca-



nadian Border at the Champlain/LaColle Border Crossing with Province of Quebec. The Canadian equivalent of this Interstate series, Autoroute 15, continues north to Montreal. I-81 and I-87 are major bi-national transportation corridors. Additionally, there are two underutilized bridge crossings into eastern Ontario near the Village of Massena and the City of Ogdensburg. Both of these connections have access to the 401 in Canada and have direct routes into the Canadian capital district and the cities of Ottawa, Ontario and Hull, Quebec.

### CONNECTION TO CANADA

The importance of these crossings and the existing levels of and potential expansion of foreign trade to Canada cannot be overemphasized:

- Canada is the largest export destination for New York State's manufactured goods. In fact, Quebec's largest trading partner is NY.
- The North Country represents the gateway for exporting goods to Canada: five of the six larger international border crossings in New York State are located in the North Country (Alexandria Bay, Champlain, Massena, Ogdensburg, and Trout River/Ft Covington/Chateaugay).
- The number of personal vehicles and passengers who enter the US from Canada from Alexandria Bay, Champlain and Massena exceeds the 2010 national average for northern border crossings (360,362 vehicles and 708,352 passengers).
- Of the 81 northern border crossings in the US, ports in Alexandria Bay and Champlain ranked in the top 10 in the nation for truck traffic entering the U.S. in 2010.
- All areas of Clinton, Jefferson and St. Lawrence counties are designated as Foreign Trade Zones, which among other things, can exempt goods and merchandise from duty payments until they are sold in the US market.
- There is an opportunity for ports in Ogdensburg and Ft. Covington to meet and exceed the national average of truck and passenger traffic



counts at northern ports of entry. Due to the logistics involved with movement of goods and materials across this important international border the North Country region enjoys a competitive wage benefit in the earnings of those employed as motor vehicle operators compared to eight of the other 10 economic development regions in the State.

From a commerce perspective, it is important to note that the region is part of two significant bi-national commerce corridors along I-81 and I-87. The region is geographically well-positioned to both provide for the necessary logistics associated with such commerce and to provide for appropriate business opportunities for businesses trading on both sides of the border. Maintaining as border fluidity is of paramount importance to the region and the State as a whole.

Regionally, the border is much more than just a trade corridor: it is also an opportunity for investment, for obtaining services and serves as a major gateway for tourism and the door, most importantly, swings both ways. The region's Canadian neighbors have long been welcome participants in the region's business; have taken advantage of services more easily obtained on the New York side of the border and have long been attracted to the world class amenities and attractions within the region. Likewise, US border residents have often availed themselves of the ultra-urban amenities of Montreal and Ottawa, have utilized Montreal and Toronto as a gateway for inter-continental air travel and have long-enjoyed the freedom to travel to neighboring Canada for recreational and cultural opportunities.

### SCENIC BYWAYS

As a result of the region's scenic beauty, 10 of the State's 22 designated scenic byways are located in the North Country, more than any other region in the State. These Scenic Byways are promoted to attract tourists, and they are successful: the Great Lakes Seaway Trail reported almost 2,600 persons visited their Discovery Center in Sackets Harbor during 2010, while the Adirondack North Country Association's Scenic Byways web site averages over

3,000 visitors per month.

But, as important as tourism is to local economies, Scenic Byways provide communities with important tools to plan for the management and development of their assets and resources; such planning has benefits for local residents and businesses, as well as for visitors. NYS DOT reports the State received over \$21 million in federal funds for such Corridor Management Plans. In the North Country Byways planning efforts have been extensive.

#### ■ AIRPORTS

Air travel to the region is appealing due to its expediency; four hour road trips can be flown in 60 minutes. However, only three regional airports capable of accommodating mid-size (40-60 passengers) airplanes exist in the region. One is located in Watertown in the west and two others are in Plattsburgh and Saranac Lake to the east. The Plattsburgh International Airport is also capable of handling large aircraft and was once an alternative landing site for the NASA Space Shuttle Program. Ten other airports that accommodate small passenger air service such as Cape Air, American Airlines, etc. and commercial services such as UPS and FedEx are located throughout the region. Expanding the runway length at the Massena International Airport, which is about halfway between Watertown and Plattsburgh, is currently being examined.

However, commercial air travel is just one aspect of the potential of air service in the region. Fort Drum has an active airfield component to its operations. Also of significance is the former Plattsburgh Air Force Base that now serves as the Plattsburgh International Airport and has become known as Montreal's US Airport. Plattsburgh International has an industrial park with intermodal connections not only to the interstate road system (I-87) but also to both US and Canadian rail networks. This facility boasts 214 acres of developable ramp space for aviation related development, an additional 108 acres of developable industrial land, 40 industrial buildings and more than a dozen competitive

“With our many rivers for hydro power and our ideal conditions for wind turbines, the North Country could become a renewable energy epicenter for the nation. And if we further tapped into our forests’ potential, residents could heat their homes and create hundreds of jobs at the same time.”

*Lucas Manning*  
*Small-business owner and USDA Rural Development*  
*St. Lawrence County*

industries. The Plattsburgh community has capitalized on this asset and has recruited a number of industries specializing in transportation equipment in need of larger scale buildings or maintenance facilities, including Bombardier, Westinghouse Airbrake and NovaBus.

#### ■ RAIL

Freight and passenger rail transportation exists in most areas of the region. Canadian Pacific operates an active rail corridor between Montreal and New York City with Amtrak passenger service and major freight activities. This rail corridor includes CN and CSX freight activity into the Port of Montreal. CSX also operates the Syracuse to Montreal mainline that services businesses in several North Country counties. Several smaller short-haul rail lines also exist, but are infrequently utilized. Passenger service by rail is limited to the aforementioned Amtrak corridor either to Montreal or to Albany and New York City with a variety of stops at stations between the two terminal destinations.

#### ■ WATER TRANSPORT

The St. Lawrence Seaway provides the markets of the major northeastern cities and the Central Plains states with convenient access to ships traveling to and from a variety of international ports. Further, the Seaway directly serves Ontario and Quebec to the north, and Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Wisconsin, Minnesota, New York and Pennsylvania to the south. Annual commerce on the system exceeds 180 million metric tons. Typical commodities include:

- Iron ore for the steel industry
- Coal for power generation and steel production
- Limestone for construction and steel industries
- Grain for overseas markets
- General cargo, such as iron and steel products and heavy machinery
- Cement, salt and stone aggregates for agriculture and industry

Nearly 25% of the cargo on the Seaway travels to and from overseas ports.

### **Renewable Energy**

■ THE NEW ECONOMY will be highly dependent upon affordable, reliable and renewable energy and the North Country is already a proven leader in these areas. In total, more than 50% of the State's installed wind generation is within the region. With a deepwater port, available land, rural development patterns and the infrastructure required to transport power already in place, the region is poised to take advantage of wind's potential. Wind is but one of many exciting green power possibilities. Low-impact hydropower has enjoyed a long and productive history in the region dating back to the use of water powered mills utilized in mineral, wood, fabric and grain processing. That tradition has been translated into electrical

tion systems are well established throughout the region. Natural gas is available in most of the region's population centers and three of New York State's major import/export exchange points for natural gas are located within the region, proximate to the Canadian border in Champlain, Massena and Waddington. Most portions of the region not serviced with natural gas utilize either fuel oil or LP gas for heating purposes.

### **Institutions of Higher Learning**

■ TEN POST-SECONDARY SCHOOLS are located in the North Country and serve as vital resources in attracting new residents and developing a talented workforce to strengthen the region's economy. Total enrollment in these schools

### **Agriculture for Food and Biomass**

■ AGRICULTURE HAS BOTH A LONG TRADITION in the North Country and a promising future. A great equalizer in times of economic turbulence, agriculture has historically maintained a fairly steady status in terms of employment and relative importance in the economy and, as a result, is fairly recession-proof. If the region is at risk at all, it is in the relative lack of value-added processing of its agricultural production. This lack also represents an immediate opportunity. The advent of greater consumer awareness of product quality, selectivity toward organic production and greater-than-ever diversification of the sector all bode well for the long-term future of agriculture within the region. With the identified potential for biomass



power generation and is well established within the region; it yields more than 2,200 MW of reliable, low cost, renewable and low-impact energy benefits distributed to the grid.

While wind and hydropower provide an excellent starting point, it is the region's potential to generate renewable biomass for conversion to fuel that holds the most promise. Given existing resources and underutilized land, the biomass potential in this region is unparalleled in the State. And the technology to take advantage of it is being developed right in the region. Zero-Point Clean Tech, Inc. (a Potsdam, New York firm) builds the world's best biomass gasifiers and deploys them around the globe to generate renewable energy and sequester carbon.

Traditional power resources and transmis-

sion exceeds 29,000 and represents nearly 7% of the region's total population.

Two year, four-year, and advanced degrees are offered at these institutions, seven of which have received national or regional recognition for quality of instruction, research and development, and specialized curricula.

The region's higher education providers overlap very little in terms of course and degree offerings, and therefore work collaboratively to maximize the educational experiences for their students and their institutional impact on the communities.

conversion in the energy sector, underutilized land and wood resources could play a prominent and renewable role in further invigorating this sector. Regionally:

- In 2007, there were 4,288 farms in the region, and more than 1 million acres of land in the North Country were used for farming, which represents 15% of all farmland in New York State;
- The market value of farm products sold in the North Country exceeded \$596 million in 2007, and accounted for 13% of the total market value in the State;
- In 2008, New York ranked 4th in the nation in number of organic farms. 13% of the State's organic farms (144) are in the North Country;
- In 2008, 20% of all the milk produced in the

State came from the North Country; New York ranks 2nd in the nation, behind Vermont, in maple production. The North Country ranks in 1st in the State for number of maple producers, and accounts for 37% of all maple syrup produced in New York in 2010; Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence counties traditionally rank in the top 10 in the state for number of cattle, number of milk cows, gallons of milk produced, and acres used hay and corn production;

Compared to the volume of agricultural products produced in the region, most, if not all, of the dairy produced in the North Country, is exported outside the region for processing. Only 42 food manufacturing firms were present in the North Country in 2010. A majority of these firms (61%) were located in Jefferson and St. Lawrence counties; and

The region's farming industry has an opportunity to maximize direct marketing sales to local consumers, institutions and businesses. In 2009, 847 farms in the North Country (including Warren County), engaged in direct and wholesale marketing, which represents 19% of total farm operations in the region. While the number of farms engaging in direct marketing sales to consumers grew by 34% since 2000, the number of farms in the region selling wholesale remained unchanged.

## Housing

■ HOUSING represents a major part of the infrastructure of the North Country. The seven counties in the region contain 216,041 housing units (ACS, 2005-09). In 2009, the aggregate value of owner-occupied housing units in six North Country counties totaled over \$15.7 billion. While this figure does not capture the total value of all housing units in the region [data for Hamilton County were not reported; data for rental units (31% of units) were not reported], it does provide a sense of the magnitude of the investment that housing represents in our communities.

■ INDIVIDUAL HOMES in the North Country are very affordable, compared to New York State as a whole. In 2009, median values for housing units ranged from \$76,800 in St. Lawrence County to more than \$170,000 in Hamilton County; this compared to a statewide median value of over \$300,000 (ACS). Similarly, the NYS Association of Realtors reported that home sale prices in 2010 in the North Country ranged from a median price of \$81,000 in St. Lawrence County to \$147,000 in Essex County; this compared to a statewide median sales price of \$215,000 (data for Hamilton County were not reported). The

relative affordability of housing in our region provides a significant incentive to attract new residents.

While housing is an integral part of the North Country's built environment, it faces problems similar to those faced by other sectors of the region's infrastructure: the need for maintenance for aging systems, the cost of replacing or upgrading systems, and investment in new units. More than half of housing units in the North Country were constructed before the decade 1950-59. Like other sectors of older infrastructure, these houses require frequent repairs, and often benefit from major reinvestment in primary systems (roofs, heating systems, electrical upgrades; plumbing; modernization of kitchens and baths; etc.).

The need for continued expenditures increases with the age of housing, and increases exponentially when maintenance is deferred. Unfortunately, many people in the North Country have lower incomes, and find it difficult to afford the cost of maintenance and reinvestment. As reported earlier, average household incomes and per capita incomes in the North Country are the

lowest among all regions in the State. Additionally, current HUD data indicate that almost half (43.8%) the population in the region has Low or Moderate Incomes (LMI), and thus qualify for HUD assistance.

Costs associated with recent housing rehabilitation activities conducted to benefit LMI households in the North Country demonstrate how deferred maintenance can result in very large repair costs: as an example, the Housing Assistance Program of Essex County, Inc. reported spending an average of \$16,138 per housing unit to restore units to HUD's Housing Quality Standard (HQS). As another example, in St. Lawrence County the investment need has been even greater: rehabilitation costs have averaged over \$28,000 per unit in 2010.

■ NEW CONSTRUCTION in the North Country has had a negligible effect on increasing or improving housing stock. The Census Bureau (ACS) reports that during the period 2005-09 only 2,504 units were built in the entire region; this amounted to just 1.1% of the region's total housing stock; 44% of these new units were built in Jefferson County, in an attempt to provide

sufficient housing to meet the needs of soldiers assigned to Fort Drum. During this period, 440 units were built in St. Lawrence County, presumably influenced by development pressures from nearby Fort Drum, and Clinton County followed closely with 422 units. Franklin (285 units), Essex (148), Lewis (67) and Hamilton Counties (41) saw considerably fewer units built during the period.

An option for lower-income households to purchase a home in the North Country is through participation in a homeownership assistance program, through which eligible applicants may receive mortgage-buy-down assistance, help with closing costs, and some limited repairs. Given the relative affordability of North Country homes discussed above, these programs have been an effective way to assist households to obtain permanent housing, and to keep moderately-priced houses occupied. Over the past five years (2006-10), the NYS Office of Community Renewal has invested over \$6.7 million for homeownership assistance in the North Country. As an example during that period, in St. Lawrence County 175 households, comprising 423 persons; were assisted by the County's Homeownership Assistance program to purchase homes. ■

7 Percent of North Country residents who are students in our colleges and universities.

### ***Business Inventory***

■ IN 2010, there were 9,633 private businesses operating in the North Country. The Retail Trade, Accommodation and Food Services, Construction, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Other Services industries represented 62% of all businesses in the region.

Since 2000, the construction industry added 128 new businesses, and the Health Care industry added 72 new firms to the region. Both of these industry sectors gained more businesses than any other industries in the North Country.

#### **2010 BUSINESSES BY INDUSTRY**

Retail Trade: 18%  
 Accommodation and Food Services: 12%  
 Construction: 11%  
 Health Care and Social Assistance: 11%  
 Other Services: 10%  
 Finance and Insurance: 4%  
 Real Estate, Rental and Leasing: 4%  
 Manufacturing: 4%  
 Administration and Waste Services: 3%  
 Transportation and Warehousing: 3%  
 Wholesale Trade: 3%  
 Arts, Entertainment and Recreation: 3%  
 Agriculture, Forestry, Fish and Hunting: 2%  
 Information: 2%  
 Educational Services: 1%

### ***Current Employment Trends by Industry Sector***

■ IN 2010, there were 10,473 public and private businesses in the North Country with 151,041 employees earning an average wage of \$36,609. On average, private businesses employed 11 workers.

SMALL BUSINESSES are a vital component of the North Country's economy. In 2010, nearly half (49%) of all private industries in the North Country (4,721 firms) consisted of businesses with 10 or fewer workers. This figure is 5 percentage points greater than the State average of 44%.

THE REGION'S LARGEST INDUSTRY with most small businesses was construction, with 1,053 firms employing 5,995 persons. With an average of six employees per firm, construction paid the highest wage compared to any other small business industry. The industry with the region's second largest number of small businesses was Other Services (such as repair and maintenance, hair salons and spas, dry cleaning, professional consultants, and non-profit organizations) at 998 firms. On average, each of these businesses employed five workers and paid an average of \$21,905 per employee.

THE TOP FIVE INDUSTRIES with 11 or more employees per business were education, manufacturing, management, health care, and utilities. Personnel earning the highest average salaries worked for utility or manufacturing companies.

Since 2005, industries that have hired the most employees are health care; retail trade; accommodation and food services; agriculture, forestry, and fishing; and construction. During that same time period, more than 3,000 employees were lost in the manufacturing industry, the largest loss compared to any other industry in the region.

### ***Fastest Growing Occupations***

■ THE NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR has identified occupations that have "Very Favorable, Favorable, Unfavorable, and Very Unfavorable" outlooks in the North Country through 2018.

- Health care, aviation, education and personal services top the "Very Favorable" occupations in the North Country that require post-secondary education and training. 3,790 new positions are anticipated to be created in the health care industry. More than a quarter of these jobs will be in ambulatory and health care services and in nursing and residential care facilities
- 1,660 new positions are anticipated to be created in the education industry and 920 more jobs will be created through the accommodation and food services industry.

# *The Economy*

WHAT IS DRIVING THE NORTH COUNTRY ECONOMY  
 AND WHERE IS IT HEADED?

**SHRINKING OCCUPATIONS**

The manufacturing industry is anticipated to continue losing positions; as many as 2,630 jobs will be lost through 2018.

**PRINCIPAL GROWTH SECTORS AND INDUSTRY CLUSTERS IN THE NORTH COUNTRY**

According to the Department of Labor, the North Country's top 5 2009 industry clusters (a group of industries) based on employment levels are as follows:

- Travel & Tourism (7,300)
- Distribution (3,400)
- Front Office & Producer Services (3,400)
- Forest Products (2,900) and
- Materials Processing (2,900)

The region's top 5 clusters based on Location Quotients (values greater than 1 indicate a service or good that is exported beyond the region's boundaries) are as follows:

- Forest Products (2.81)
- Biomedical (1.71)
- Materials Processing (1.48)
- Food Processing (1.39)
- Travel & Tourism (1.08)

The Department of Labor reports in 2009 the North Country's travel and tourism sector employed 7,270 workers and represented 4.8% of the region's workforce. A majority of these employees (2,540) worked in accommodations, followed by food service (2,050) and culture, recreation and amusement services (1,820 workers).

In 2010, visitors to the North Country spent \$977 million dollars during their stays, and accounted for 5.4% of total tourism expenditures in the State, outside New York City. In 2009, visitors spent \$259 million on second homes (\$66 million of which was spent in Jefferson County), followed by \$227 million on lodging, and \$188 million on food and beverages.

LARGEST INDUSTRIES IN 2010

| Sector                            | # of Businesses | % of Private Industry | Since 2000 Net Change | Since 2000 % Change |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Retail Trade                      | 1,750           | 18%                   | -166                  | -9%                 |
| Accommodation and Food Services   | 1,155           | 12%                   | -36                   | -3%                 |
| Construction                      | 1,053           | 11%                   | 128                   | 14%                 |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 1,041           | 11%                   | 72                    | 7%                  |
| Other Services                    | 998             | 10%                   | -26                   | -3%                 |

Source: New York Department of Labor Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

INDUSTRIES < 10 EMPLOYEES PER BUSINESS

| Industry                                   | # of Firms   | Average Employment | Employees Per Firm | Average Wage     |
|--|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Construction                               | 1,053        | 5,995              | 6                  | \$ 47,315        |
| Other Services                             | 998          | 4,627              | 5                  | \$ 21,905        |
| Administrative and Waste Services          | 320          | 3,268              | 10                 | \$ 25,092        |
| Professional and Technical Services        | 551          | 2,819              | 5                  | \$ 42,786        |
| Wholesale Trade                            | 309          | 2,746              | 9                  | \$ 40,526        |
| Finance and Insurance                      | 417          | 2,516              | 6                  | \$ 42,002        |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting | 239          | 2,108              | 9                  | \$ 31,770        |
| Information                                | 180          | 1,863              | 10                 | \$ 37,945        |
| Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation        | 252          | 1,499              | 6                  | \$ 20,797        |
| Real Estate and Rental and Leasing         | 373          | 1,421              | 4                  | \$ 26,811        |
| Mining                                     | 29           | 270                | 9                  | \$ 46,814        |
| INDUSTRIES < 10 EMPLOYEES PER BUSINESS     | <b>4,721</b> | <b>29,132</b>      | <b>6</b>           | <b>\$ 35,156</b> |
| % OF ALL PRIVATE INDUSTRIES                | <b>49%</b>   | <b>28%</b>         |                    |                  |

Source: New York Department of Labor Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

INDUSTRIES 11+ EMPLOYEES PER BUSINESS

| Industry                                | # of Firms   | Average Employment | Employees Per Firm | Average Wage     |
|---|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Health Care and Social Assistance       | 1,041        | 22,401             | 22                 | \$ 38,299        |
| Retail Trade                            | 1,750        | 21,590             | 12                 | \$ 23,181        |
| Accommodation and Food Services         | 1,155        | 13,170             | 11                 | \$ 15,000        |
| Manufacturing                           | 343          | 11,106             | 32                 | \$ 52,186        |
| Transportation and Warehousing          | 313          | 3,639              | 12                 | \$ 35,442        |
| Educational Services                    | 73           | 2,862              | 39                 | \$ 38,559        |
| Management of Companies and Enterprises | 45           | 990                | 22                 | \$ 47,044        |
| Utilities                               | 45           | 680                | 15                 | \$ 83,567        |
| INDUSTRIES 11+ EMPLOYEES PER BUSINESS   | <b>4,765</b> | <b>76,438</b>      | <b>15</b>          | <b>\$ 32,422</b> |
| % OF ALL PRIVATE INDUSTRIES             | <b>49%</b>   | <b>72%</b>         |                    |                  |

Source: New York Department of Labor Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

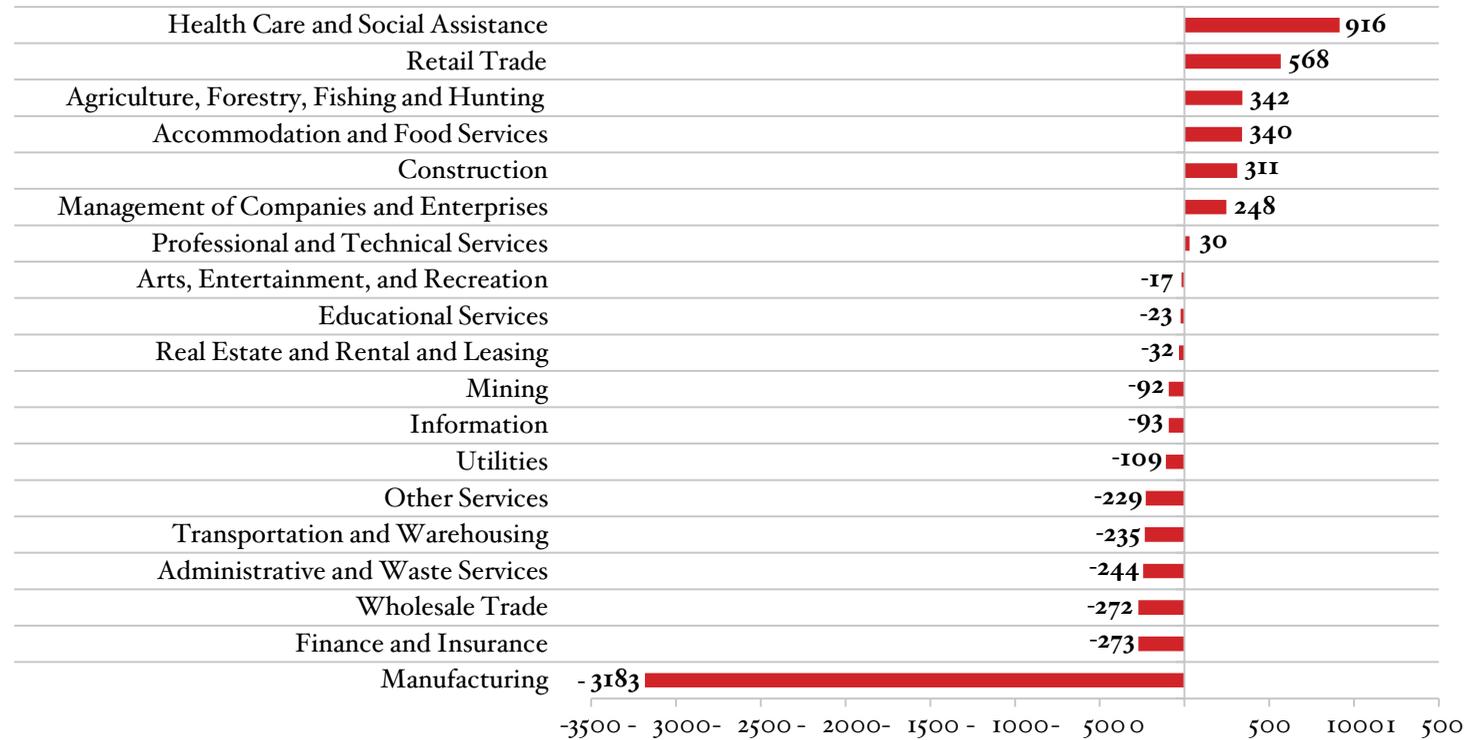
As a result of the activities available through the region's abundant, beautiful and varied open spaces, the North Country's visitor industry has the opportunity to expand and significantly impact the economy as more than 120 million potential visitors live within a day's drive of the region.

Seven industries in the North Country have emerged as significant based on one or more of the following characteristics: growth (on a percentage or absolute basis); high wages (average weekly wage above the 2009 regional average of \$687); or strong expected growth through 2016. Those industries are:

- Support activities for transportation - A potential for growth resulting from a MRO proposing to establish an aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul facility at the Plattsburgh International Airport, projected to increase jobs by 51% by 2016
- Ambulatory health care and hospitals - Almost all health care occupations are expected to be in demand over the next decade as the North Country's population continues to age. Jobs growth in this area is expected to grow by 29%.
- Educational services - The highest employment figure of any significant industry in the region with a projected job growth of 9%
- Food & drinking places - The third largest industry in terms of employment, and is primarily driven by tourism in the Adirondack Park and along major waterways.
- General merchandise stores - Added the most jobs, primarily due to the establishment of "big box" retailers in the North Country.
- Public Administration - A relatively large industry due to the presence of State correctional, disability and recreational facilities.

From 2006-2009, employment for six of these industries grew despite the worst national economic downturn in 75 years.

## Changes in Employment by Industry 2005 - 2010



### Business Expansions and Contractions

From 2005 to 2010, industries with the largest gains in business expansions were: construction; administrative and waste services; agriculture, forestry, fishing; and accommodation and food services.

Source: New York Department of Labor Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Industries that experienced the largest contractions in the region were: retail trade; manufacturing; wholesale trade; and finance.

### COMPANIES EXPANDING, LAYING OFF OR CLOSING

Based on information provided by the Department of Labor, County Industrial Development Agencies, and County Planning and Development Offices, the North Country experienced a net gain of more than 2,700 jobs since August 2010. More than 1,800 jobs were added by existing companies that expanded their operations, followed by more than 1,500 jobs created by new business operations. 640 jobs were lost as a result of business closures, and 29 jobs were lost due to business retraction.

### Current Labor Force and Unemployment Trends

Since 2000, the region's labor force population grew by 2% from 189,000 to 193,400 persons (as of August 2011). Meanwhile, the region's unemployment rate grew from 5.4% in 2000 to 9.9% in 2011. The North Country's manufacturing industry was particularly impacted by layoffs due to the 2008 national recession. Historically, counties in the North Country have

been challenged with having some of the highest unemployment rates in the State, outside of New York City. However, the North Country's unemployment rate is comparable to the national rate of 9.6%.

Unemployment and underemployment are somewhat chronic conditions in this large, rural region although it varies widely on a community by community basis. With respect to the former, unemployment rates traditionally exceed the State average by a percent or two (seasonally adjusted). With respect to the latter consideration, there is also a significant employment potential with the "trailing partner" phenomena associated with both the military installation at Ft. Drum and the presence of 10 institutions of higher education throughout the region.

This level of unemployment, underemployment and the presence of over 29,000 students attending college at one of the region's 10 centers of higher learning create a rich potential to foster entrepreneurial innovation and development. The region's higher education providers actually have very little overlap in terms of course and degree offerings and thus often work collaboratively to maximize the educational experiences for their students and their institutional impact on the community. The region's business, education and governmental leadership expect to enhance the capture of both the graduates of these institutions and the potential innovation spawned there as it moves into a more robust future.

The region is actively engaged in educating and training the future workforce not only for the State and the nation – but, specifically, for the region.

### SIGNIFICANT INDUSTRIES IN THE NORTH COUNTRY

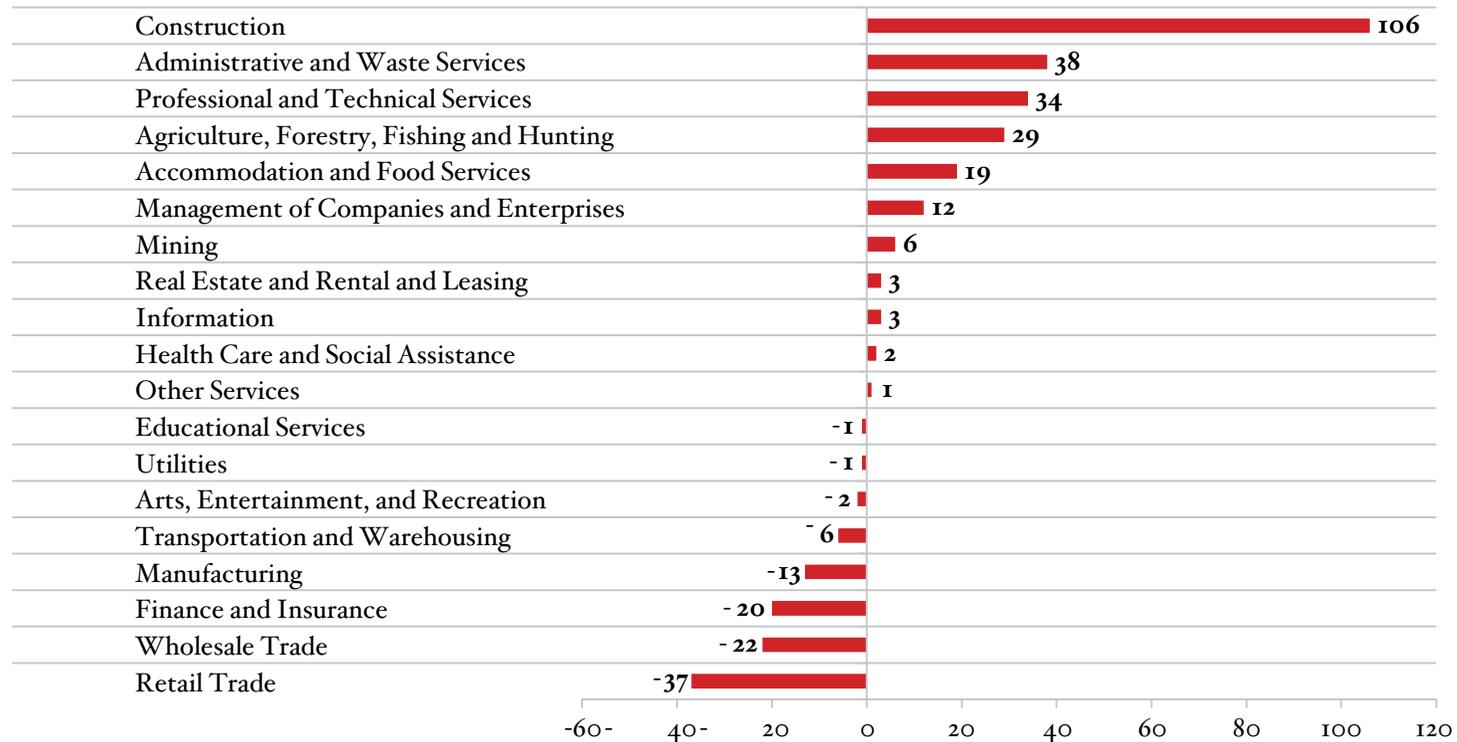
| NAICS | Industry                              | Jobs in 2009 | Avg. Weekly Wage | Projected Change in Jobs: 2006-2016 | Why Significant |
|-------|---------------------------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 488   | Support Activities for Transportation | 1,237        | \$ 831           | 51.5%                               | P,W             |
| 621   | Ambulatory Health Care Services       | 5,573        | \$ 885           | 28.9%                               | G,P,W           |
| 611   | Educational Services                  | 19,412       | \$ 751           | 9.4%                                | G,J,P,W         |
| 722   | Food and Drinking Places              | 10,269       | \$ 255           | 4.6%                                | G,J,W           |
| 622   | Hospitals                             | 8,763        | \$ 925           | 3.3%                                | G,J,W           |
| 452   | General Merchandise Store             | 5,165        | \$ 365           | 2.3%                                | G               |
| 92    | Public Administration                 | 17,821       | \$ 859           | 1.2%                                | G,J,W           |

G: Experienced above-average job growth from 2006-2009  
J: Employs a significant number of jobs (>5,000)

P: Above-average growth projected for 2006-2016  
W: Pays above-average wages

Source: New York Department of Labor

## Business Expansions & Contractions by Industry 2005 - 2010



### BUSINESS CONTRACTIONS IN REGION SINCE AUGUST 2010

| Date         | Company              | Jobs      |
|--------------|----------------------|-----------|
| October-2011 | County of Franklin   | 15        |
| October-2011 | McCadam/Cabot Cheese | 14        |
| October-2011 | ComLinks             | NA        |
| <b>Total</b> |                      | <b>29</b> |

### BUSINESS CLOSINGS IN REGION SINCE AUGUST 2010

| County       | Date           | Company                             | Jobs       |
|--------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Jefferson    | September 2010 | Northland Electric                  | 62         |
| St. Lawrence | October 2010   | BreconRidge Manufacturing Solutions | 82         |
| St. Lawrence | November 2010  | Newton Falls Fine Paper             | 106        |
| Essex        | December 2010  | Stephano's Restaurant               | 4          |
| St. Lawrence | January 2011   | Tuborough K kosher Cheese Plant     | 40         |
| St. Lawrence | March 2011     | Fashion Kraze                       | 36         |
| St. Lawrence | April 2011     | North Lawrence Dairy                | 156        |
| Essex        | May 2011       | Old Adirondack                      | 42         |
| St. Lawrence | May 2011       | CoorsTek Armor Solutions            | 24         |
| Essex        | August 2011    | Lowe's                              | 87         |
| Hamilton     | October 2011   | Mama T's Pizza                      | 1          |
| <b>Total</b> |                |                                     | <b>640</b> |

BUSINESS EXPANSIONS IN REGION SINCE AUGUST 2010

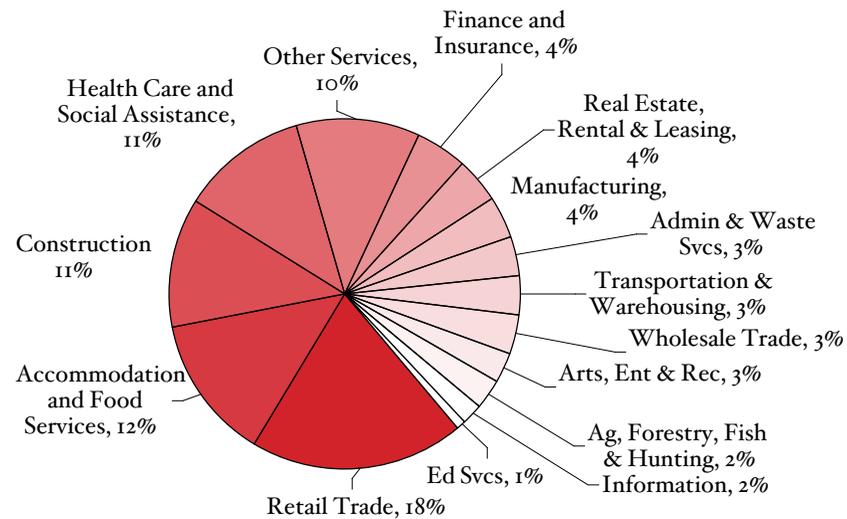
| County       | Date           | Company                                 | Jobs         |
|--------------|----------------|---|--------------|
| Clinton      | August 2010    | Bombardier Transportation               | 80           |
| Clinton      | August 2010    | Mountain Valley Integrated Solutions    | 165          |
| Franklin     | August 2010    | St. Regis Mohawk Tribe (Broadband)      | 780          |
| Jefferson    | August 2010    | Jefferson Community College Enrollment  | NA           |
| St. Lawrence | August 2010    | SUNY Potsdam Enrollment                 | NA           |
| Franklin     | November 2010  | Asept Pak                               | 62           |
| Franklin     | November 2010  | Paul Smith's College Enrollment         | NA           |
| Franklin     | March 2011     | Bingo Palace & Casino Hotel             | 40           |
| Clinton      | April 2011     | Champlain Plastics                      | 25           |
| Clinton      | April 2011     | Fujitsu Frontech North America          | 50           |
| Jefferson    | April 2011     | Stream Global Services                  | 120          |
| St. Lawrence | April 2011     | SUNY Potsdam (Performing Arts Building) | 344          |
| St. Lawrence | May 2011       | Clarkson University Enrollment          | NA           |
| Essex        | July 2011      | Essex Box & Pellet                      | 8            |
| Lewis        | August 2011    | Ara-Kuh Farms                           | 2            |
| Jefferson    | September 2011 | New York Air Brake                      | 78           |
| Jefferson    | September 2011 | MetalCraft Marine                       | 10           |
| Franklin     | October 2011   | St. Lawrence Gas Pipeline               | 100          |
| Hamilton     | October 2011   | Technidocks                             | 11           |
| <b>Total</b> |                |   | <b>1,875</b> |

BUSINESS OPENINGS IN REGION SINCE AUGUST 2010

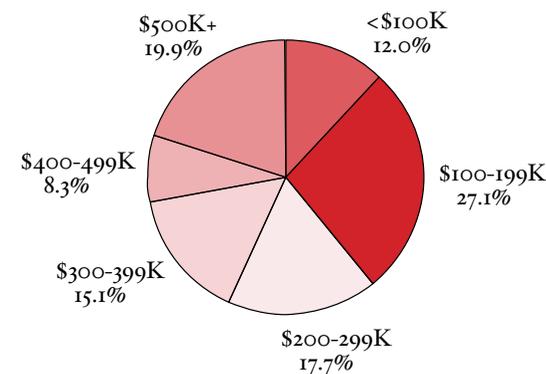
| County       | Date           | Company                               | Jobs       |
|--------------|----------------|---------------------------------------|------------|
| Clinton      | August 2010    | Comfort Inn & Suites Hotel            | 125        |
| Essex        | August 2010    | Northwoods Wellness Phys & Occ Health | 3          |
| Lewis        | August 2010    | Kids Corner Day Care Center           | 4          |
| Clinton      | September 2010 | Smardt Chiller Group                  | 32         |
| Clinton      | October 2010   | Moe's Southwest Grill                 | 35         |
| Jefferson    | November 2010  | Afgritech                             | 8          |
| St. Lawrence | February 2011  | ALCOA East                            | 100        |
| Hamilton     | March 2011     | Flavor Catering                       | 3          |
| Essex        | April 2011     | Hannaford Supermarket                 | 100        |
| Jefferson    | April 2011     | Olive Garden                          | NA         |
| St. Lawrence | May 2011       | Upstate Niagara Cooperative           | 25         |
| Hamilton     | June 2011      | Donnelly's Sunset Point               | 3          |
| Lewis        | June 2011      | Ridgeview Inn Restaurant              | 21         |
| Lewis        | June 2011      | Catspaw Country Market                | 3          |
| Lewis        | July 2011      | North Country Farms                   | NA         |
| Lewis        | July 2011      | Killingbeck Wine Kits & Supplies      | 2          |
| Hamilton     | August 2011    | Ali Baba's Liquor Store               | 1          |
| Lewis        | August 2011    | Pioneer Lodge                         | 6          |
| St. Lawrence | August 2011    | Fashion Kraze                         | 12         |
| Jefferson    | September 2011 | Hilton Garden Inn                     | 94         |
| Lewis        | September 2011 | TJ's BBQ                              | 3          |
| Clinton      | October 2011   | Texas Roadhouse                       | 145        |
| Essex        | October 2011   | Tractor Supply                        | 15         |
| Franklin     | October 2011   | Olympia Sports                        | NA         |
| Hamilton     | October 2011   | Attorney                              | 2          |
| <b>Total</b> |                |                                       | <b>742</b> |

Net Jobs Gained or Lost from August 2010 to Present 1,948

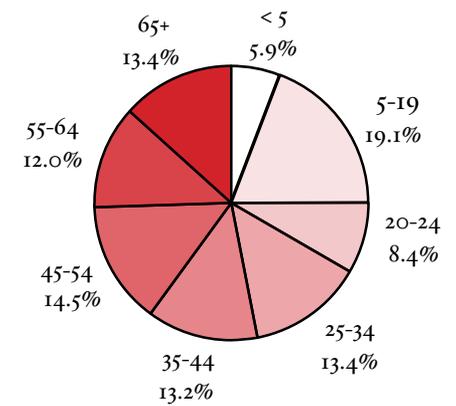
2010 Businesses by Industry



2009 Owner Occupied Housing Units by Value



2009 Population by Age



EMBRACING OUR STRENGTHS, addressing our challenges and acting on our opportunities are the foundation from which the North Country Regional Economic Development Council has built its five-year plan.

**STRENGTHS:**

■ Our Strengths are based on our geographic location, our wealth in natural resources, existing businesses and educational resources, the relatively low overall cost of doing business regionally and our diverse and rich culture and history.

The North Country's proximity to Quebec and Ontario has already enabled deep and broad partnerships with the nation's second largest trading partner and the region continues to attract investment from Canada. Internationally renowned destinations such as the Adirondacks and the 1000 Islands have an established reputation and proven success for the tourism business.

The North Country offers public access, unparalleled in the Northeast, to millions of acres of undeveloped and protected land with expansive natural beauty and open space, including thousands of lakes, rivers, ponds and streams for recreation and transportation. We have plentiful clean water resources, among the best in the State, as well as an abundance of raw materials for the forest products and emerging biomass industries. We have significant four-season recreational opportunities poised to leverage private investment. Fort Drum generates \$2.2 billion annually in economic activity in the western part of the region and provides demand for increased services and amenities. Top quality colleges in a small region of 400,000 people provide resources, training opportunities and the capacity to incubate new ideas. An existing dynamic cluster of biomedical companies, a clean, low-impact industry compatible with the sensitive ecosystem of the North Country, promotes similar entrepreneurial ventures. The North Country has ready access to natural gas, rail, cost-effective hydropower, solar and wind

energy. Its outstanding agricultural infrastructure supports successful large and small dairy, apple, maple and livestock operations.

Our diverse culture includes extensive Native American and Amish communities as well as nationally known arts and museum centers. These significant historic places and landmark sites are an important part of America's historical legacy.

Traditionally, the North Country has attracted business investment, both large and small, because of lower business start-up costs: a lower wage scale, competitive building costs, and relatively lower land costs. A desirable quality of life and lower cost of living is advantageous in the recruitment of highly skilled personnel and entrepreneurs and encourages employees to stay, thereby providing stability and skill development over time.

**WEAKNESSES AND THREATS:**

■ The North Country's weaknesses and threats stem from aging or inadequate infrastructure including tourism lodging, lack of regional recognition of tourism as an economic driver for other business and community development, business challenges including lack of access to capital, increased border security and the volatility of the price of imported fuel for home heating and long commutes.

Infrastructure issues include inconsistent broadband capability and cell phone access in the region. Aging water, sewer and power systems and lack of up-to-date lodging facilities adversely affect many areas of the region. There is a perception of distance and isolation between communities in the region because of the large size of the North Country region. This has had the effect of impeding business development, which needs cost effective means of getting goods to market. Business challenges also include the lack of access to investment capital for new or expanding businesses, the sad fact that most economic development programs are not geared toward rural business expansion and the relatively high cost of doing business in New York State. There are workforce challenges in

some areas including shortages of non-retired residents, declining and aging populations, untrained/unskilled employees and a workforce that can exhibit poor customer service skills. In addition, lower per-capita incomes and a small population make establishing and maintaining a profitable business difficult.

Lastly, increased border security deters the



free flow of people and goods across what has, historically, been a very open and accessible border. The lack of an east-west connector to support the border crossings tends to hamper the region. Some in the North Country understand the importance of border fluidity to the new paradigms of the global economy, but many do not.

**OPPORTUNITIES:**

■ The North Country's opportunities grow from plentiful renewable energy resources, proximity to Canada, natural capital, including its waterways, the high rate of start-ups of small businesses, rich agricultural lands and emerging trends in eco- and agri-tourism.

The region will expand energy production capacity using regional resources in hydropower, biomass, wind and solar and attract jobs and keep energy dollars local. It will grow and deepen its connection to Canada, building on our historic economic relationships with Ontario and Quebec leveraging our location as a gateway to the US for Canadian businesses and visitors to attract new investment from Canada. We will capitalize on the region's natural and scenic attributes to use tourism development to attract private investment to revitalize and diversify communities because more "livable" communities attract visitors, residents and business investment. We will put strategic tools in place targeted to attract private tourism-related development. We will harness the economic power of the region's many waterways to create blueway corridors to promote and advance community and tourism development. We will use the region's existing successful track record in small business start-ups to encourage more entrepreneurial activity among residents and to attract new entrepreneurs to the area by promoting the desirable quality of life in the region.

The transit equipment manufacturers in the region are well-positioned to take advantage of the trend toward buses and trains as a means of transportation, particularly those powered

by alternative fuels. Partnerships with institutions of higher education will enable jobs skills training programs, resources to assist in business start-ups and targeted research and development to be available throughout the region. There is opportunity to creatively engage the institutions of higher learning in the region to participate in community development projects.

With targeted agricultural economic development the region will be positioned to take advantage of the growing interest in locally-produced food and the region's successful agricultural history and plentiful, affordable land to attract new farmers and investment to expand and improve existing facilities. This initiative will mesh the growing national interest in sustainability and green practices with existing regional natural resources to grow green tourism, geo-tourism and sustainable farming. The region will actively promote agri-tourism as a means to take advantage of and to diversify the agricultural industry. The region will publicize its work as a laboratory for sustainable practices as it moves forward with business growth in the areas of clean energy and sustainable food production.

The North Country has an emerging arts and culture cluster that will be enhanced as projects now coming to fruition are fully realized. The Strand project in Plattsburgh, a new project in St. Lawrence County and Clarkson University's proposed community arts project are examples of opportunities for the future.

And lastly, The North Country will leverage private investment and new business placement to strengthen connectivity between communities in the region as well as build capacity and better integration between the I-87 and I-81 corridors to improve the movement of goods through the region.

# 2.2

Number of dollars (in billions)  
that are generated annually by  
Fort Drum's economic activity.

## **Planning Committee and Work Group Overview Overview**

■ The North Country Regional Economic Development Council created seven Work Groups and a Planning Committee to aid in its endeavors. Each Work Group completed its own SWOT analysis by subject area, and from that developed several strategies key to meeting the Council's long-term Vision. Individual work group SWOTS and summaries can be found in Appendix A. The following is a brief overview of the Planning Committee and Work Group responsibilities.

### **PLANNING COMMITTEE:**

■ The Planning Committee acted as the umbrella for several sub-committee groups that include: Public Participation, Visioning, Existing Conditions, Critical Issues and Opportunities,

Regional Implementation Agenda and Benchmarks, Measures and Outcomes. Committee functions included creating the Vision Statement, coordinating public engagement, developing the Consolidated Funding Application Endorsement Criteria and the Priority Project Selection Criteria, which were based on input and recommendations from the sub-committee Work Groups described below. This committee was also responsible for crafting the draft strategic plan for the Council's consideration.

### **WORK GROUPS:**

■ Work Groups were critical to enhancing the Council's knowledge and understanding of key clusters, geographic areas, core assets, strengths, critical issues and barriers related to the economic opportunities that are the focus of

this strategic plan. The following is an overview of the NCREDC Work Groups:

**Strategic Clusters:** Identified significant existing or emerging strategic clusters in the region and opportunities related to each; and helped generate recommendations for actions related to selected clusters. Clusters included:

- Advanced Materials
- Aerospace and Transportation
- Agriculture
- Arts and Culture
- Biotechnology
- Clean Energy
- Distribution
- Fort Drum/Defense
- Higher Education
- Wood and Paper

**Canadian Connection:** Identified issues, opportunities and strategies for broadening and deepening the North Country's economic connections with Canada, particularly Quebec and Ontario.

**Tourism Development:** Identified issues, opportunities and strategies for developing, modernizing and growing the value of the tourism/hospitality sector in the North Country.

**Infrastructure:** Identified issues, opportunities and strategies that directly support and enhance economic development. Includes transportation (road, rail, air) broadband/telecommunications, energy (electric and gas) and water/sewer.

**Small Business Development:** Identified issues, opportunities and strategies for strengthening and growing the small business sector in the

North Country, within the context of the aims of this regional process.

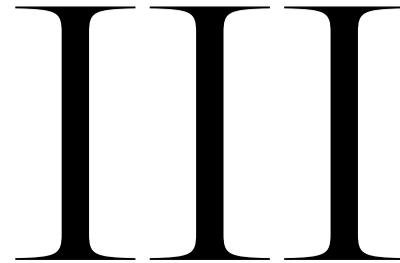
**Community Development:** Identified issues, opportunities and strategies the examination for strengthening communities in the North Country as a key component of attracting and retaining jobs. Includes quality communities, downtowns, housing, arts/culture, sustainability of villages and hamlets, etc.

**Adirondack Park:** Identified issues, opportunities and strategies designed to address the special economic challenges and circumstances within the Adirondack Park.

*\*See Appendix B for Planning Committee/Work Group Responsibilities Document and List of Participants*







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## Where Do We Want To Be?

*Economic Development Vision;  
Critical Issues and Opportunities*

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# THE VISION

The North Country Will Lead The  
Economic Renaissance Of New York  
State's Small Cities And Rural Communities.

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**WE WILL**

*ENERGIZE OUR MICROPOLITAN CITIES, BUILDING ON GROWTH IN THE AEROSPACE, TRANSIT EQUIPMENT, DEFENSE, BIOTECH, AND MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES.*

*ATTRACT AND NURTURE ENTREPRENEURIAL PIONEERS TO CULTIVATE INNOVATIVE CLUSTERS IN OUR RURAL COMMUNITIES.*

*MOBILIZE THE CREATIVITY AND CAPACITY OF THE GRADUATES OF OUR OUTSTANDING PLACES OF HIGHER EDUCATION.*

*CATALYZE THE HIGHEST PER CAPITA RATE OF SMALL BUSINESS START-UPS IN THE STATE.*

*ELEVATE GLOBAL RECOGNITION OF THE REGION AS ONE OF THE SPECIAL PLACES ON THE PLANET TO VISIT, LIVE, WORK AND STUDY.*

*ACTIVATE TOURISM AS A DRIVER TO DIVERSIFY OUR ECONOMIES.*

*PROPAGATE AN AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION AS WE HELP FEED THE REGION AND THE WORLD.*

*CREATE THE GREENEST ENERGY ECONOMY IN THE STATE.*

■ ACTUALIZING THIS VISION will create family-sustaining jobs and build an innovative economy, capitalizing on our abundant natural capital - pristine waters, productive forests and agricultural lands; the splendor of the Adirondacks; and our dynamic international border. The Vision springs from the North Country's unique assets- the longest New York border with Canada; the largest watershed production in the State, the most extensive forested lands in the State; the iconic Adirondack Mountains and 1000 Islands, one of the largest tourist economies in the State, and a special quality of life in safe and secure communities with access to four-season outdoor recreation.

THE VISION RECOGNIZES that our prime tourism centers continue to thrive despite the

on investment and is well-positioned to drive a new North Country economy.

THE VISION EXPANDS from emerging growth in niche high-tech research and manufacturing; new investment in aerospace and transportation equipment manufacturing; hosting the largest defense employer in the State; breakthroughs in farming technologies and growth in community scale farms and value-added agricultural products; supplying the State with a substantial portion of its clean, renewable energy, including more than 2200 megawatts of hydropower and the largest wind farms in the State.

THE VISION CAPITALIZES on the power of emerging movements in local food and local energy production, based on national security

THE VISION RECOGNIZES that incentivizing small business start-ups will be the engine of future economic growth in the region as well as the State. The scale of our communities and population base means that metrics and performance measures can be reliably tracked and that the impact of the State's investment in the North Country can be profoundly transformational.

THREE MACRO STRATEGIES will guide the Council on the pathway to attain its Vision. First, we will increase and retain jobs in industries that export products and import dollars, including traditional value-added manufacturing and agricultural jobs as well as jobs in sectors including tourism, biotech and renewable energy. Second, we will build wealth in the region by



downturn of the national economy. This Plan is designed to spread that success to other communities in the North Country. In a region whose mills and mines are largely gone but whose physical beauty remains intact, tourism is a proven fit. Improvements that make a community attractive to visitors provide a high quality of life for year-round residents which, in turn, entice other industries to locate here to create a variety of jobs across business sectors. It is an upward spiral of development which will attract the critical mass of people needed to sustain the small communities of the North Country. Tourism is a \$1 billion annual industry in the North Country which in 2010 spun off \$122 million in local and state tax revenues. It has a low upfront investment cost, quick return

and health concerns. The North Country, with its 4288 farms and vast fertile lands along Lake Champlain, Black River Valley and the St. Lawrence Valley, will lead a revolution in the State, creating family-sustaining jobs at every point along the food value system. The renewable energy economy will grow from thermal biomass heating systems based on by-products of our managed forests and agricultural lands, solar thermal, geothermal, solar, and a region-wide investment in energy efficiency. It will catalyze the development of local businesses around production, distribution and maintenance of these systems. It will retain our energy dollars in the region rather than spending them outside the State or the nation and reduce dependence on imported oil.

strengthening existing resources, building capacity and fostering entrepreneurial opportunities. Third, we will leverage the North Country's economic development strategy in order to contribute a significant portion to the resurgence of New York State's economy through increased jobs and the tax revenues the newly created jobs will generate. ■

### **Infrastructure**

■ POTENTIALLY limiting factors with respect to developing or expanding business throughout the North Country include availability of broadband and cell coverage; capacity and condition of public sewer and water systems, roadways and major surface transportation corridors, and air and rail service.

There is an enormous need for improvement of water and wastewater systems throughout the region, both to protect the region's clean water resources and to support community development.

Most areas of the region have made great advances in broadband and cell coverage but uninterrupted service in a region this rural is essential. Particular emphasis needs to be placed on continuing expansion of the regional backbone to underserved sub-regions and to attracting last mile providers to the region. Opportunities for business start-up or working remotely are hampered by the gaps in broadband infrastructure.

The region is also challenged by the need for improved air and rail and highway service improvements, particularly for freight. Air service to the region is threatened by the heavy reliance on the EAS subsidies at all North Country airports.

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### **Attracting & Retaining Young Talent**

■ HIGH SCHOOL and college graduates leave the area and often do not return because of the lack of employment opportunities. Graduates of the 10 institutions of higher education in the region, even if they have come to love the area, have the same difficulty. The result is the potential of a downward spiral where a lack of jobs means young people leave and that lack of human capital means even fewer jobs are created. This results in fewer families living here, fewer people living here year-round dwindling school populations and the lack of a critical mass that can sustain the Main Street businesses of many of our communities. Renewable energy, manufacturing, agriculture, tourism, forestry, and biotechnology jobs appropriately sized and situated to the various communities would start the spiral moving upward again. Some communities need just one business employing 20 more people, some need just six more families to move in. The investment needed to make the difference in each of this region's communities is not great, so the ability to transform the entire region is immense.

If this issue is not addressed Main Street storefronts will remain empty and communities will lose the character and quality of life attributes which could otherwise attract new manufacturing and retail start ups. This region's resources: built, natural and human, will remain underutilized and the potential of the entire region to be a contributor to New York State's economic renaissance will be lost.

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### **Regulation & Financing**

■ GOVERNMENTS and private funding partners alike need to have regulatory and financing mechanisms that are both flexible and nimble enough to move at the speed of business, be available to non-traditional start-ups and be sized to fit the rural scale of development that exists in the North Country. Traditional funding sources currently do not support seasonal employers, many of which are significant potential employers within the region. Similarly, because of the rural nature of the region, the lack of local government institutional capacity and resources to support community and economic development and the specific lack of professional staff hinders implementation of long-term plans.

If this type of funding is not made more accessible to investors, communities will not add jobs or residents. Entrepreneurs' intent on capitalizing on North Country business opportunities will look elsewhere. High quality community planning will go unimplemented. As a result, New York State will not benefit from the tax revenues that could be created by these new and expanded businesses.

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### **Costs of Invasive Species**

■ SPREAD OF INVASIVE SPECIES has the potential to greatly impact agriculture and tourism by limiting places people can visit or destroying the ecological integrity of the region. Invasive species hampers fishing, boating, and swimming. Non-native plants and animals drive out indigenous species and affect bird watching and hunting. The North Country's lumber economy hangs in the balance of encroaching insect infestation. Support of continued eradication and education programs is essential to the ecological balance in the region. The State stands to lose its most diverse source of natural resources if efforts to eradicate invasive species are not supported.

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### **Adding Value in Agriculture**

■ FINALLY, there are challenges to the development of the North Country's agriculture sector. Scarce availability of refrigerated warehousing, few central distribution points, limited USDA slaughterhouse facilities, dwindling and sporadic financial support for ag-research in Northern New York and New York State all impact this important sector. These challenges need to be addressed to ensure the safety, reliability and sustainability of the North Country's independent food supply. The alternative is to continue to export food shopping dollars outside the State. The issue of providing an adequate agricultural workforce is an increasing challenge that needs to be addressed to create a guest worker program.

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# *Critical Issues*

TO BE ADDRESSED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THE VISION

### ***Relatively Small Investments Have High Impact***

■ THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT in the North Country is high. In one community, one hotel could be transformational, complete cell phone coverage could be transformational; a new boat launch could be transformational. Each of these smaller projects could lift a community from a struggling situation to be a site of prosperity. Many North Country communities, often in partnership with local and State government, are on the cusp of this type of transformation.

Investment in the North Country regions offers a strong return on investment, where virtually every community across the region can be positively impacted with the funding available.

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### ***Partnering with Canada***

■ 200 MILES OF BORDER with Canada makes the North Country Region a gateway for Canadian companies who want a U.S. presence, especially those in the aerospace, defense, biotech and transit industries. The border is also a gateway for Canadian tourism, with 19 million Canadian visitors within a half day's drive. The need for Canadian companies to meet U.S. domestic content requirements presents many opportunities for manufacturing growth. Proximity to the Canadian border also creates opportunities for white collar, professional job creation by companies engaged in cross border trade – attorneys, accountants, immigration consultants, insurance brokers, bankers, among others.

Critical to capitalizing on this proximity is the ability to cross the border without unexpected delays and inconsistent requirements from crossing to crossing. Although it is an asset to have such a large border with Canada, the border does make the region more vulnerable to any change in regulations or procedures which could jeopardize the flow of goods and people. Investment in increased capacity for the airports near the border will allow the region to capitalize on the opportunity presented by the high cost of airfares and congestion around the airports in Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto. Underutilized bridge capacity to move freight to and from U.S. markets over the St. Lawrence River offers opportunity to build on existing supply chain infrastructure.

There is an opportunity to enhance the east-west transportation corridor through the region to accelerate future growth potential to handle critical freight traffic in an efficient manner.

Canadian business interested in having a U.S. presence will stay in Canada or go to other border states if our region does not capitalize on this relationship. The region and the State need to value the fact that the border issues are not limited to new business but also to existing Canadian businesses that want to grow in the US. The relationship with Canada is not just boxes crossing a border; it is an integrated highly dynamic economy. If the region does not build on that, goods will just pass through the region with little opportunity for the North Country to be the site of value-added manufacturing. As a result the State will lose jobs and income that cannot be captured elsewhere.

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### ***Tourism***

■ THE TOURISM INDUSTRY, with its potential market to more than 120 million prospective visitors within one day's drive, can be the catalyst to drive economic development in the North Country to add world-class hospitality venues and greater demand for services and amenities. The development of tourism infrastructure (lodging, retail, restaurants, recreation, arts and culture) can transform the region by driving community development, which enhances quality of life, attracts more visitors and residents, and serves as leverage for attracting private investment. Providing more and higher quality lodging, in particular, could quadruple individual visitor spending. Because the visitor's dollar multiplies throughout the region, tourism as an industry is an instant revenue generator. The jobs created in this sector are financially sustainable and contribute measurable value to state and local coffers through sales, use and property taxes.

The region has a history of hospitality and several successful tourism hubs in place and exceptional four-season outdoor recreational opportunities are poised to leverage private investment in lodging, restaurant, attraction and other types of tourism related venues. Further, a variety of both motorized and human powered recreation and legendary hunting and fishing opportunities are available.

There is proven pent-up market demand for higher-quality tourism products and our existing destination draws: Lake Champlain, the Adirondacks, the 1000 Islands, Tug Hill and the St. Lawrence Seaway can be leverage to increase visitation to lesser known attractions. Appropriately placed lodging would enable overnight stays which would multiply day trip spending by a factor of four.

The North Country has vast open spaces and the largest "dark sky" in the northeast U.S. that offer a unique opportunity to draw astronomers and nature lovers to the region.

The region contains historic sites that were pivotal in American History and is teeming with varied arts and cultural experiences.

Many North Country communities have historic Main Streets, water access and recreational opportunities that will be lost forever if they are not revitalized soon. Tourism offers a way to save the things that make our communities authentic places to visit, live and to grow new business. Tourism has the potential to re-grow our communities and contribute to New York State's renaissance.

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# *Critical Opportunities*

TO BE SEIZED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THE VISION

## Natural Capital

THE NORTH COUNTRY has natural resources that are unparalleled in the rest of the State and the entire Northeast. These resources offer raw materials for manufacturing, renewable energy sources and a high quality of life for residents.

The region is the largest source of fresh water in New York State.

Its forests offer an opportunity to maintain and grow sustainable forestry related industries. The wood and paper sector has the potential to simultaneously sustain an industry and the woodlands of the North Country.

There are great opportunities for the development of renewable power (hydro, wind, biomass and bio waste). The North Country has a number of existing, functioning and capable businesses in all the areas related to clean energy. No new technologies are required to address opportunities in wind, solar, hydro, or biomass. There are, however, challenges in this sector with regulations, permitting, siting, net metering, the volatility of tax credit programs, and a lack of transmission access.

The cost of fuel (heating, process and transportation) is a growing international concern. In fostering the greenest economy of the State, there is an inherent potential for the region to encourage, at least in part, a local focus and to ensure scalable energy generation and conservation measures appropriate for local residents and businesses;

The North County has a history of conservation, hospitality, forestry and agriculture. The region has a wealth of resources that North Country residents have learned how to utilize sustainably. When the region takes the lead on this initiative, it will be a net exporter of energy.

## Existing Business Synergies

SOME COMMUNITIES have a concentration of capabilities that complement one another and a collaborative environment among existing companies. These can be reinforced and ex-



panded. For example, Fort Drum and its related industries; an emerging concentration of biotech (Trudeau and Miner Institutes); world class recreational venues and the Olympic Training Center in Lake Placid; food processing companies like Kraft in Lowville and McCadam/Cabot in Chateaugay and transportation companies like Nova Bus and Bombardier in Plattsburgh.

The region has good north-south transportation infrastructure to encourage growth in clusters that depend on movement of goods.

## Military Investment

THE OVERRIDING FACTOR that impacts almost all aspects of supporting Fort Drum is to be able to provide, cost effectively, the infrastructure and services necessary for the quantity of military population that flow in and out of the region so frequently, and who have limited financial means.

## Quality of Life

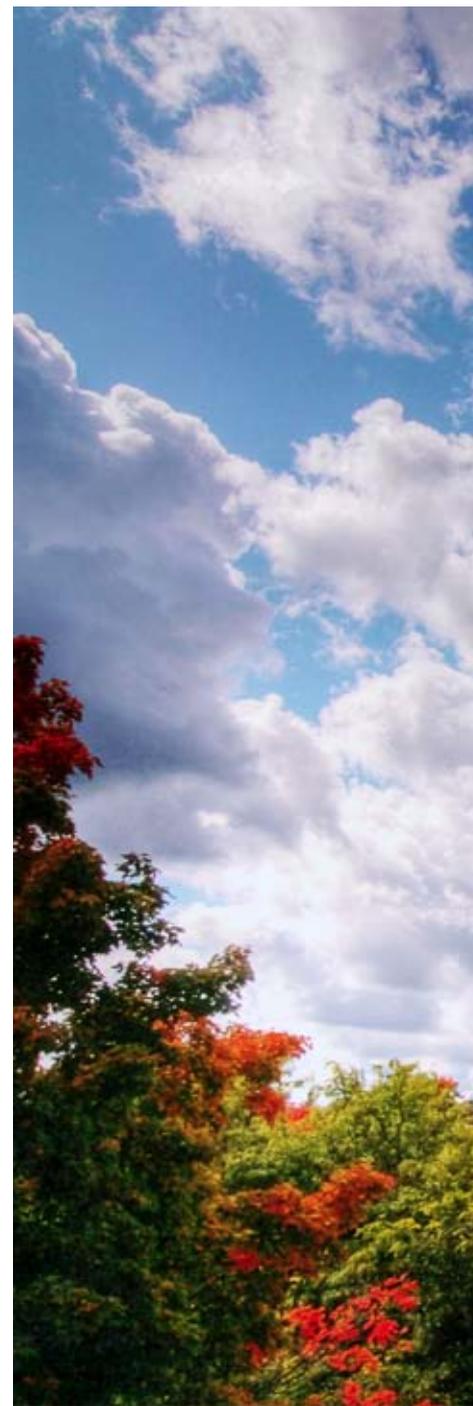
THE DESIRABLE RURAL LIFESTYLE, free of stresses encountered in major metropolitan areas, is a strong draw for small business operators and entrepreneurs.

The greatest risk is if the companies that are established are unable to find the services and resources they need to support their business. It is critical to support existing industries so that their success will retain and create jobs, generating revenue for the region and the State.

## Colleges and Universities

STUDENT, FACULTY and research populations and faculty at ten universities add to the North Country's educated, creative, entrepreneurial and energetic workforce. The North Country offers these graduates "live where you play" benefits and encourages them to remain in the region they chose for their educations.

The educational institutions have a vested interest in developing appropriate and scalable tools to encourage entrepreneurial activity. The



North Country has education programs that are in place offering programs in photovoltaic (both residential and commercial), commercial wind, residential wind, hydro power, engineering, hospitality and culinary arts management majors.

With a large region and small distributed population, there is an opportunity to be able to provide sufficient training in the vocational skills trades to prepare the younger work population for the manufacturing industry. And, in general, across all industries in the North Country recruiting and retaining degreed professionals is a constant challenge.

The North Country region's institutions of higher education fill many needs: small business support, data collection, job creation, attractions of potential residents into the region, and, most importantly, educating our workforce with curricula which is tied to the changing demands of the economy. The institutions continue to be valuable partners and resources to the region and their continued innovations benefit the entire State.

■ THE DEVELOPMENT of the North Country Strategic Plan included multiple ways for the public to participate and to offer input. A Public Participation Work Group was formed early in the process to create dynamic channels for public engagement during the development of the five-year Strategic Plan and to define methods for obtaining and incorporating public input on an on-going basis.

Ensuring public awareness of the strategic planning process, gathering feedback on economic development in the North Country and engaging citizens in both the planning and implementation of the Plan are vital components of the public participation plan.

In order to reach the maximum number of people possible, the Council developed multiple methods for the public to provide suggestions, comment on the Plan and the process, find out about opportunities for funding and keep abreast of developments as the Strategic Plan was developed.

### **Public Forums**

■ THE NORTH COUNTRY region is vast, covering 11,420 square miles from Lake Ontario to Lake Champlain and from the Canadian Border south through the Adirondacks. Because of the region's size, the Council conducted seven public forums, one in each county of the region, five more than the two prescribed by the State. Three forums were held in the early stages of the process to solicit ideas from the public and provide information about the Council, the elements of the Strategic Plan, and funding opportunities. Four forums were held after the NCREDC's Vision had been adopted. At least one of the Co-Chairs of the Council attended all of the forums. Council members were also present at each session. At each of the forums, a short PowerPoint presentation set the stage for discussion, followed by Q & A period and a formal opportunity for people to provide comments and suggestions. The public is invited to

“It’s great to work in a community that is willing to support small business and that also comes with a workforce that has a great work ethic as a resource.”

**Doreen Garrett**  
**President and CEO, Otis Technology**  
**Lewis County**

attend Council meetings. Dates and times of the meetings are sent to local media outlets, are posted on the [www.northcountryopenforbusiness.com](http://www.northcountryopenforbusiness.com) website, on Facebook and sent out via email. The seven Work Groups and Strategic Clusters Groups also held forums, inviting local business owners, government representatives, experts in the clusters, not-for-profits, educators, and others to participate at their meetings.

### **Personal Presentations**

■ COUNCIL MEMBERS were provided with copies of the Council-developed PowerPoint presentations used in the Public Forums which they could use at community level meetings all over the North Country to increase regional awareness and gather ideas. Council Members were given public comment forms for people to use to submit written comment and directed community level attendees to the other avenues for submitting comments and advice. All Council PowerPoint presentations are posted on the Council's website.

### **Website**

■ THE NORTH COUNTRY Open for Business section of the NYS website was used to inform the public and to gain valuable insight from stakeholders on issues, options and project ideas. Suggestions obtained via the website were compiled by Empire State Development staff and disseminated to the Work Groups. As elements of the Plan were developed, each was posted on the site for review and comment.

### **Social Media**

■ THE COUNCIL identified ways to reach those who could not or did not want to attend the public forums. Reaching young people was of special concern since they are less likely to go to public events. To help reach this demographic, a Facebook page was developed. Anyone can submit a comment, like or share items posted on the page. Videos of the forums were

posted to give people unable to attend as a way to hear from Council members about the Plan. The Vision and other documents were posted on these sites.

### ***E-mail***

■ ATTENDEES at the forums, meetings, and other events were given the option of receiving updates via email. The addresses were compiled into a database and used to disseminate information in a timely manner. The public can also use email to submit ideas and concerns to the Council by email.

### ***Surveys***

■ As the strategic planning process moved forward, the Council found there were some areas for which more public input was needed. Short electronic and paper surveys were developed and stakeholders were asked to complete them.

2,200 Megawatts of renewable hydropower that are produced in the North Country.





# IV

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## How Do We Get There? Pt. 1

*Economic Development Strategy & Components;  
Project Evaluation Agenda*

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**Economic Development Strategy and Components/Project Evaluation Agenda**

■ THE NCREDC submits the following strategies that demonstrate how best to use our regional assets, capitalize on opportunities and address critical issues impeding future growth. Successful implementation of these strategies, achieved through specific actions, will help realize the full potential of the region’s economic development Vision.

*Vision: Energize our micropolitan cities, building on growth in the aerospace, transit equipment, defense, biotech, agriculture and manufacturing industries*

The North Country economy is anchored by several strong industry clusters that fuel the economies of the small cities in the region. In addition to the substantial number of people

ket, research and development, funding for expansion and community development must be developed and strengthened to ensure the growth and viability of the clusters. In addition, the business climate of the State must continue to improve to prevent relocation of these key industries to other states or other countries.

**Strategy 1: Develop a strong workforce development system to support the needs of employers in the targeted clusters using a combination of new and incumbent worker training, certificate programs, degree programs, and recruitment assistance.**

**ACTIONS YEAR 1:**

- In cooperation with industry sector businesses

- and businesses to work together to develop training program curricula
- Develop new curricula or integrate elements of existing programs in new ways to better prepare workers for jobs in the target industries
- Determine cost per student/employee for each program
- Identify federal, state, local and private sector funding sources
- Market programs through training provider’s normal methods, New York State Department of Labor Website, local newspapers, secondary schools, career fairs, and social media.
- Conduct the programs. The types of programs will vary by industry and geographic area.
- Work with “One Stops” to place graduates
- Measure success using benchmarks
- Get feedback from businesses, students



who work for these major employers, many more are employed by the businesses they purchase products and services from. For many communities, the loss of one of these major employers would be devastating. It is of the utmost importance that everything possible is done to help these industrial sectors compete with other parts of the United States and with companies in other countries for market share and resources. Their growth will help to add jobs for community residents, stabilize the tax base, foster entrepreneurship and encourage other companies to come to the region.

Support systems in the areas of workforce development, supplier base, efficient and affordable transportation of products to mar-

in the region survey key clusters to determine the skill sets needed by each cluster

- Map workforce development assets in the region, focusing on programs that match the identified needs
- Determine program gaps
- Work with industry leaders, educational institutions and service providers, to develop potential workforce development options
- Set benchmarks to measure success
- Determine what resources are needed to fund and sustain programs

**ACTIONS YEAR 2:**

- Gain commitments from training institutions

**ACTIONS YEAR 3 AND BEYOND:**

- Revise programs as needed



**Strategy 2: Expand the vendor base for manufacturing facilities, keeping more money in the region and the State and helping the manufacturers to better compete in the global marketplace.**

**ACTIONS YEAR 1:**

- In cooperation with industry sector representative, determine services/products manufacturers are purchasing outside the region
- Identify regional sources for the identified products and services
- Work with vendor companies to determine whether they have the capacity to deliver the needed products or services
- If assistance is needed, work with service providers, funding sources and New York State Agencies to identify resources to help

**ACTIONS YEAR 2:**

- If no businesses currently located in the region are able to provide the needed products/services, work with the manufacturers to determine if there is enough demand to support a new supplier
- If a new vendor would be sustainable, work with manufacturers to identify businesses

from other areas of the State that could expand into the region or companies from outside New York State that could be recruited and relocated

- Create a recruitment plan – identifying resources needed, sources for the resources and setting timelines/benchmarks

**ACTIONS YEAR 3 AND BEYOND:**

- Begin recruitment of companies identified by the manufacturers
- Identify regions both inside and outside the U.S. where vendors with the products and services are located.
- Develop a plan to market to vendors in the identified regions - identifying resources needed and sources for those resources
- Begin recruitment in regions identified in plan
- Measure success using benchmarks
- Institutionalize process and expand to other industry clusters

**Economic Cluster Specific Strategies**

**AEROSPACE AND TRANSPORTATION EQUIPMENT**

■ The North Country region has become an emerging center for the manufacture of Transportation Equipment, attracting and

successfully hosting major core producers such as Bombardier Transportation (railcars and locomotives), Nova Bus (transit buses) and New York Air Brake (railroad brake systems), as well as a large contingent of component and specialized service companies supplying these and other out of area transportation equipment operations. Currently centered upon the production of mass transit equipment (rail and bus), this regional cluster represents a key strategic opportunity for the North Country to be a major part of the emerging “green economy” and to develop greater high technology employment. It also provides a cornerstone for the attraction of other “transportation equipment” related enterprises (such as alternative energy/hybrid vehicles of various kinds) which can benefit from a workforce trained in easily transferable skills and from the growing presence of suppliers able to meet the need for various components and support services.

Building upon the existing transportation equipment cluster and the availability of the impressive aviation facilities at Plattsburgh International Airport (the former Plattsburgh Air Force Base), Aerospace is embraced by the

NCREDC as a strategic opportunity in the North Country. Located one hour from Montreal, one of the top aerospace centers in the world, Plattsburgh International is being actively marketed and positioned as “Montreal’s U.S. Airport and Aerospace Park”, and has attracted a pending investment of a \$200 million project for the planned creation of a high-tech Maintenance, Repair & Overhaul (MRO) complex for wide-body aircraft. Supporting and facilitating aerospace and other aviation-related enterprises at Plattsburgh, and also in potential association with Fort Drum and the Defense Cluster in Watertown, with related supplier activity envisioned throughout the region, is supported as an important priority for strategic cluster development in the North Country.

**Strategy I: Workforce Development**

**ACTIONS YEARS 1 THROUGH 5:**

- Continuous development and upgrading of training programs and resources in support of the Transportation Equipment and Aerospace cluster, including programs and initiatives at the region’s community colleges, Plattsburgh Aeronautical Institute, area BOCES, Clarkson

University (Aeronautical Engineering as well as Advanced Materials), and SUNY Plattsburgh and Clarkson University (Global Supply Chain Management).



**Strategy 2: Airport Infrastructure Improvements**

ACTIONS YEARS 1 THROUGH 5:

- Actively facilitate and promote the continued development of facilities and infrastructure at Plattsburgh International Airport and communities adjacent to Fort Drum, in support of the attraction and accommodation of aerospace, aviation and defense related investment and job creation as a priority opportunity for successfully growing employment in the North Country.
- Support infrastructure improvement at other airports in the North Country as well, related to demonstrable opportunities for attracting and accommodating aerospace and aviation industrial investment and employment, including Watertown, Ogdensburg and Massena.

**Strategy 3: Transportation Equipment Cluster Support**

ACTIONS YEARS 1 THROUGH 2:

- Support finalization and implementation of a “Center of Excellence” for the production of 21st century railcars and locomotives, as envisioned and proposed by Bombardier Transportation, representing a transformative opportunity for the North Country regional economy and its Transportation and Aerospace cluster.

ACTIONS YEARS 1 THROUGH 5:

- Support contract opportunities for or transportation equipment companies in the North Country through various means, and will advocate for a more focused and committed approach

by New York State and its various transportation authorities in support of maximizing the retention of federal and state equipment contract dollars within New York State.

- Work actively and closely with our region’s Congressional delegation in support of the earliest possible approval by Congress and the President of a new multi-year federal transportation authorization bill to facilitate greater contract opportunities for our North Country transportation equipment providers and their suppliers.
- Work closely with our regional transportation equipment companies over the next five years to identify and actively support anticipated opportunities related to facility expansions, equipment and technology upgrades, and changing workforce recruitment and training needs. Responding positively and collaboratively to all such opportunities as they emerge will be a continuous strategic priority.

**Strategy 4: Aerospace Marketing**

ACTIONS YEARS 1 THROUGH 5:

- Aerospace is an especially global industry and its development in the North Country requires meaningful, high level engagement and visibility on a global level. With this in mind, the NCREDC will seek a continuation of a past and current partnership with Empire State Development and others in securing a visible and effective exhibition space and presence at the Farnborough and Paris International Air Shows.

2

Number of the nation’s top 10 logistics and shipping terminals that are located in the North Country.

## Biotech

■ THE NORTH COUNTRY is the home of Trudeau Institute, a world-renowned research facility in operation in Saranac Lake since 1884. Trudeau scientists work to improve our understanding of the human immune system. Saranac Lake is also home to several small but dynamic biotech companies with specialized products used by researchers, hospitals and universities around the globe. These companies could do business anywhere in the world but chose Saranac Lake, with its peaceful waterfront, beautiful mountains and superb quality of life as their preferred location.

Doing business in a rural area like the Adirondacks is not without its challenges. Getting a product that can save a life across the country quickly can sometimes be a problematic. Sharing resources with universities and other research facilities is more difficult than it would be in a metropolitan area. These issues need to be addressed if the North Country is to attract other bio-related companies, keep the current research facilities and businesses in the region as they grow, and help the next generation of innovators to take good ideas from the lab to the marketplace.

The North Country's biotech cluster also features major facilities in Rouses Point and Chazy owned by Pfizer. The Rouses Point site includes a pharma manufacturing complex of almost 1 million SF and a highly specialized chemical development laboratory facility. Nearby Chazy hosts a state-of-the-art vivarium and testing/research complex. The Chazy site

has been closed but is being maintained during current marketing efforts. The Rouses Point complex is largely closed, with remaining Pfizer manufacturing activity due to cease in the next few years; it is also currently being marketed. These modern and productive facilities, with a surrounding ready workforce, present a major opportunity to attract new biotech and pharma related investment and jobs and their successful reuse is an established priority for the NCREDC and the State of New York.

***Strategy 1: Support the existing small but dynamic biotechnology cluster in the Saranac Lake/Lake Placid area and encourage other biotech companies to locate in the region, including early-stage biomedical tool companies. Having a larger bio-cluster presence in the region will help large and small biotech facilities to stay, expand and thrive.***

### ACTIONS YEAR 1:

- Identify and address barriers to entry into the biotech cluster in New York to facilitate the attraction of new companies

### ACTIONS YEAR 2:

- Identify opportunities to attract early-stage biomedical tool companies to the region
  - Construct or renovate a facility near or adjacent to existing biotech facilities to provide expansion space for existing companies or space for new early-stage companies
  - Utilize equipment and capacity at Trudeau Institute to help companies develop new

products

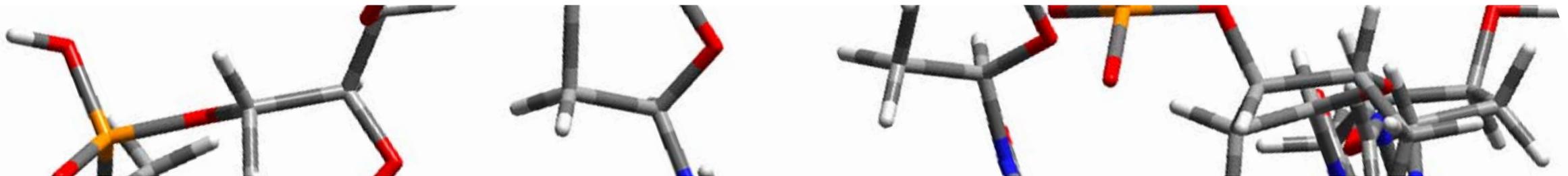
### ACTIONS YEAR 3:

- Establish a public/private biotech Equity Investment Fund to assist existing biotech businesses and attract new companies to the region
  - Explore public and private funding sources
  - Develop an advisory board with expertise in both bioscience and finance to manage the fund
  - Determine benchmarks and measurements that will demonstrate the performance of the Fund

***Strategy 2: Actively and aggressively support the collaborative marketing of the Pfizer facilities in partnership with ESD, Pfizer Pharmaceuticals and the community.***

### ACTIONS YEAR 1:

- Continue the existing collaborative marketing effort, both globally and in targeted markets such as the biotech sector in neighboring Canada. This must include an active and sustained readiness by the NCREDC and the State of New York to move quickly and effectively to work with prospective reuse opportunities as they emerge.



## Defense/Fort Drum

■ FORT DRUM is the single largest employer in Upstate New York. At the end of Federal fiscal year 2010, the soldier population at Fort Drum was 19,447, the civilian employment was 4,826. The combined payroll for the Fort Drum employees was \$1.21 billion. The total economic impact for Fort Drum operations inclusive of payroll for FY 2010 was \$1.505 billion. The total direct economic output to the North Country when considering direct expenditures, indirect expenditures, and induced expenditures, is calculated to be in excess of \$2.2 billion.

Approximately 54% of the soldiers have dependents. Of that number 3,670 (35%) live in base housing, the remainder live in the various communities around Fort Drum. An estimated 1,100 single soldiers not assigned to the barracks also live on the market in various communities.

Military personnel and spouses enhance the skilled workforce in our region, and they bring a cultural diversity to the area as well, resulting in an enhanced quality of life to area residents. The many school age dependent children attend area schools as the Post has no schools of its own. This is the largest and only installation of its size not to have an on post hospital. Both soldiers and their dependents use community resources for such medical requirements. These families are truly integrated into the North Country fabric of life.

Programs such as the proposed Homeward Bound initiative can provide added support for the defense cluster and for the soldiers' families living in the North Country.



## Strategy 1: Address the shortage of rental housing available for soldiers and their families in the Fort Drum area and, in turn, improve the quality of housing options for the community as a whole.

### ACTIONS YEARS 1 THROUGH 2:

- Continue to support the Community Rental Housing Program (CRHP) to create new rental stock.
- Ensure that soldiers and family members are fully welcomed and included into the many North Country communities convenient to them.

### ACTIONS YEARS 2 THROUGH 5:

- Represent the community to the outside development teams that frequent the changing scope of activity at Fort Drum.
- Increase and expand the CRHP model to induce more rehabilitation of older stock.

## Strategy 2: Provide a regional market plan and site selection options specifically targeted towards businesses that complement and support Fort Drum and the North Country.

### ACTIONS YEAR 1:

- Add resources to the already established Drum Country Business marketing effort.
- When appropriate and applicable replicate the site selector marketing effort in other parts of the region.

### ACTION YEARS 2 THROUGH 5:

- Target existing defense contractors not already in the New York or regional market.
- Promote cross border business by establishing regional offices and services that capitalize on "Drum Country".



## Distribution

■ ALTHOUGH not a classic hub area surrounding a major metro city, the North Country has become a significant center for Distribution based largely on its strategic location on the Canadian border with several commercial border crossings serving shipping and warehousing activities associated with growing U.S.-Canadian commerce, as well as inbound and outbound shipping at the nearby Port of Montreal. This hub includes near border operations by a large number of customs brokers, many of them global companies (UPS, FedEx, etc.), as well as other warehouse and distribution centers serving international operations in the U.S. market and also supporting Canada bound export activity. While this sector has recently been depressed due to the current global recession, there is every expectation that economic recovery and growth will reenergize it and offer renewed opportunities for investment and new jobs.

In addition to the cross-border dynamic, there are also regional distribution centers such as Kinney Drugs in Gouverneur and supply operations associated with large manufacturers such as Bombardier Transportation. The development of warehousing and supply chain operations within the region must also be pursued in concert with intra-regional dynamics going forward.

**Strategy 1: The NCREDC is committed to working to optimize fluidity at its commercial border crossings in terms of facilities, staffing, operations and processes. Especially critical will be the continued pursuit of U.S. federal and Canadian investment at the Alexandria Bay, Ogdensburg and Massena ports of entry.**

ACTIONS YEARS 1 THROUGH 5:

- The Council's regional advocacy efforts in Washington and Ottawa will reflect these distribution economy issues.

**Strategy 2: Encourage and support the maximization of activity and economic value from distribution and supply chain management activities associated with companies located within the North Country.**

ACTIONS YEAR 1:

- Support the earliest possible action in the Village of Gouverneur to carry out water system improvements that are required to secure the continued location of Kinney Drugs' warehouse and distribution operations there, inadequate supply and pressure currently necessitating an evaluation of potential relocation options.
- Support and take greater advantage of the expertise and support services of our region's two outstanding Global Supply Chain Management Programs, at SUNY Plattsburgh and at Clarkson University. Facilitate a dialogue and exploration of how these two programs might engage in greater collaboration and partnership in the future.

**Strategy 3: The NCREDC will continuously support transportation investments and enhancements in the region that will improve supply chain connections and distribution activities, including but**

**not limited to east-west highway investments, rail improvements, and developments in support of air cargo opportunities.**

ACTIONS YEARS 1 THROUGH 5:

- This will be a continuous, long-term NCREDC commitment to related promotion, marketing and advocacy.

### **Manufacturing**

■ MANUFACTURING in most cases provides the most value and impact on local or regional economies. In the North Country we have witnessed this firsthand with the presence and success of such manufacturers as Alcoa, International Paper, McCadam/Cabot Cheese and Kraft. We have also experienced the devastating effects when a large manufacturer pulls out of the region, as General Motors did in Massena and Pfizer is doing in Rouses Point.

The North Country needs a multi-pronged effort to maintain and grow manufacturing in our region. First, we need to support the existing manufacturing base more proactively, working with them to identify issues and work collaboratively to resolve them. Second, we need to promote and encourage new manufacturers in the region, such as clean energy products, which are consistent with the Vision for the North Country Region.

**Strategy 1: Create a Business Retention and Expansion Plan for existing large manufacturers**

ACTIONS YEAR 1:

- Identify those large manufacturers in the region that are critical to the North Country region's economy and create plans to keep the manufacturers, local and regional government entities, and economic development resources connected so that they can continue to grow and support our economy.

# 223

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Miles of border with Canada,  
the United States' largest export market.

**Strategy 2: Manufacturing Cluster Support**

ACTIONS YEAR 3 AND BEYOND:

- Increase the resources and methods for technology transfer from Clarkson University, Paul Smith’s College and other institutions, both inside and outside our region, to assist manufacturers in resolving issues and becoming more competitive globally.

**Combined Vision for entrepreneurial pioneers and small business start-ups: To attract and nurture entrepreneurial pioneers to cultivate innovative clusters in our rural communities and to catalyze the highest per capita rate of small business start-ups in the State**

**Strategy 1: Foster development of small businesses and entrepreneurial activities that add value to local resources.**

Small business and entrepreneurial development in the North Country is defined, supported and promoted by a vast array of community-based, regional, state and federal entities. The diversity of the region lends itself to a unique blend of commerce and ingenuity and cultivates an environment where in small businesses and entrepreneurial spirit can grow and thrive. The North Country has never really conformed to a “one size fits all” business model; hence the inherent “disconnects” often seen between government incentives and the actual needs of small businesses and/or entrepreneurs.

Regional small business support tools must be designed first and foremost by recognizing that each community in the North Country is unique and needs to find its own particular path to success. In order to attract and nurture entrepreneurial pioneers to cultivate innovative clusters in our rural communities and catalyze the highest per capita rate of small business

start-ups in the State the following Action Items must be taken:

ACTIONS YEAR 1:

- Establish a regional microenterprise grants and loans program that complements state resources;
- Foster entrepreneur-friendly communities by providing user-friendly information and resources on navigating local regulations in a variety of media; and
- Expand the Business Incubator program located in Potsdam to better support the entire region.

ACTIONS YEAR 2:

- Establish a marketing and outreach program to inform young adults of the opportunities to work, live and play in the North Country. Create marketing materials in a variety of media that speak to the region’s high quality of life, need for community leaders and skilled and professional workforce, opportunities for

entrepreneurship, and resources available to those who choose to stay here;

- Establish a “Welcome Home to the North Country” program leader to host a “one-stop shop” of resources for potential returnees, including information on housing, small business development, workforce development and job placement;
- Establish a mentor network of successful community leaders and business people to work hands-on with interested high school and college students to understand opportunities available to them; and
- Develop a plan for additional business incubator centers in other areas of the North Country Region.

ACTION YEAR 3 AND BEYOND:

- Establish and grow regionally based venture/equity funds for business start-ups.

**Strategy 2: Recognize and support the role of active arts and cultural centers in attracting innovators and creating vibrant communities.**

ACTIONS YEAR 1 THROUGH 5:

- Complete the development of the Strand Performing Arts Center in Plattsburgh
- Support other performing arts centers including the Tahawus Lodge project in Ausable Forks

**50** Percent of businesses in the North Country that have 10 or fewer employees.

***Vision: Mobilize the creativity and capacity of the graduates of our outstanding places of higher learning***

■ THE NORTH COUNTRY is home to ten higher education institutions that are widely distributed around the region. These institutions include several community colleges whose student bodies are mostly comprised of young people who grew up in the region. The three four-year SUNY colleges in the region attract many out of region students but also offer regional community college graduates and other students from the region a high-quality low-cost commuter college experience. The three private institutions in the region offer opportunity for students from the region but attract the

ACTIONS:

- Create an investment fund designed to provide seed capital and support for group scholarship and research which is undertaken jointly by two or more North Country educational institutions with commercial outcomes.
- Encourage the institutions of higher learning to become mixed-use centers of the North Country knowledge community by underwriting business incubators proximate to the institutions in the region. Beyond mere outreach, this strategy would welcome entrepreneurs into the array of amenities provided to the institution's faculty, students and staff, providing a truer and more lasting connection between the institutions and the entrepreneurial community.

- Offer pro-bono legal and accounting assistance to faculty seeking to provide regional business or engineering consulting services.

ACTIONS YEAR 3 AND BEYOND:

- Seek foundation and governmental support to grow the investment fund.
- Market on-campus consulting services and opportunities for faculty-led student work on behalf of regional businesses.

***Strategy 2: Reduce obstacles so that North Country residents can easily return to post secondary education or begin in their post secondary education at institutions in the region, including apprenticeships.***



majority of their students from outside the region.

To achieve the North Country's Vision, it will be important that graduates of the region's colleges and universities see professional and career opportunities here so that they can choose to remain in the North Country when their schooling is complete. Introducing these students into community activities and integrating their enthusiasm into North Country communities can be beneficial to all.

***Strategy 1: Recognize the North Country's higher education cluster and design and implement incentives for collaborative research and entrepreneurial activity among and between them.***

- Dedicate staff and faculty resources for the solving of system problems of regional business issues in such areas of regional strength as supply chain, advanced materials and environmental analysis.

ACTIONS YEAR 1:

- Investigate costs and obstacles to offering access to on-campus amenities like gyms, golf courses, pools, and faculty clubs to entrepreneurs active at university-based incubators.
- Investigate opportunities for arranging faculty work and teaching assignments so that group scholarship, research and faculty business consulting are more feasible.

ACTIONS YEAR 2:

- Market the amenities package to potential entrepreneurs.

ACTIONS:

- Ensure that all SUNY four-year campuses accept corresponding credits earned at any SUNY campus.
- Using a consortium approach, offer regionally accepted on-line and web-based courses acceptable at all other regional four-year and two-year institutions, respectively.
- Support universal North Country access to low cost, high-speed broadband and telecommunications.
- Organize a cross-region paid internship program for full-time students from the ten regional institutions.

ACTIONS YEAR 1:

- Identify existing articulation agreements between area institutions and evaluate their successes and the obstacles to success.
- Facilitate an inter-institution meeting of the internship staffs at all ten institutions with the goal of increasing opportunities for regional students to secure paid internships within the region.

ACTIONS YEAR 2:

- Meet with SUNY Central to begin to discuss how to standardize SUNY on-line and web-based courses to make returning to school at a regional institution less problematic.
- Incentivize internship placement staff to seek inter-regional placements.

ACTIONS YEAR 3 AND BEYOND:

- Stage events at all regional institutions to market the ease of returning to higher education at any North Country institution.
- Provide incentives to North Country residents with less than two years of full-time higher education remaining to accomplish to qualify for a four-year degree to use on-line and web-based courses to ease their return to the “classroom”.

***Strategy 3: Elevate the access of the residents of the North Country to arts and culture through integration of cultural activities for higher education students and North Country residents.***

ACTIONS:

- Provide cost effective on-campus venues for cultural activities.
- Integrate some on-campus cultural productions with community participants.
- Use off-campus venues for campus productions with little or no cost to regional audiences such as the Strand in Plattsburgh.
- Invest in the development of arts and culture venues for community-wide use such as proposed at Clarkson University.

ACTIONS YEAR 1:

- Using the SUNY Plattsburgh Choral Union - Champlain Valley Voices collaboration at SUNY Plattsburgh as a model. Survey staff, students and community participants to gain insight into the benefits and challenges of such campus-based collaborations.
- Experiment with offering student level prices to community members to increase audience size and to interest community members in cultural offerings on campus.

ACTIONS YEAR 2:

- Based on the research/surveys of the SUNY Plattsburgh program, develop an implementation template for other institutions.
- Offer financial and academic incentives to campus-based arts and cultural groups to bring activities to underserved areas, perhaps in association with regional arts councils.

ACTIONS YEAR 3 AND BEYOND:

- Monitor the increase in mutual recognition of the value of higher educational institutions to the region.
- Encourage businesses in the region to do on-campus recruitment events at all 10 institutions.

70

Percent of the colleges and universities in the North Country that are nationally ranked for excellence.

***Vision: Elevate global recognition of the region as one of the special places on the planet to visit, live, work and study.***

THE CREATION of a world-class brand embraced by key stakeholders throughout the Region and intelligently communicated to traditional and new global markets will sustainably foster a broad public desire to be associated with the Region and share in its future. In doing that it will give every business in the Region an advantage they do not now have. Agricultural and artisan producers, tourism businesses, small and large communities, entrepreneurs, universities and colleges, and existing businesses will gain exponentially from a strong brand. Our Region has a distinctive heritage, and the people who live here represent rich traditions in the arts, culture, and economic development of New York State.

The Region has a compelling story to tell, and needs a brand that presents us as a coherent, cohesive, uniquely valuable place to an increasingly diverse global market. This bold initiative in its start-up phase requires public sector financial assistance; from the get go, recruitment of private sector investment will be sought and as the benefits of a Regional brand become increasingly apparent, the public sector share of the costs will diminish.

After decades of fragmented identities based on political or sector boundaries, it is time to create a transformational brand identity that defines the North Country Region, and supports the sub brands that make the diversity of the Region so attractive. The development of this Regional brand starts with research and outreach to all the potential beneficiaries and stakeholders to identify and gather support for common objectives and the benefits of a coordinated effort. From early research we know that the word ‘Adirondack’ evokes emotionally positive, powerful responses and will likely be an integral part of the Regional brand identity. Today the word is



used by many different organizations without a focused coordination, by some to describe products not even made in the United States, much less in the North Country Region.

***Strategy 1: Create and manage a transformational regional “brand” which powerfully communicates the compelling values, identity, and resources of the people, places, and products of the North Country region.***

***Strategy 2: Foster the development and enhancement of sub-regional plans and marketing analyses that identify opportunities to attract more businesses, students, and ‘boomer’ retirees; drive new markets for agricultural and artisan producers; encourage new investment in the Region; create higher value-added opportunities for Regional products and services; grow the number of visitors to the Region, and; increase tax revenue to the State.***

**ACTIONS YEAR 1:**

- Prepare and administer qualitative and quantitative research surveys to select stakeholders, potential investors, past and potential visitors, current and prospective customers for regional artisans and manufacturers
- Involve 750 to 1000 residents through a series of 40-50 facilitated meetings to seek opinions and concepts for a brand identity, with local community leaders, representative organizations for local food production and distribution, cultural organizations, tourism promotion agencies, tourism destinations, hospitality venues, farmers, loggers, artisans, local communities, chambers of commerce, business owners, existing manufacturers, schools and universities, and



- potential investors in those strategic clusters identified by the North Country Regional Council that would benefit from a coordinated and coherent brand identity and marketing effort
- Analyze and synthesize the information obtained
- Develop brand identity usage guidelines
- Develop authentication guidelines for food producers, artisans, manufacturers, “made in the region” stakeholders

**ACTIONS YEAR 2:**

- Complete research and outreach effort
- Identify creative resources necessary to assist with implementation of the program
- Create oversight brand team with representatives from the major stakeholders to provide perspective and advice on the implementation and success of the branding program
- Develop a complete brand identity system based on research and outreach
- Communicate the brand identity system to stakeholders and outreach meeting participants
- Develop brand messages based on research for both internal and external target audiences
- Develop and design collateral in digital, print, and electronic media; include focus group testing of messages and materials and fine-tuning as necessary.
- Coordinate global brand launch using media (all formats)
- Create sustainable web-based brand platform including a web 2.0 site and social media presence.
- Plan and implement media buys (all formats) to promote the brand to a global community and help recruit investors and entrepreneurs
- Hire and train staff to handle social media and website requirements

47

Percent of New York's  
Scenic Byways that are in  
the North Country.

ACTIONS YEAR 3 AND BEYOND:

- Continuing research to measure and advance effectiveness
- Compile and communicate success metrics annually
- Adapt the messages to stay current
- Expand digital market penetration to measurably increase share of mind for the Region
- Enhance penetration of global markets with effective and targeted messages
- Recruit private sector investment share to more than 50% of annual program costs
- Negotiate sustained public sector financial support by a dedicated share of the increased revenues generated in the region

***Vision: Activate tourism as a driver to diversify our economies.***

■ TOURISM offers the most viable opportunity to diversify and ignite the North Country economy by capitalizing on existing demand to attract a wide variety of private investment that will transform communities. Tourism is a \$1 billion annual industry in the North Country which in 2010 spun off \$122 million in local and state tax revenues. It has a low upfront investment cost and a quicker return on investment than many other industries and is well-positioned to drive a more robust North Country economy.

The sparsely populated communities of the North Country on their own do not have a critical mass of residents to support the revitalization necessary to attract private investment or the amenities that communities need to grow and thrive. However, the tourism industry, with its potential market of 120 million visitors within a day's distance, can be the catalyst to drive economic development in the North Country by adding enough demand for services and amenities to sustain businesses for residents and create year-round jobs. The development of tourism infrastructure (lodging, retail, restaurants, recreation, arts and culture)

can transform the region by driving community development, which enhances quality of life, attracts more visitors and residents, and serves as the lever for attracting private investment and a diversity of jobs. The implementation of the strategies will have the additional benefit improving recreation and hospitality venues for all North Country residents.

***Strategy 1: Put in place tools to attract private investment which will drive demand to revitalize and diversify communities and create a climate that will allow entrepreneurs to flourish. Below are the recommended tools for the recruitment and development of tourism-related businesses. These strategies are based upon established programs successful elsewhere in North America but tailored to fit North Country's needs.***

ACTIONS YEAR 1:

- Creation of the Community Transformation Tourism Program to assist in furthering tourism-related development projects that will have a transformational impact on communities.

ACTIONS YEAR 2:

- Creation of a Tourism Investment Solicitor, a program that will provide regional tourism expertise to enable targeted recruitment of tourism businesses;
- Leverage existing brand equity to broaden awareness of the attributes of the North Country region.

***Strategy 2: Creation of the Tourism Business Revitalization Program, a mechanism to assist existing business owners to update amenities and provide funding to enable season extensions.***

ACTIONS YEAR 1:

- Creation of the Green Energy Tourism Fund to provide incentives for tourism-related businesses to convert to green energy technologies and practices to reduce costs, sustain natural resources and attract a new generation of environmentally conscious traveler;
- Regional Tourism Planning Initiative, to build connections between communities by taking advantage of opportunities already identified in the many community development plans.

***Strategy 3: Solicit recreational and competitive sporting events/competitions on the national and international level to leverage regional identify, sports tourism and economic activities.***

ACTIONS YEAR 1:

- Work with existing and new national and international sports organization to pursue sports on a more regional basis.

***Vision: Propagate an agricultural revolution as we help feed the region and the world***

■ THERE ARE challenges to the development of the North Country’s agriculture sector. Low availability of refrigerated warehousing, few central distribution points, limited USDA slaughterhouse facilities, financial support for ag-research in Northern New York and New York State is sporadic and reduced, and farm labor supply is a constant challenge.

These challenges need to be addressed to ensure the safety, reliability and sustainability of the North Country’s independent food supply. The alternative is to continue to export its food shopping dollars outside the State, denying New York State this commerce.

Prospects for enhancing economic growth and prosperity of the region’s agricultural heritage include upgrading and modernizing farm facilities to increase milk product quantity and quality that will help meet the growing global demand for food; improving the productivity of agricultural lands; improving farm operations through technical assistance and financial incentives; decreasing farm operation costs through renewable energy conversions; capitalizing on the region’s burgeoning local foods movement.

***Strategy 1: Maintain, establish and expand the presence of storage, processing and distribution facilities in the region to promote the sales of value-added agricultural products that are sold locally and globally.***

MOST OF the value-added production for locally-grown agricultural products (dairy, in particular) occurs outside the region, and the limited number of existing value-added production facilities is detrimental to the economic well-being of the North Country’s farming industry. Increasing value-added production of

agricultural goods in the region will raise the industry’s earnings and contributes to the regional and state economy.

**ACTIONS YEAR 1:**

- Coordinate with companies to sustain the continued operation of existing value-added processing facilities in the region, and assist with their modernization and expansion to increase production.
- Fund a market research and feasibility study that identifies opportunities for value-added production in the region. This study would: identify the number, location, type and capacity of existing storage, distribution and processing facilities in the region; quantify the type and volume of agricultural products that are exported outside the region for processing; and examine the demand and potential locations for new or expanded agricultural storage, distribution and value-added production facilities.

**ACTIONS YEAR 2:**

- Analyze project costs and public-private

investments necessary to sustain, establish, modernize and expand storage, distribution and production facilities.

**ACTIONS YEAR 3 AND BEYOND:**

- Collaborate with participating farmers to demonstrate the available supply of agricultural products needed for storage, distribution and value-added production purposes.
- Secure commitments from interested firms to establish new agricultural storage, value-added processing and distribution facilities.
- Compare accomplishments to performance measures, identify and assess unanticipated barriers discovered to date, and amend strategies as needed.

***Strategy 2: Increase and expand direct marketing sales with consumers, institutions, restaurants, and grocery stores to capitalize on the region’s burgeoning local food movement.***

DIRECT MARKETING increases the region’s money-multiplier effect when local customers purchase goods and services from local farm operations and agri-businesses that reinvest these funds in the North Country economy.

**ACTIONS YEAR 1:**

- Fund a survey that identifies direct marketing opportunities that can be established or expanded between farmers and local customers in the region. This survey will: quantify the number and locations of existing farms engaged in direct marketing and the volume of sales in the region; identify local institutions, businesses, restaurants, grocers, and communities that are interested in participating in direct marketing, and the type and volume

of goods they desire; determine what products and goods are available to meet the demand of institutions, businesses, restaurants, grocers, and consumers; and quantify the volume of agricultural products and the storage and distribution facilities that may be needed to satisfy direct marketing arrangements.

- Identify the resources needed to launch, print, publish, distribute and coordinate a multi-year direct marketing campaign.

**ACTIONS YEAR 2:**

- Fund programs that provide technical assistance and business planning to producers to: improve the quality of product grown; standardize the product; develop and increase consistent product availability; and implement strategies for branding and selling their products.
- Fund programs that provide cost sharing incentives to producers and agri-businesses for installing and/or modernizing facilities that are necessary for meeting wholesaler and consumer demand.
- Fund a marketing campaign that launches, creates, publishes, and distributes a “North Country Grown” product label to producers and agri-businesses by profiling local farms/agri-businesses in the media and the products they sell.

**ACTIONS YEAR 3 AND BEYOND:**

- Compare accomplishments to performance measures, identify and assess unanticipated barriers discovered to date, and amend strategies as needed.

1,000,000

Acres that are in agricultural production, supporting more than 4,200 North Country farms.

**Strategy 3: Increase the quantity and quality of agricultural products grown, produced and processed in the region by offering farmers and agri-businesses a comprehensive array of technical assistance services, education services, and cost-sharing incentives.**

INDUSTRY EARNINGS reflect the type, volume, and quality of the product sold. Technical assistance, education, and cost-sharing incentives for agricultural producers and agri-businesses can be used to improve business operations; reduce farm operational and production expenses; and educate and train the next generation of farmers and agri-business operators.

**ACTIONS YEAR 1:**

- Fund successful technical assistance, education programs and cost-sharing incentives that are offered to farmers and agribusinesses that demonstrate a valuable return on investment for the region's agricultural industry. Examples include: upgrading and modernizing facilities that increase product quantity, improve product quality or add-value; reducing operating expenses by converting farm and agribusiness facilities from conventional to renewable energy resources; incorporating environmental stewardship practices that satisfy CAFO requirements; workshops, courses, and technical training that improve herd, land and product management; and business assistance programs that strengthen a farm or agribusiness' technical, organizational,

- marketing, and managerial capacities.
- Fund projects that advance the region's emerging biomass energy industry and support the region's farmers and agribusinesses that grow and process biomass energy crops.

**ACTIONS YEAR 2:**

- Fund an assessment that examines collaborative opportunities between organizations such as industrial development agencies, soil and water conservation districts, Cornell Cooperative Extension offices, BOCES, universities, and the Miner Institute. The intent of the assessment will: identify gaps in services and programs that would benefit the region's agricultural industry; recommend collaborative approaches to meet the technical, educational and financial needs of the agricultural

**Vision: Create the greenest energy economy in the State**

■ WITH THE largest wind farm concentration in the State, the production of 2200 megawatts of clean hydropower, and the potential to develop a regional thermal energy economy based on local biomass (wood and grass), the North Country is poised to provide clean renewable energy to its own businesses and residents as well as leading the State in its commitment to the '45 by 15' Clean Energy Policy. This Policy challenges the State to meet 45 percent of its electricity needs by 2015 through increased energy efficiency and renewable energy. The '45 by 15' Clean Energy Policy proposes to reduce electricity end-use in 2015 by 15 percent below forecasted levels, while simultaneously meeting



industry; and identify successful services and programs that provide a valuable return on investment that should be expanded and replicated throughout the region.

**ACTIONS YEAR 3 AND BEYOND:**

- Secure commitments and leverage local resources from participating organizations to address findings and implement recommendations from the Year Two assessment.
- Compare accomplishments to performance measures, identify and assess unanticipated barriers discovered to date, and amend strategies as needed.

30 percent of the State's electricity supply needs through renewable resources.

The North Country's Clean Energy Strategy will catalyze the development of local businesses around production, distribution and maintenance of these systems; retain our energy dollars in the region rather than spending them outside the State and the nation; help the State meet its energy policy goals and reducing the State's dependence on imported oil.

The North Country advocates an approach where all clean energy options are considered and the best one is applied in each individual circumstance. Implementing the strategy utilizing each energy option outlined above is estimated to create 1200 jobs across the region.

**Strategy 1: Work with existing power distribution companies (e.g. – St. Lawrence Gas, National Grid and NYSEG) to plan and build energy networks to better link clean energy sources to the grid.**

**ACTIONS YEAR 1:**

- Outline challenges and limitations to existing infrastructure, break down issues into various categories: legislative, infrastructure type, regional challenges, local challenges.
- Hold meetings with electrical distributors and local governments on challenges and brainstorming possible solutions.
- Produce best practices report for small scale power economics. Work with appropriate agencies on height restrictions for wind turbines, dam removal and other issues as needed.
- Complete constraint identification, constraint relief options and develop initial plan to work thru each option.

**ACTIONS YEAR 2:**

- Bring on statewide political support to engage in legislative process. Support legislators in drafting legislation changes.
- Support legislation preparation and associated questions/answers.
- Goal: Legislation is adapted to allow for energy strategies to move forward.
- Support legislation preparation and associated questions/answers.

**ACTIONS YEAR 3 AND BEYOND:**

- Continue as needed to support legislative changes as needed
- Engage electrical distributors to begin planning to upgrade infrastructure to support Region-wide projects which are underway (under other strategies)
- Develop and implement communications plan to engage North Country residents on changes.

**Strategy 2: Promote Smart Growth principles by encouraging adaptive reuse of existing structures and new residential construction in or near villages and hamlets.**

**ACTIONS YEAR 1:**

- Complete NYSERDA Cleaner Greener Community Phase 1, Sustainability Plan and GHG Inventory
- Develop List of Regional projects for funding
- Create a stronger community of residents who share an interest in energy savings and emission reductions and use that community to build movement for implementing region-wide improvements
- Complete principles, share with municipalities and pilot where appropriate

**ACTIONS YEAR 2:**

- Develop management and support structure for incoming funds
- Develop and use metrics for management of green initiatives for the Region.
- Create local energy working groups within cities, towns and villages to support new ideas and upcoming projects
- Share pilot results with state agencies and developers, improve program for rollout/sharing with other community leaders.

**ACTIONS YEAR 3:**

- Implement monitoring program and track implementation of programs
- Track developer interest, investment, improve materials and rollout the additional North Country communities.

**Strategy 3: Maximize North Country utilization of energy efficiency resources and programs to reduce total housing and energy costs.**

**ACTIONS YEAR 1:**

- Coordinate with existing programs such as NYSERDA's Green Jobs Green New York, NYSERDA's Energy Smart Communities, utilities, NYSERDA's Empower program, the Wild Center's Adirondack Climate Action Plan and other ongoing programs, to enhance the rate and scale of energy retrofits
- Conduct outreach to targeted communities including education and case studies and testimonials from homeowners and businesses on benefits of the programs.
- Identify and enlist community-based partners who will assist in outreach
- Identify BPI certified contractors to do the audits and retrofits within each County and within reasonable working distance in interested target communities
- Build contractor awareness of benefits of energy efficiency; offer access to training through SUNY Canton's Center for Energy Efficiency and Building Science and other training centers
- Coordinate with NYSDOL Career One-Stop Centers to steer unemployed individuals to training opportunities

**ACTIONS YEAR 2:**

- Create referral program for energy retrofits from homeowner to homeowner and business to business. Experience in the region indicates that one of the best referral approaches is word of mouth, especially in rural communities. Making information about the program easily accessible and "share-able" through handouts, on-line and socially-networked information that participants can use to easily notify others in their neighborhoods, networks and circles of influence about the program benefits.

- Encourage additional contractors, including MWBE to become BPI accredited
- Support continued growth of a strong foundation of accredited contractors to encourage workers to leverage training opportunities currently in place
- Connect trainees with contractor employers to increase employment in this sector
- Continue actions from Year 1

**ACTIONS YEAR 3 AND BEYOND:**

- Assess success of Years 1 and 2 and adjust strategies if necessary
- Measure, track and report on the number of buildings that have been retrofitted
- Measure, track and report on the reduction in energy cost and GHG emissions
- Work with BOCES and Community Colleges to increase training opportunities for new and upcoming workforce
- Continue actions from Years 1 and 2

**Strategy 4: Invest in large and small clean energy technology businesses, including lighting and biomass**

**ACTIONS YEAR 1:**

**BIOMASS**

- Following up on past reviews, conduct a comprehensive assessment of biomass sources.
- Engage regional stakeholders on this issue including the existing and potential business sector, forest product companies, sustainability accreditation organizations, environmental interests and the public to reach common ground on the subject
- Identify residential, business or institutional partners who are interested in converting to biomass fuel

**Micro-Hydro**

- Gather data on existing dam infrastructure. Collect information on land-use, property, water conditions, local transmission infrastructure
- Develop report on equipment best practices, current technologies which can support small

“We have the ability to transport and ship all over the world and that allows firms to operate anywhere. As a business based in the Adirondacks, we feel appreciated by the community. This is a great place to raise your kids, and a great place to make a difference.”

**Jeff Allott**  
**Vice President New Products and Business Development**  
**General Composites**  
**Essex County**

- or micro-hydro installations
- Finalize report on identified sites

**ACTIONS YEAR 2:**

**BIOMASS**

- Use outcomes of Strategy 1 to move forward with implementing a biomass production (both enhancement of existing companies, as well as encouraging new business development)
- Use NYSERDA and other funding to convert energy systems within the region to use biomass as a fuel source
- Work to sign up an initial set of residential, business and/or institutional partners to utilize locally sourced biomass fuel
- Produce best practices for small scale power economics. Work with appropriate agencies on height restrictions for wind turbines, dam removal and other issues as needed.

**MICRO-HYDRO**

- Identify ten to twenty initial locations for further investigation, with the expectation that five to ten locations can be included in a first phase environmental and economic analysis
- Develop an information Toolkit for local landowners to support process
- Engage local construction and design companies on the program, and provide information on business opportunities

**ACTIONS YEAR 3 AND BEYOND:**

- Continue to grow biomass production. Expand and or explore business opportunities that will support local biomass production such as shipping, warehousing and retail systems
- Monitor and collect information on shifting energy use, conduct best practices, share improvements
- Through a media and local communications share the success stories of locally sourced energy
- Have five to ten hydro locations under development by private landowners, with support of electrical distributors

## Overarching Strategies

### CANADIAN CONNECTION:

■ NEW YORK STATE is recognized as a center for international trade and investment historically focused in New York City and bolstered by its manufacturing exports across the State. What is understood and actively embraced in the North Country is the rapid economic integration of the U.S. and Canada following the U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement of the 1980's. This agreement has shifted a 200 year pattern of predominantly east-west development in both countries to a new north-south corridor paradigm.

New York State hosts three of these north-south corridors -- the "Capital" Corridor from Ottawa and eastern Ontario through St. Lawrence and Jefferson Counties to Syracuse and Washington; the Quebec-New York Corridor from Montreal through Plattsburgh and Albany to New York City; and the Toronto-Buffalo connections along the Buffalo-Niagara frontier. Two of these corridor connections are in the North Country.

The North Country and its economic development community fully understand this, and its regional expertise must be valued and supported both to maximize the inherent economic opportunities for the North Country but also to serve the economic interests of the entire State.

The Council, therefore, commits to partnering with other regions in the State to exploit this economic opportunity, on behalf of New York State as a whole.

**Strategy 1: The North Country Regional Economic Development Council will lead initiatives to fully tap the power of the dynamic international border by actively and aggressively broadening and deepening its already powerful economic relationship with Ontario and Quebec, creating the most attractive, supportive and dynamic location for Canadian-based investment, travel and other economic activity in the United States. The Council will build upon the North Country's two existing bi-national corridor coalitions to steadily broaden and deepen its economic connectivity with Ontario and Quebec.**

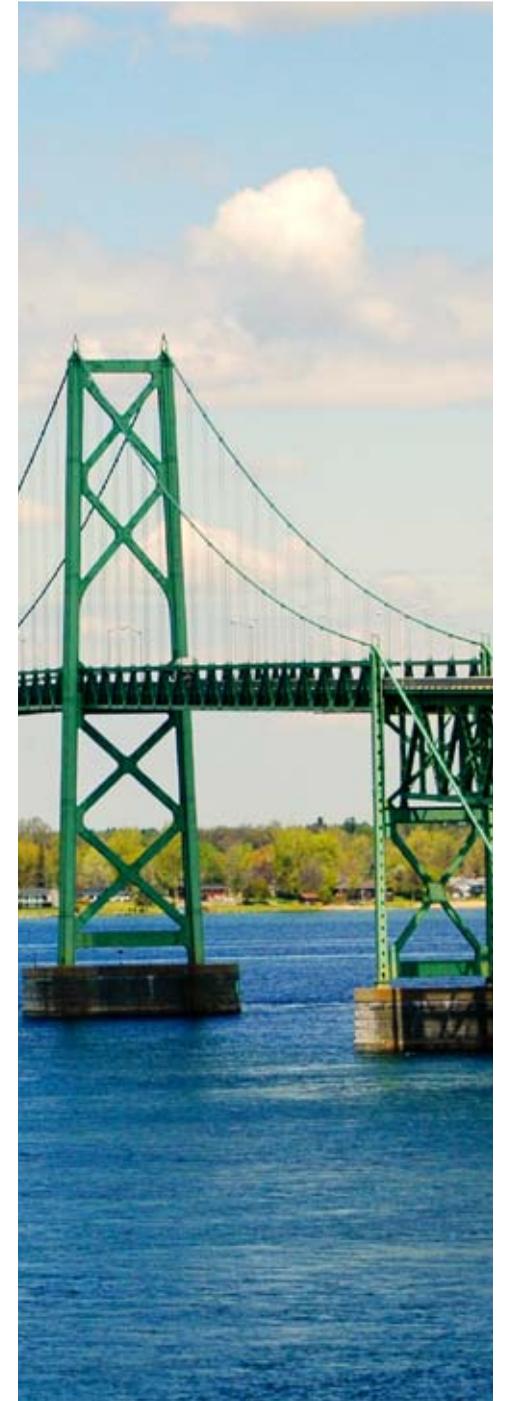
### ACTIONS YEARS 1 THROUGH 5:

- Build upon the framework of the 2001 "Quebec-New York Corridor Agreement" to establish a fresh agenda of action items in early 2012 in partnership with the Quebec Government and the Quebec business community, and work with Quebec and New York State to organize and conduct a fifth Quebec-New York Economic Summit in 2012 at a site in New York to be mutually agreed upon by the involved parties.
- Bring regional support and cooperation to the "Capital Corridor", including the conduct of its annual conference in 2012 and succeeding years, and work to strengthen coordination within our North Country region behind defined opportunities for broadening and deepening our region's economic connections with Ontario. This will include active exploration and pursuit of a New York-Ontario Economic Summit.

**Strategy 2: Optimize fluidity at the North Country's U.S. - Canadian Border Crossings, the relative ease and predictability of crossborder movement by both cars and commercial traffic is essential to achieving the Council's strategic aims and a successful North Country economic future.**

### ACTIONS YEARS 1 THROUGH 5:

- The NCREDC will, by early in 2012, develop and establish a North Country Border Agenda, including the identification of issues and needs related to infrastructure, staffing, operations, policies and practices. It will establish and engage in joint advocacy across the region with regard to the border and its fluidity, in Washington, Ottawa, Albany and the provinces. This will include direct involvement by the region's Congressional delegation, and the U.S. and Canadian consulates on both sides of the border, as well as key stakeholder organizations such as the Can/Am Border Trade Alliance. The Council will also work actively with the new North Country Border Caucus being formed in the State Legislature.
- The Council will coordinate these efforts on an on-going basis with those involved in the developing of the North Country Distribution Cluster. Improved east-west roadway infrastructure will complement the North Country Distribution Cluster and the north-south corridors.



**Strategy 3: The Council will enhance the effectiveness of the region’s economic development activities in Canada by encouraging and facilitating collaborative team approaches.**

ACTIONS YEAR 1 THROUGH 5:

- Includes such things as targeted trade shows and marketing activities, with a particular focus on Canadian-based investment opportunities in strategic clusters identified in this Plan (example: biotech, clean energy, etc.).
- 

**Community Development**

■ VIBRANT communities are key assets in economic development and, therefore, assisting and encouraging North Country community development efforts is a vital component of the North Country Regional Council’s Strategic Plan.

The extensive and inclusive process the Council has used to develop this Strategic Plan has already begun to forge the relationships and alliances that will be needed to ensure that North Country communities will be able to provide the services, infrastructure, and amenities that are essential to creating an appealing destination for tourists and site selectors as well as a high quality of life for its residents.

There are many long term vital strategies that may not have projects associated with them at this time, but are key to supporting the economic growth of the North Country. As such these vital strategies each support many of our vision statements and goals.

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**Strategy 1: Recognize the importance of community planning in achieving the NCREDC’s Vision of tourism, housing, arts, culture and infrastructure improvements.**

ACTIONS YEAR 1:

- Assist North Country communities in funding and implementing community planning efforts to strengthen their economies and improve the quality of life and services they offer residents through such initiatives as the Adirondack Partnership’s Adirondack Economic Development Strategy (Adirondack EDS).
- Assist communities in utilizing regional, state, and federal housing rehabilitation programs to improve the housing stock and provide employment for local contractors.
- Assist communities experiencing the downsizing and closure of state facilities such as Lyon Mountain, Camp Gabriels and others across the North Country.
- Assist local communities and counties in the region to find cost-effective methods to maintain local surface transportation infrastructure.

ACTIONS YEAR 2:

- Prepare regional and sub-regional market analyses that build upon the NCREDC’s Strategic Plan to inform local and regional economic development planning.
  - Create a regional inventory of current housing rehabilitation assistance and develop a strategy to expand assistance to serve all North Country communities.
  - Identify critical housing needs of North Country residents, including working families, retirees, students, professionals, and the homeless, both in terms of affordability and variety of housing options, and develop a strategy to meet those needs in Tug Hill, the Adirondack Park and other rural areas under served in housing.
- 

**Strategy 2: Support affordable broadband access throughout the North Country region.**

ACTIONS YEAR 1:

- Advance ongoing broadband funding acquisition, planning and construction activities and solicitation of additional funding to move toward the region’s goal of high speed internet access for all North Country communities.
- Create a team of experts from both private and public entities to prepare a joint strategy for bringing affordable broadband access to all residents and businesses in the North Country.
- Work with all pertinent agencies to complete the planning/study.

ACTIONS YEAR 2:

- Develop and access the funding to support this strategy.

ACTIONS YEAR 3:

- Implement the program/solution.
-

**Strategy 3: Plan and permit a natural gas extension pipeline in non-service areas of the North Country, including a North-South linkage through Ticonderoga.**

PROVIDING a source of natural gas to replace less green fuels such as heating oil and diesel is consistent with the region's goal of having the greenest economy in the State. And at the same time, this will reduce costs to residents and businesses, helping them to grow.

**ACTIONS YEAR 1:**

- Create a unified regional group to define this project and serve as the point of contact with the utility companies, Adirondack Park Agency, and NYSERDA and NYPA.
- Work with all agencies to determine next steps in the planning/study.
- Apply for study funds.

**ACTIONS YEAR 2:**

- Complete the study, determine next steps, and prepare implementation strategy.
- Gather commitments from all agencies.

**ACTIONS YEAR 3 THROUGH 5:**

- Apply for funding
- Prioritize routes.
- Start Construction.

**Strategy 4: Preservation and optimization of the North Country's rail infrastructure as a vital supporting asset for future economic development and the region's desired place in the green economy. This will include, but not be limited to, the development of High Speed Rail in the Montreal-New York City corridor; preservation and full rehabilitation of the Adirondack railroad infrastructure from Remsen to Lake Placid; preservation and rehabilitation of the CSX rail infrastructure serving Newton Falls and southern St. Lawrence County and consideration of the relocation of rail lines that hamper community opportunities for economic growth.**

**ACTIONS YEARS 1 THROUGH 5:**

- Support the development of High Speed Rail in the Montreal-New York corridor, following established plans and commitments by NYSDOT and the Quebec Government. This must include collaboration with other regions in New York hosting portions of the Adirondack and Empire passenger rail corridors, via the statewide Chairman's Committee to be convened as a part of the Regional Plan process, and active advocacy for continued federal investment in High Speed Rail and for the continued inclusion of the Adirondack Corridor from Rouses Point to Schenectady as a target for federal and state investment

as funds become available. This aim will also be directly supported as part of our region's Canadian Connection strategy, being a shared aim of New York and Quebec, and will be the subject of the next Quebec-New York Summit targeted for 2012.

- Support for state, federal and private funding for the eventual rehabilitation of the entire Adirondack railroad from Remsen to Lake Placid as the last remaining rail access into the central Adirondacks, with accommodation for recreational trail use as well, as much as possible. First priority shall be accorded to fully rehabilitating the segment between Saranac Lake and Tupper Lake as phase one. Protected as a listed asset on the National Register of Historic Places, this infrastructure offers near-term tourism benefits and long-term strategic opportunities related to general economic development and the green movement of people and goods in and out of the Adirondack Park.
- Support for state, federal and private funding for the rehabilitation of the CSX rail infrastructure from the Watertown area to Newton Falls and southern St. Lawrence County, in support of paper making and other economic opportunities in that part of the region.



***NCREDC CFA Endorsement Criteria:***

■ REGIONAL COUNCIL endorsements provide additional scoring support to state agencies in determining priority projects statewide. The relevant state agencies will evaluate applications, taking into consideration the Regional Council endorsement and pre-established State agency eligibility, feasibility and programmatic criteria for funding, which will result in statewide rankings of projects for each program.

The NCREDC submits the following endorsement criteria for use in CFA application process. The standards set forth below will pertain to projects applying for CFA appropriations. ■

Does the project meet the basic Strategic Plan criteria?  
TOTAL AVAILABLE POINTS: 20

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Does the Project advance the Vision as prescribed by the Strategic Plan?  
TOTAL POINTS: 1

The Project does advance the Vision  
Award 1 Point

The Project does not advance the Vision  
Award 0 Points

**Is there significant community and stakeholder support for the Project?**  
TOTAL POINTS: 2

The Project is a “priority project” as delineated by the priority project list  
If yes, Award 2 Points

**-OR-**

The Project is supported by a local, county or regional government and/or is a project reflected in an approved local or regional plan  
If yes, Award 2 Points

The Project is not a “priority project” but falls into one of the regional strategic clusters as defined by the Strategic Plan  
If yes, Award 1 Point

The Project has significant community and/or stakeholder opposition  
If yes, Award 0 points

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Is the Project identified in and/or advances a strategy that is part of the Strategic Plan?  
TOTAL POINTS: 7

The Project is identified in the Strategic Plan  
If yes, Award 7 Points

The Project is not identified but advances a strategy in the Strategic Plan  
If yes, Award 5 Points

The Project is related to but does not advance a strategy in the Strategic Plan  
If yes, Award 3 Points

The Project is not identified and does not advance a strategy that in the Strategic Plan  
If yes, Award 0 Points

**Is the Project of significant importance to advancing the regional implementation agenda?**  
TOTAL POINTS: 3

The Project is identified in the regional implementation agenda  
If yes, Award 3 Points

The Project is not included but advances the regional implementation agenda  
If yes, Award 2 Points

The Project is not included but is related to an item in the regional implementation agenda  
If yes, Award 1 Point

The Project does not advance the regional implementation agenda  
If yes, Award 0 Points

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Does the Project leverage other funding sources?  
TOTAL POINTS: 3

**Use if Private Sector Economic Development Project:**

The Project is more than 75 percent funded by private sector investment  
If yes, Award 3 Points

More than 50 percent but less than 75 percent of the project is funded by private sector investment  
If yes, Award 2 Points

Less than 50 percent of the project is funded by private investment  
If yes, Award 1 Point

**-OR-**

**Use if Public Sector/Community Development Project:**

The Project provides a match  
If yes, Award 3 Points

The Project does not require a match  
If yes, Award 2 Points

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**If funded, can the results of the Project be monitored and evaluated against the Strategic Plan’s performance measures?**  
TOTAL POINTS: 4

The Project can be monitored and evaluated using the performance measures included in the Strategic Plan  
If yes, Award 4 Points

The Project cannot be monitored and evaluated using the performance measures in the Strategic Plan but does include specific benchmarks and standards  
If yes, Award 3 Points

The Project includes opportunities for public review of the project’s progress and/or adaptive strategies for modifying the project based on measurable results  
If yes, Award 2 Points

The Project cannot be monitored and evaluated using performance measures in the Strategic Plan and does not include any specific benchmarks or standards  
If yes, Award 0 Points

*\* See Appendix C for CFA Scoring Criteria Matrix*

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# Project Assessment

NCREDC CFA ENDORSEMENT CRITERIA

## **NCREDC Project Selection Criteria:**

Regional Council Priority Project selection criteria have been developed to identify “ready-to-go” and transformative projects in order to achieve desired economic growth based on the endorsed Strategic Plan. Criteria will be applied to identify transformational projects and other priority actions that are central to achieving the region’s Vision and address the needs and issues most critical for enhancing the region’s economy. Criteria are both quantitative and qualitative. The NCRED Council submits the following criteria to be used in identifying priority projects for the region.

**TOTAL PROJECT POINTS = 40**

*(NOTE: 50% of a Project’s total score is based how well it meets the criteria of the Strategic Plan)*

### **DOES THE PROJECT MEET THE STRATEGIC PLAN CRITERIA?**

**TOTAL POINTS: 20**

#### **Does the Project advance the Vision as prescribed by the Strategic Plan?**

**TOTAL POINTS: 1**

The Project does advance the Vision  
Award 1 Point

The Project does not advance the Vision  
Award 0 Points

#### **Is there significant community and stakeholder support for the Project?**

**TOTAL POINTS: 2**

#### **If Project meets any of the following criteria Award 2 Points**

The Project is supported by a local, county or regional government and/or is a project reflected in an approved local or regional plan and/or project is part of a multi-jurisdictional/regional effort

The Project falls into one of the regional strategic clusters as defined by the Strategic Plan and/or builds on or taps into the region’s connection with Canada

#### **Is the Project identified in and/or advances a strategy that is part of the Strategic Plan?**

**TOTAL POINTS: 7**

The Project is identified in the Strategic Plan  
If yes, Award 7 Points

The Project is not identified but advances a strategy in the Strategic Plan  
If yes, Award 5 Points

The Project is related to but does not advance a strategy in the Strategic Plan  
If yes, Award 3 Points

The Project is not identified and does not advance a strategy that in the Strategic Plan  
If yes, Award 0 Points

#### **Is the Project of significant importance to advancing the regional implementation agenda? TOTAL POINTS: 3**

The Project is identified in the regional implementation agenda  
If yes, Award 3 Points

The Project is not included but advances the regional implementation agenda  
If yes, Award 2 Points

The Project is not included but is related to an item in the regional implementation agenda  
If yes, Award 1 Points

The Project does not advance the regional implementation agenda  
If yes, Award 0 Points

#### **Does the Project leverage other funding-sources?**

**TOTAL POINTS: 3**

#### **Use if Private Sector Economic Development Project:**

The Project is more than 75 percent funded by private investment or other non-state funds  
If yes, Award 3 Points

More than 50 percent but less than 75 percent of the project is funded by private investment or other non-state funds  
If yes, Award 2 Points

Less than 50 percent of the project is funded by private investment or other state funds  
If yes, Award 1 Point

**-OR-**

#### **Use if Public Sector/Community Development Project:**

The Project provides a match  
If yes, Award 3 Points

The Project does not require a match  
If yes, Award 2 Points

#### **If funded, can the results of the Project be monitored and evaluated against the Strategic Plan’s performance measures? TOTAL POINTS: 4**

The Project can be monitored and evaluated using the performance measures included in the Strategic Plan  
If yes, Award 4 Points

The Project cannot be monitored and evaluated using the performance measures in the Strategic Plan but does include specific benchmarks and standards  
If yes, Award 3 Points

The Project includes opportunities for public review of the project’s progress and/or adaptive strategies for modifying the project based on measurable results  
If yes, Award 2 Points

The Project cannot be monitored and evaluated using performance measures in the Strategic Plan and does not include any specific benchmarks or standards  
If yes, Award 0 Points

#### **PROJECT READINESS: Total Points: 10**

#### **Permits and Approvals (pick one)**

**Total Available Points: 5**

5 Project sponsor has site control and has secured all necessary permits and/or approvals

4 Project sponsor has site control and has applied for all necessary permits and approvals

3 Project sponsor has site control and is preparing applications for all necessary permits and approvals

2 Project sponsor has site control but has not initiated the application process for all necessary permits and approvals

1 Project sponsor does not have site control and has not started permitting or approval process

**-AND-**

#### **Timeline/Project Phasing (pick one)**

**Total Available Points: 5**

#### **Single Projects (pick one)**

5 Project will be completed within (1) year from the date of the award

4 Project will be completed in more than (1) year but less than (2) years from the date of award

3 Project will be completed in more than (2) years but less than (3) years from the date of award

2 Project will be completed more than (3) years to complete from the date of award

**-OR-**

#### **Multi-Phase Projects (pick one)**

5 “Phase 1” is ready to proceed and will be completed within (1) year from the date of award

4 “Phase 1” will be completed in more than (1) year but less than (2) years from the of award

3 “Phase 1” will be completed in more than (2) years but less than (3) years from the date of award

2 “Phase 1” will be completed in more than (3) years from the date of award

**TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECTS:**

**Total Points: 4**

**Project is considered to be “Transformative” as defined by NCREDC’s Transformative Project Standards**

**Total Available Points: 4**

If Yes, Assign 4 Points

**WORKFORCE & EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT:**

**Total Points: 3**

**Employment Impact Total Available Points: 2**

If “Significant,” Award 2 Points

If “Somewhat Significant,” Award 1 Point

*NOTE: Job calculations can include in-direct jobs as well as construction jobs*

Are the numbers of jobs created/retained significant relative to the size of the business?

Are the number of jobs created/retained significant relative to the population of the community?

Are the number of jobs created/retained significant relative to the size of the firm’s industry?

How significantly will the number of jobs created/retained affect the area’s unemployment rate?

-AND-

**Workforce Knowledge, Skills and Capacity Building Total Available Points: 1**

**If Project meets any of the following criteria Assign 1 Point**

Project will lead to improved job skills and/or career enhancing opportunities to new or existing employees

Project provides on-the-job training or specialized training opportunities to new or existing employees

Project supports the region’s educational institutions in building programs and enrollment and/or requires significant investment in educational programs

Project supports higher education research and use of regional R&D resources and/or will provide the opportunity for other start-up ventures to help support its Plan

Project supports entrepreneurial activity

**SUSTAINABILITY, ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT & INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Total Points: 3**

**If Project meets any of the following criteria Assign 2 Points**

**Total Available Points: 2**

Project is located in a distressed area as defined by the Census and/or HUB Zone as defined by the SBA

Project is located in the Adirondack Park and is consistent with the Adirondack Land Use and Development Plan

Project protects or enhances environmentally significant areas or is located in a designated growth area

Project uses Low Impact Development, Conservation Subdivision and/or innovative water supply/wastewater treatment/stormwater treatment practices

Project is more than 1,000 feet from any environmentally sensitive area

Project utilizes green energy or energy efficient technologies

Project promotes the use of technology in economic development, including but not limited

to, access to high-speed telecommunications and/or broadband

Project contains a Health Impact Assessment

**If Project meets any of the relevant smart growth criterion in the NYS Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act**

**Assign 1 Point**

**Total Available Points:1**

Project utilizes, maintains or improves existing infrastructure;

Project is located in a municipal center;

Project is located in a developed area or an area designated for concentrated infill development in a municipally approved comprehensive land use plan, local waterfront revitalization plan and/or brownfield opportunity area plan;

Project protects, preserves and enhances NYS resources, including agricultural lands, forests , surface and groundwater, air quality, recreation and open space, scenic areas, and significant historic and archeological resources;

Project fosters mixed land uses and compact development, downtown revitalization, Brownfield redevelopment, the enhancement of beauty in public spaces, the diversity of housing in proximity to places of employment, recreation and commercial development and the integration of all income and age groups;

Project provides mobility through transportation choices including public transportation and reduced automobile dependency;

Project involves participation in community-based planning and collaboration;

Project ensures predictability and land uses codes; and

Project promotes sustainability by strengthen existing and creating new communities which reduce greenhouse gas emissions and do not compromise the needs of future generations, by among other means encouraging broad based public involvement in developing and implementing a community plan and ensuring the governance structure is adequate to sustain its implementation.

**PRIORITY RANKING:**

**Project Priority Ranking**

Priority Project: Total Score = 40 - 35

Number 2 Priority Project: Total Score = 34 - 25

Number 3 Priority Project: Total Score = < 25

Not identified as a priority: Total Score = 0

*\* See Appendix C for Priority Project Scoring Matrix*

### ***NCREDC Transformational Project Guidelines***

■ The North Country Regional Economic Development Council places a high priority on the programs and projects that can transform the economy of the region. It is therefore of great importance that the Council has an agreed-upon understanding of the terms “transformative and transformational.”

While specific project sponsors may see the projects they champion as being “transformative” or “transformational”, for the purposes of the North Country Regional Economic Development Council’s Five Year Strategic Plan, as it relates to the Priority Project Selection criteria, the following guidance is provided.

Transformative and Transformational Projects shall exhibit a majority of the following attributes:

- The project will advance the adopted Vision; and
- The project will unlock barriers to economic progress; and
- The project capitalizes on a unique regional asset; and
- The project can demonstrate a significant impact, beyond the immediate community proposing the project, or a regional impact; and
- If the project is a pilot, the project must be able to demonstrate that it can be replicated and is scalable for potential regional results; and
- Projects that demonstrate a multi-county, regional or inter-regional impact shall be most highly valued. ■





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How Do We Get There? Pt. 2

*Regional Implementation Agenda*

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***Implementation of the  
NCREDC Strategic Plan:***

■ DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN has produced a new momentum across the North Country for employing Regional Strategies to achieve the Vision. The Implementation Plan that follows will capitalize on that momentum through completion of Priority Projects; development of Tier II Projects and advancement of Vital Actions essential to advancing strategic initiatives and removing constraints that impede the region's progress. ■

***Priority Projects:***

■ After consideration of hundreds of proposals submitted from the across the region, the North Country Regional Council's 16 Priority Projects were selected based upon their transformational nature, their advancement of the Vision, their readiness for immediate implementation, and their long-term benefit to the North Country and New York State.

Each of the Priority Project summaries that follow includes a project description, including projected outcomes and costs; a summary of regional benefits; and an explanation of how the project advances the North Country's Regional Economic Development Vision and Strategies. As the project funding agency, Empire State Development, will monitor progress on each of the Priority Projects to ensure project completion and measurable job creation and capital investment by the end of 2012.

The projects leverage \$6.4 dollars for every dollar invested by the State. Total investment is \$255.9 million. Over 1,000 full time jobs will be created, 350 jobs will be retained and hundreds of construction jobs will result with the success of the selected projects. ■

V.B. PRIORITY PROJECTS MATRIX

| North Country Strategic Plan                         |  |  |                      |                     |  |  |                          |        |        |        |        |
|--|--|--|----------------------|---------------------|--|--|--------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX                                |  |  |                      |                     |  |  |                          |        |        |        |        |
| Priority Projects                                    |  |  |                      |                     |  |  |                          |        |        |        |        |
| Project  | Implementation Steps   | Lead Organization                                    | Total Project Cost   | NYS Funding         | Economic Development Outcome   | Mechanism  | Implementation Time Line |        |        |        |        |
|  |  |  |                      |                     |  |  | Year 1                   | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 |
| Bombardier Plant Expansion                           | Construct Buildings, Track electrification, upgrade robot  | Bombardier Corporation                               | \$26,605,000         | \$5,300,000         | 150 Jobs   | Jobs Created, New Contracts  | x ----                   | ---x   |        |        |        |
| Cleaner, Greener Communities Plan                    | Undertake a NYSERDA sustainable communities initiative   | Essex County (on behalf of the NORTH COUNTRY region) | \$1,000,000          | \$1,000,000         | green jobs, improved energy conservation, increased disposable income in local economies   | no match required by NYSERDA   | x                        |        |        |        |        |
| C Speed RADAR Systems                                | Demonstration of Radar System, Construct manufacturing facility  | C Speed, LLC   | \$5,250,000          | \$1,350,000         | 275 Jobs, reduces radar interference from wind turbines - global export potential  | Jobs Created, Success eliminating radar interference                                       | x                        |        |        |        |        |
| Community Rental Housing                             | Incentivize Housing Developers   | DANC/FDRLO   | \$53,900,000         | \$4,000,000         | 100 construction jobs and 5 permanent site jobs  | 300 rental units, increased stability at Ft. Drum  | x ----                   | ---x   |        |        |        |
| Community Transformation Tourism Fund<br>* See Below | Establish fund   | Adirondack Economic Development Corporation          | \$35,000,000         | \$7,000,000         | New Businesses, Jobs, Improved Infrastructure  | New County and State sales and use taxes   | x                        |        |        |        |        |
| Shovel Ready Potential Project                       | Clayton Hotel Construction   | Krog Corp.   | \$35,000,000         | \$3,500,000         | Construction plus 90 permanent Jobs  | Hotel Constructed, Jobs created  | x                        |        |        |        |        |
| Shovel Ready Potential Project                       | Green Transportation Project in Alexandria Bay, Lake George, Lake Placid, North Creek and Saratoga Springs | Adirondack Pedal Cab Company                         | \$250,000            | \$50,000            | 35 seasonal jobs with potential to grow regionally   | multi-region, tourism, green transportation  | x                        |        |        |        |        |
| Gouverneur Water                                     | Water Project Upgrade  | Village of Gouverneur                                | \$1,243,500          | \$900,000           | retains 350 jobs at Kinney's Regional warehouse plus construction  | protects \$14M inventory plus distribution to 90+ regional retail stores                   |                          |        |        |        |        |
| Kraft Fill Line                                      | Install Tools  | Kraft Foods  | \$7,000,000          | \$1,400,000         | 4-8 Jobs, Buy more milk from farmers, increase capacity  | Milk purchased, Jobs created   | x                        |        |        |        |        |
| LED Technology                                       | Product development  | Ephesus Technology                                   | \$2,830,000          | \$1,130,000         | 125 Jobs, improved energy efficiency projects  | Jobs created   | x                        |        |        |        |        |
| Lyons Falls Brownfield Site Development              | Remediation and Site Development   | Lewis County Development Corporation                 | \$3,300,000          | \$2,000,000         | Incentivizes bio and hydro-energy development and future forest product industries   | Jobs created   | x                        |        |        |        |        |
| Mobile Food Processing                               | Purchase Mobile Poultry Processing Equipment   | North Country Pastured, LLC                          | \$180,000            | \$130,000           | 4-5 production jobs; New markets for farms   | Poultry processed, farms served  | x                        |        |        |        |        |
| Newton Falls Rail Upgrade                            | Repair tracks, construct rail space to Newton Falls Fine Paper, LLC  | St. Lawrence County IDA                              | \$69,300,000         | \$9,600,000         | Construction plus 155 Jobs at Newton Falls Fine Paper, service to other plants   | Bio fuel project, natural resource manufacturing 3-county project                          | x ----                   | ---x   |        |        |        |
| North Country Brand                                  | Develop regional brand   | Adirondack North Country Association                 | \$5,600,000          | \$500,000           | New markets for ag products; new investment; value-added opportunities for existing business; increased tourism; increase year-round residents | Number of visitors; new business start ups; population increase; jobs created; Tax revenue | x ----                   | -----  |        |        |        |
| ReEnergy Biomass Conversion                          | Convert Black River Generation Facility to biomass   | ReEnergy Holdings, LLC                               | \$30,000,000         | \$3,000,000         | 178 Jobs, new market for loggers in 4 county area  | Jobs created, wood purchased   | x                        |        |        |        |        |
| Rural Hamilton Broadband Project                     | Build broadband system   | Hamilton County                                      | \$6,500,000          | \$1,200,000         | Phase 1 - Improve businesses ability to compete, new investment  | Customers served, new business, tax revenue  | x                        |        |        |        |        |
| Strand Theater Restoration                           | Complete Historic Theater Restoration  | North Country Cultural Center for the Arts           | \$2,200,000          | \$450,000           | local arts jobs, tourism draw, attract and retain educated workers   | Jobs created, tax revenue  | x                        |        |        |        |        |
| Trudeau Institute                                    | Scientist Recruitment  | Trudeau Institute                                    | \$6,000,000          | \$1,000,000         | 20+Jobs, sustain research facility in New York   | Jobs created   | x                        |        |        |        |        |
| <b>GRAND TOTAL</b>                                   |  |  | <b>\$255,908,500</b> | <b>\$39,960,000</b> |  |  |                          |        |        |        |        |

\* The Community Tourism Transformation Fund will help to capitalize the projects in the yellow shaded boxes

### ***Project – Bombardier Main Plant and Test Track Expansion***

■ APPLICANT: Bombardier  
 PROJECT/PROGRAM LOCATION: Plattsburgh  
 PROJECT/PROGRAM COST: \$ 26.6 Million

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Bombardier Transit manufactures passenger Rail Cars for municipal, state and interstate transit systems. The project includes a 57,000 sq ft expansion of the main plant; an upgrade of the main car shell welding robot; a 2,100 sq ft expansion at the off-site testing facility, and electrification of an additional half mile of railroad track at the test facility. The changes will increase efficiency, flexibility and capacity for new contracts. To prepare for the project, Bombardier is also paving and modifying the back of the plant, purchasing a new weighing system and making improvements to the security system.

#### **REGIONAL BENEFIT**

The project will increase the capacity of the facility by more than forty percent. It will increase both the hourly and salaried workforce. It will provide career opportunities for graduate schools in the region including Clinton Community College, CV-Tech and Clarkson University. Bombardier employees commute from three of the counties in the region. Increased capacity will help maintain and grow jobs at supplier companies in the region. Customers relocate personnel to the area for the duration of a contract, contributing to the economic health of the region.

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#### **VISION ADDRESSED**

- Energize our micropolitan cities, building on growth in the aerospace, transit equipment, defense, biotech, and manufacturing industries
- Mobilize the creativity and capacity of the graduates of our outstanding places of higher education

#### **STRATEGY ADDRESSED**

- Expand the vendor base for manufacturing facilities, keeping more resources in the region and state, and assist New York manufacturers to better compete in the global marketplace.
- Create a Business Retention and Expansion Plan for Existing Large Manufacturers
- Transportation Equipment Cluster Support

#### **FUNDING YEAR 1**

- \$ 21.3 Million in Private Investment
- \$ 5.3 Million in Public Investment

#### **OUTCOME**

- Create 150 new manufacturing jobs
  - Increase competitive advantage
- 

### ***Project – Cleaner Greener Communities Plan***

■ APPLICANT: Essex County  
 PROJECT/PROGRAM LOCATION: North Country Region  
 PROJECT/PROGRAM COST: \$ 1 Million

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Essex County will serve as the lead agency on behalf of the North Country region to engage in a multi-phased project to develop a comprehensive energy sustainability plan. The plan will include prioritized actions based on a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) baseline assessment and inventory, and goals to achieve GHG reductions.

#### **REGIONAL BENEFIT**

The Regional Sustainability Plan represents a key step toward a strong, coordinated, energy smart economic development plan for the region. The plan will help reduce dependence on imported energy resources, and promote job creation by investing in emerging, viable and local energy opportunities.

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#### **VISION ADDRESSED**

- Create the greenest energy economy in the state

#### **STRATEGY ADDRESSED**

- Establish a Cleaner, Greener Communities Regional Sustainability Planning Program.
- Maximize North Country utilization of energy efficiency resources and programs to reduce total housing and energy costs.
- Invest in large and small clean energy technology businesses, including lighting and biomass.

#### **FUNDING**

- \$ 1 Million in Public Investment

#### **OUTCOME**

- A validated prioritized action plan to pursue funding that will be used to identify specific actions to achieve GHG reductions.
- 

#### **VISION ADDRESSED**

- Create the greenest energy economy in the state

#### **STRATEGY ADDRESSED**

- Establish a Cleaner, Greener Communities Regional Sustainability Planning Program.
- Maximize North Country utilization of energy efficiency resources and programs to reduce total housing and energy costs.
- Invest in large and small clean energy technology businesses, including lighting and biomass.

#### **FUNDING**

- \$ 1 Million in Public Investment

#### **OUTCOME**

- A validated prioritized action plan to pursue funding that will be used to identify specific actions to achieve GHG reductions.
- 

# *Priority Project Summaries*

### **Project – C Speed Advanced Technology Manufacturing Center Expansion**

■ APPLICANT: C Speed, LLC  
 PROJECT/PROGRAM LOCATION: Potsdam  
 PROJECT/PROGRAM COST: \$ 5.25 Million

**DESCRIPTION**  
 C Speed, LLC researches, develops, and manufactures high technology electronic systems for the Defense, Medical and Test and Measurement markets. C Speed will soon launch the first radar in the world to economically mitigate wind turbine interference. \$450,000 will be provided to support capital equipment and electronic costs associated with demonstrating the radar at Ft.Drum, and \$900,000 will be used to develop a 50,000 sq. ft. facility in Potsdam to manufacture an advanced antenna array.

**REGIONAL BENEFIT**  
 The project resolves wind turbine interference on radar systems, which jeopardizes operation stability at Ft.Drum, and allows for the expansion of renewable energy development in the North Country. The manufacturing plant will also be in close proximity to the firm’s research and development offices at Clarkson University, and allows engineering students to learn in a manufacturing environment.

**VISION ADDRESSED**

- Energize our micropolitan cities, building on growth in the aerospace, transit equipment, defense, biotech, and manufacturing industries
- Attract and nurture entrepreneurial pioneers to cultivate innovative clusters in our rural communities
- Mobilize the creativity and capacity of the graduates of our outstanding places of higher education

**STRATEGY ADDRESSED**

- Expand the vendor base for manufacturing facilities, keep more resources in the region and state, and assist New York manufacturers to



better compete in the global marketplace.

- Recognize the North Country’s Higher Education cluster and design and implement incentives for collaborative research and entrepreneurial activity among and between them.

**FUNDING**

- \$ 1.35 Million in Public Investment
- \$ 3 .9 Million in Private Investment

**OUTCOME**

- Create 275 new manufacturing jobs

### **Project – Community Rental Housing Program**

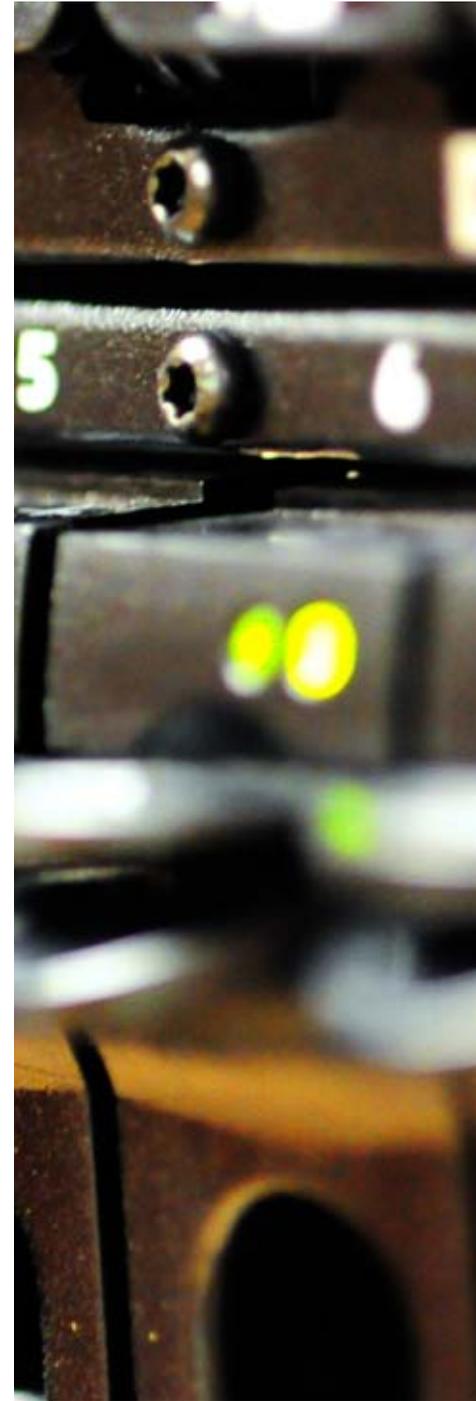
■ APPLICANT: Development Authority of the North Country  
 PROJECT/PROGRAM LOCATION: Fort Drum Impact Area  
 PROJECT/PROGRAM COST: \$53.9 Million

**DESCRIPTION**  
 The Development Authority of the North Country, in partnership with the Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization, Jefferson County, and the Jefferson County IDA, administers the Community Rental Housing Program, to incentivize development of rental housing in the Fort Drum area (primarily Jefferson County).

**REGIONAL BENEFIT**  
 Fort Drum’s recent expansion has resulted in a housing shortfall totaling 1095 units. The community has provided financing to support development of 650 units. Development of the balance of units is key to stabilizing the Fort Drum soldier and family population in the region. Fort Drum is the largest employer in the region (\$1.2 billion annual impact) and ensuring the availability of affordable housing in the region will help ensure the continued and growing presence of the US Army at Fort Drum.

**VISION ADDRESSED**

- Energize our micropolitan cities, building on



growth in the aerospace, transit equipment, defense, biotech and manufacturing industries.

**STRATEGY ADDRESSED**

- Actively facilitate and promote the continued development of facilities and infrastructure in support of the attraction and accommodation of aerospace, aviation, and defense related investment and job creation as a priority opportunity for successfully growing aerospace, aviation and defense employment in the North Country.

**FUNDING**  
 \$4 Million in Public Investment  
 \$49.9 Million in Private investment

**OUTCOME**  
 400 units of housing  
 100 construction jobs/5 permanent jobs

### **Project – Community Transformation Tourism Fund (CTTF)**

■ APPLICANT: Adirondack Economic Development Corporation  
 PROJECT/PROGRAM LOCATION: North Country Region-Administrated by AEDC  
 PROJECT/PROGRAM COST: \$35 million

**DESCRIPTION**  
 The CTTF will be a program available to tourism related business on a 7:1 basis. This fund will be a no interest loan to be repaid over ten years offering loan forgiveness if sale tax targets are met. It will be a performance driven fund. Jobs created, new municipal and county taxes generated, and new private investment dollars will be its measurement tools. The Adirondack Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) will administer this transformational fund.

An example for this fund is the Clayton Hotel project. This project will have a total cost of \$35 million. It could need \$3 to \$4 million in gap financing. CTTF funding would result in 90

new full-time equivalent jobs (plus seasonal) and over \$16 million in new county and state taxes over ten years. If sales targets for this project are met loan funding would be converted to a grant and the state investment would be greater than 7:1.

REGIONAL BENEFIT

Increased tourism will drive demand for services and amenities that can sustain service and amenities for small population bases. The CTF will increase overnight visitation that will grow: private investment, job creation, taxable sales, new real estate assessments and over-all quality of life services and amenities for residents. It will allow for a greater success rate of job diversity by enabling more communities to have services needed to attract new entrepreneurs.

VISION ADDRESSED

- Energize our Micropolitan cities, building on growth in the aerospace, transit, equipment, defense, biotech, and manufacturing industries
- Attract and nurture entrepreneurial pioneers to cultivate innovative clusters in our rural communities
- Mobilize the creativity, capacity and graduates of our outstanding places of higher education
- Catalyze the highest per capita rate of small business start-ups in the state
- Elevate the global recognition of the region of the region as one of the special places on the planet to live, work and study
- Activate tourism as a pathway to diversifying our economies

STRATEGY ADDRESSED

- Tool to attract private investment to revitalize and diversify
- Develop tourism infrastructure to transform region

FUNDING

- \$7 million state to leverage \$28 million in private

OUTCOME

- 500 jobs
- Performance goals need to be met in order to convert loan to grant
- Increase local, county and state tax revenues

**Project – Gouverneur Water Project (Kinney Drugs Distribution)**

■ APPLICANT: Village of Gouverneur

PROJECT/PROGRAM LOCATION: Gouverneur

PROJECT/PROGRAM COST: \$ 1.24 Million

DESCRIPTION

Kinney Drugs (and its subsidiary firms) has rapidly expanded from a local drug store chain to a nationally prominent entity in terms of retail, institution and mail order pharmaceutical management. It employs over 350 people at its warehouse and distribution center and the value of its inventory in the warehouse exceeds \$ 14 million. Lack of sufficient water pressure in the eastern portion of the Village has compromised the fire suppression system at the warehouse to the point that the cost of insurance is threatening the continued viability of this operation in the region. The Village wants to expand the capacity of the water mains in this end of the Village.

REGIONAL BENEFIT

In addition to the significant employment at risk, this business operates 90 retail outlets in northern and central New York and northern Vermont. Disruption of its warehouse operations could have significant adverse impact on the entire network and location of its businesses within the region.

VISION ADDRESSED

- Energizing our micropolitan cities, building on growth in the aerospace, transit equipment, defense, biotech and manufacturing industries

STRATEGY ADDRESSED

- Expand the vendor base for manufacturing facilities, keeping more resources in the

region and the state and assisting New York manufacturers to better compete in the global marketplace.

- Maximize the level of activity and economic value from distribution and supply chain management

FUNDING

- \$ .85 Million in Public Investment
- \$ .35 Million in Private Investment

OUTCOME

- Retain 350 supply chain and distribution jobs
- Create construction jobs for the water supply line enlargement

**Project – KRAFT Replacement Fill Line**

■ APPLICANT: KRAFT

PROJECT/PROGRAM LOCATION: Lowville

PROJECT/PROGRAM COST: \$7 Million

DESCRIPTION

The project will install new a fill line, upgrading the capability and technology to support associated production equipment. The project will support the purchase of an additional 50 million pounds of milk, purchase of 1 million cases from NY companies, and the trucking industry with over 500 loads of finished goods.

REGIONAL BENEFIT

The project will stabilize and strengthen the product line and volume at the Lowville plant. It will ensure the continued employment of the 300 employees, and could add up to 8 additional skilled positions. Further, it improves the overall competitive position of the Lowville plant within the industry to add new product line in the future.

VISION ADDRESSED

- Energize our micropolitan cities, building on growth in aerospace, transit equipment, defense, biotech, and manufacturing industries
- Propagate and agricultural revolution as we help feed the region and the world

20

Percent of all of the milk produced in New York State that comes from the North Country.

STRATEGY ADDRESSED

- Create Business Retention and Expansion Plan for Existing Large Manufacturers
- Maintain, establish and expand the presence of storage, processing and distribution facilities in the region to promote the sales of value-added agricultural products that are sold locally and globally

FUNDING

\$1.4 Million in Public Investment  
\$5.6 Million in Private Investment

OUTCOME

Long term retention of 300 jobs, expanded product line

**Project — LED Lighting Technology**

■ APPLICANT: Ephesus Technology  
PROJECT/PROGRAM LOCATION: Ogdensburg  
PROJECT/PROGRAM COST: \$2.83 Million

DESCRIPTION

Ephesus Technology is working with Anson Inc in Ogdensburg to develop commercially applicable LED lighting technology. The technology's competitive advantages include energy efficiency and quality of light while the company's advantage rests in the ability to maximize energy usage in lighting fixtures while reducing heat.

REGIONAL BENEFIT

The region has identified green technology manufacturing as a priority. This project builds on the growing Advanced Materials cluster in the region. Clarkson University has long been a leader in engineering and science education and research. The development of the Advanced Materials sector offers graduates of Clarkson and other area universities the opportunity to pursue a career in the North Country. Since the company's first order is 1500 – 1800 lighting fixtures for the Airport in Syracuse, the project will also benefit the Central New York region

by increasing the energy efficiency and reducing cost at the airport.

VISION ADDRESSED

- Create the Greenest Energy Economy in the State
  - Energize Our Micropolitan Cities
  - Catalyze the highest per capita rate of small business start-ups in the state
  - Mobilize the graduates of our places of higher education
- STRATEGY ADDRESSED
- Increases resources and methods for technology transfer from Clarkson University, Paul Smith's College and other institutions.
  - Invest in large and small clean energy technology businesses including lighting and biomass.

FUNDING

· \$ 1.13 Million in Public Investment  
· \$ 1.7 Million in Private Investment

OUTCOME

- 33 new manufacturing jobs, and a total of 125 new jobs over five years.
- Reduce Energy Use

**Project — Lyons Falls Mill Redevelopment**

APPLICANT: Lewis County Devel. Corp.

PROJECT/PROGRAM LOCATION: Lyons Falls  
PROJECT/PROGRAM COST: \$ 3.3 Million

DESCRIPTION

■ The Lewis County Development Corporation will collaborate with a private hydroelectric producer for the multi-phased redevelopment of a brownfield site that will allow for a \$30 million expansion of a hydrofacility and initiate a long-term community revitalization effort. Phase one of this project will include remediation of hazardous materials; engineering preparation for demolition; and permitting for demolition. Once complete, the project will make adaptive reuse of an abandoned property that would accommodate new uses such as greenhouse and biofuel facilities.

REGIONAL BENEFIT

The project demonstrates the adaptive reuse of abandoned brownfield sites in the North Country that will be used to increase the capacity of a locally generated sustainable energy resource; expand agricultural infrastructure; and promote biofuel production.

VISION ADDRESSED

- Create the greenest energy economy in the state
- Propagate an agricultural revolution as we help feed the region and the world

STRATEGY ADDRESSED

- Invest in large and small clean energy technology businesses, including lighting and biomass.
- Promote Smart Growth principles by encouraging adaptive reuse of existing structures and new residential construction in or near villages and hamlets.
- Strengthen the sustainability of farmers and the agricultural industry by increase the quantity and quality of agricultural products grown and processed in the region.

FUNDING

· \$ 2 Million in Public Investment  
· \$ 1.3 Million in Private Investment

OUTCOME

- Remediation of an abandoned brownfield site to allow a \$30 million hydrofacility expansion project.

**Project — Mobile Food Processing**

APPLICANT: North Country Pastured, LLC  
PROJECT/PROGRAM LOCATION: Dekalb Junction  
PROJECT/PROGRAM COST: \$ 180,000

DESCRIPTION

North County Pastured plans to utilize mobile slaughtering to expand the diversity and value of production agriculture within the region. There is both local and national demand for meats that are produced naturally

and harvested humanely and this effort focuses as a first phase on that demand and market potential with a specific focus on poultry. A subsequent second phase will focus on red meat slaughter, processing and packaging.

REGIONAL BENEFIT

■ The region has identified local agricultural production/utilization as a catalyst and focus within its agricultural vision. A USDA certified slaughtering facility would greatly expand market potential (locally and regionally) for pastured poultry and there is year-round demand for this quality of meat. Currently the lack of capacity at the two regional slaughterhouses severely limits production potential. Mobile slaughtering is a low-tech, highly replicable model for production throughout the region and the State.

VISION ADDRESSED

- Propagating an agricultural revolution as we help feed the region and the world
- Catalyzing the highest per capita rate of small business start-ups in the State

STRATEGY ADDRESSED

- Increase and expand direct marketing sales to institutions, restaurants and grocery stores in the region to capitalize on the rapidly expanding local foods movement.
- Increase the quantity and quality of agricultural products grown and processed in the region by offering farmers and agri-businesses a comprehensive array of technical assistance services, education services, and cost-sharing incentives.

FUNDING

· \$ 130,000 in Public Investment  
· \$ 50,000 in Other Funding

OUTCOME

- Create 7 new processing jobs in the first phase

85

Percent of New York's international border crossings that are located in the North Country.

**Project – Newton Falls Rail Restoration Project**

■ APPLICANT: St. Lawrence County IDA  
PROJECT/PROGRAM LOCATION: Newton Falls  
PROJECT/PROGRAM COST: \$ 69.3 Million

DESCRIPTION

The Newton Falls Rail Project will rehabilitate and reopen the 46.25 mile Newton Falls Rail Line. This project will restore and enhance the most efficient, environmentally-friendly and reliable form of transportation, at the most cost-effective price, to service the paper mill at Newton Falls and the operations at Benson Mines. Newton Falls Fine Paper is poised to make a \$ 60 M investment in rebuilt papermaking machinery and conversion of the heating system to biomass for the mill and needs reliable rail service.

REGIONAL BENEFIT

The project would benefit the paper and wood products sector of the economy, restore manufacturing employment and extend economic benefits and employment relative to renewable biomass for the heating plant. Resurrection of this short line will increase the competitiveness of other industry in this Adirondack area of the State, reduce highway truck traffic and emissions, and create opportunities for increased employment within the region.

VISION ADDRESSED

- Attracting and nurturing entrepreneurial pioneers to cultivate innovative clusters in our rural communities
- Creating the greenest energy economy in the State

STRATEGY ADDRESSED

- Invest in large and small clean energy technology businesses, including lighting and biomass.
- Foster development of small businesses and entrepreneurial activities, which add value to local resources.

FUNDING

“The high priority placed on maintaining the integrity of our natural environment has created an avenue for businesses such as ours to fill distinct roles. Every year our milfoil removal business has grown by leaps and bounds. We plan to continue to grow and diversify and serve the needs of the region.”

*Andrew Lewis*  
*Co-owner Aquatic Invasives Management*  
*Essex County*

- \$ 9.6 Million in Public Investment
- \$ 59.7 Million in Private Investment

OUTCOME

- Create 155 new paper manufacturing jobs
- Create 80 resource management jobs relative to biomass harvesting and processing
- Create construction jobs for the rail line

**Project – North Country Brand**

■ APPLICANT: Adirondack North Country Association  
PROJECT/PROGRAM LOCATION: North Country Region  
PROJECT/PROGRAM COST: \$5.6 Million

DESCRIPTION

This project will create a regional brand that communicated the unique identity of the seven county region, attracting new visitors, residents, entrepreneurs, and investment, and opening new access to markets for the region’s businesses and organizations.

REGIONAL BENEFIT

The future of the region is tied to creation of a broadly supported brand that is intelligently communicated to other markets around the world. All business sectors will gain exponentially from a strong regional brand.

VISION ADDRESSED

- Elevate global recognition of the region as one of the special places on the planet to visit, live, work and study

STRATEGY ADDRESSED

- Create and manage a transformational regional brand which powerfully communicates the unique identity and resources of the people, places and products of the North Country region.

FUNDING

- \$2.6 Million in Public Investment
- \$3 Million in Private Investment

OUTCOME — TBD

**Project – ReEnergy (Black River Generation Facility)**

■ APPLICANT: ReEnergy Holdings LLC  
PROJECT/PROGRAM LOCATION: Fort Drum  
PROJECT/PROGRAM COST: \$30 Million

DESCRIPTION

This project will convert the former coal burning generation facility at Fort Drum into a 50 MW biomass facility.

REGIONAL BENEFIT

The project will support the logging industry in the region by providing long term procurement contracts. This will generate substantial long term job growth, and new business development opportunities. It will also support Fort Drum and other regional goals regarding development and use of renewable energy.

VISION ADDRESSED

- Create the greenest economy in the state
- Catalyze the highest per capita rate of small business start-ups in the state
- Energize our micropolitan cities, building on growth in the aerospace, transit equipment, defense, Bio Tech, and manufacturing industries

STRATEGY ADDRESSED

- Invest in large and small clean energy technology businesses, including lighting and biomass

FUNDING

- \$3 Million public investment
- \$27 Million private investment

OUTCOME

- 178 construction jobs/33 FT employees/144 new supplier jobs

**Project – Rural Hamilton County Broadband**

■ APPLICANT: Nicholville Telephone Company  
PROJECT/PROGRAM LOCATION: Hamilton County  
PROJECT/PROGRAM COST: \$4.8 Million

“There seems to be a critical mass of individuals and institutions interested in working toward regional goals through locally-attuned and appropriately-scaled ventures. Green energy and sustainable tourism are significant contributors in positioning the region for truly transformational change.”

**Ruth McWilliams**  
Co-owner  
**Catamount Lodge & Forest LLC**  
St. Lawrence County

DESCRIPTION

This project will install both middle mile and last mile fiber optic facilities to provide broadband service several communities in Hamilton County, which currently have no existing broadband capacity as defined by the FCC.

REGIONAL BENEFIT

Access to Broadband has been identified as a fundamental community asset in the 21st Century. Broadband supports business, education, healthcare, government, and social functions that create communities. The complete lack of broadband facilities in Hamilton County puts county residents, businesses and institutions at a dramatic competitive disadvantage. This project will provide the infrastructure to level the playing field.

VISION ADDRESSED

- Attract and nurture entrepreneurial pioneers to cultivate innovative clusters in our rural communities
- Catalyze the highest per capita rate of small business start-ups in the state
- Activate tourism as a pathway to diversifying our economies

STRATEGY ADDRESSED

- Foster development of small businesses and entrepreneurial activities that add value to local resources
- Put in place tools to attract private investment to revitalize and diversify communities and create a climate that will allow entrepreneurs to flourish

FUNDING

- \$1.2 Million in Public investment
- \$3.6 Million in Private investment

OUTCOME

- 15 construction jobs/40 permanent jobs by year 2

120 People (in millions) who live within a day's drive of the North Country.

### **Project — Strand Theater Restoration**

■ APPLICANT: North Country Cultural Center for the Arts  
 PROJECT/PROGRAM LOCATION: Clinton County Plattsburgh  
 PROJECT/PROGRAM COST: \$2.2 Million

**DESCRIPTION**  
 This project is the restoration of the 1924 Strand theatre to the Strand Performing Arts Center in downtown Plattsburgh. The total restoration cost is \$3,700,000 and the project is currently 40% complete. The \$1,000,000 grant is needed to match the community fundraising effort.

**REGIONAL BENEFIT**  
 The Technical Assistance Center at SUNY Plattsburgh has estimated that the completed restoration of the Strand will have an economic impact of approximately \$3,000,000 during the first full year of operation which will grow annually. It will be an anchor project in down-

town Plattsburgh revitalization along with adding to the quality of life for residents and potential new residents. The Strand will be a complete performing arts center to include music and film festivals appealing to a visitor audience as well as a local audience. The Strand will add to the overall appeal of Plattsburgh as a destination.

- VISION ADDRESSED**
- Attract and nurture entrepreneurial pioneers to cultivate innovative clusters in our rural communities
  - Mobilize the creativity, capacity, and graduates of our places of higher education
  - Catalyze the highest per capita rate of small business start-ups in the state
  - Elevate global recognition of the region as one of the special places, to live, work and study
  - Activate tourism as a pathway to diversifying our economies

**STRATEGY ADDRESSED**

- Foster development of small business

- Elevate access to arts and culture
- Put tourism tools in place to attract private investment to revitalize and diversify communities

**FUNDING**

- \$450,000 in Public Funding
- \$1.75 Million in Private Investment

**OUTCOME**  
 Restores a historic building; creates an entertainment venue that draws a regional audience that can increase local business activity and tax revenue.

### **Project — Trudeau Institute Medical Research Team Recruitment**

■ APPLICANT: Trudeau Institute  
 PROJECT/PROGRAM LOCATION: Saranac Lake  
 PROJECT/PROGRAM COST: \$ 6 Million

**DESCRIPTION**  
 The Trudeau Institute is a biomedical health organization that focuses on the eradication of

infectious and inflammatory disease through basic research aimed at the development of vaccines and immune-based therapeutics. The organization intends to recruit and establish four faculty level scientists and their research teams at the Institute's Saranac Lake research campus who will attract competitive funding from the National Institutes of Health and related organizations.

**REGIONAL BENEFIT**  
 The project advances a biomedical organization as an anchor institution that will support an emerging bioscience industry cluster in the North Country. Once established, the project is anticipated to attract other bioscience and related companies to the region, and formalize greater collaboration between public and private research and development firms.

**VISION ADDRESSED**

- Energize our micropolitan cities, building on growth in the aerospace, transit equipment, defense, Bio Tech, and manufacturing industries

- Attract and nurture entrepreneurial pioneers to cultivate innovative clusters in our rural communities
- Mobilize the creativity and capacity of the graduates of our outstanding places of higher education

**STRATEGY ADDRESSED**

- Support the existing small, but dynamic biotechnology cluster, and encourage other Bio Tech companies to locate in the region.
- Recognize the North Country's Higher Education cluster and design and implement incentives for collaborative research and entrepreneurial activity among and between them.

**FUNDING**

- \$ 1 Million in Public Investment
- \$ 5 Million in Private Investment

**OUTCOME**

- Create 20 new and retain 22 existing research and development jobs

| North Country Strategic Plan          |  |                             |                    |              |  |  |                          |        |        |        |        |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------|--|--|--------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--|
| Vital Potential Future Projects       |  |                             |                    |              |  |  |                          |        |        |        |        |  |
| Project                               | Implementation Steps   | Lead Organization           | Total Project Cost | Project Rank | Economic Development Outcome   | Monitoring Mechanism   | Implementation Time Line |        |        |        |        |  |
|                                       |  |                             |                    |              |  |  | Year 1                   | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 |  |
| Advanced Materials                    | Development of advanced materials processing capabilities            | MAS                         | \$523,000          | 11           | 6-8 jobs   | Jobs Created, New Contracts  |                          | ---    | x      |        |        |  |
| Biotech Building                      | small move-in ready biotech incubator                                | Trudeau Institute           | \$1,400,000        | 8            | jobs in biotechnology sector   | Jobs Created, creating new investment in biotechnology                                 |                          | x      |        |        |        |  |
| Biotech Park Development              | build-out of a biotech park  | Trudeau Institute           | \$1,100,000        | 10           | jobs in biotechnology sector   | Jobs Created, creating new investment in biotechnology                                 |                          | x      |        |        |        |  |
| Black Liquor Process Enhance.         | upgrade existing process to improve production and energy efficiency | International Paper         | \$1,600,000        | 7            | jobs preservation, paper industry and energy savings   | job creation and retention in critical sector  |                          | x      |        |        |        |  |
| Control Valve R&D                     | Recovery Boiler Super heater Replacement                             | NY Air Brake                | \$3,500,000        | 9            | Retain jobs, improve product offerings and increased new employment  | job creation and retention in critical sector  |                          | x      |        |        |        |  |
| International Paper Energy Efficiency | Recovery Boiler Super heater Replacement                             | International Paper         | \$8,900,000        | 1            | Retain jobs, energy efficiency, business for loggers   | Energy saved   | x                        |        |        |        |        |  |
| Kraft Warehouse                       | expand warehouse size and capabilities                               | Kraft Foods                 | \$9,000,000        | 3            | new employment in expanded production potential  | new employment and support of ag business and increased tax base                       |                          | x      |        |        |        |  |
| Mfg. Facility Enhancement             | plant expansion  | Bombardier Corporation      | \$26,000,000       | 4            | new employees tied to increased production   | employment in transit equipment sector   |                          | x      |        |        |        |  |
| Production Enhancement                | redesign of production line to reduce completion timing              | NOVA Bus                    | \$2,650,000        | 6            | retain employment and improve plant efficiency   | prospective new employment tied to increased plant capacity                            |                          | x      |        |        |        |  |
| PTAC - Ft. Drum                       | Install Tools  | Watertown-North Country CoC | \$375,000          | 5            | assists local businesses in securing contracts for goods and services at Ft. Drum estimated to be valued at over & 75 M over three years | increased local business and employment by civilians doing business with military base |                          | x      |        |        |        |  |
| X-Commuter Development                | New Vehicle Development  | NOVA Bus                    | \$23,500,000       | 2            | 55 new production jobs, construction employment  | Jobs created   |                          | x      |        |        |        |  |
| Subtotal                              |  |                             | \$78,548,000       |              |  |  |                          |        |        |        |        |  |

**Tier II Projects:** Review of the applications for Priority Projects yielded a list of projects with potential to advance the North Country's Vision and Strategy. These projects may rise to the level of priority projects in Years 2-5.

**Advancement of Vital Actions:**

■ DURING THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS, the Council identified other transformational projects, priorities and programs that are of major regional significance to the achievement of the North Country’s Vision. The Council and stakeholders will work to develop creative ways to address these opportunities.

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

The Council has determined that workforce development will be an ongoing priority that will be addressed by additional focus group activity.

**HEALTH CARE**

The Health care industry of the North Country is vital. The care, the jobs and the investment needs further attention by the Council as it is a primary and necessary ingredient of the North Country’s future success. Programs like Homeward Bound can play a large economic role in the future.

**ADIRONDACK CLUB AND RESORT**

This project is transformational and will need additional attention by the Council as it moves through the permitting process and into the development stage. The business development opportunities associated with the project are significant for the region and its overall economic health.

**ADIRONDACK RAIL AND TRAIL**

The Council will work with the varied interests to secure continued support (state, federal and private) for the Remsen to Lake Placid rail line along with the advancement of the recreational trail.

Both efforts are potentially transformational and will provide future economic gains for the region.

**BROADBAND ACCESS**

Many rural areas of the region do not have an affordable broadband option or do not have access at all. As a result, economic development is limited and recruitment of professionals, especially young professionals, is more difficult. Financing broadband infrastructure is a challenge. A combination of public funds and private investment will be needed. The Council and partner organizations will explore funding options.

**HIGH SPEED RAIL**

The Montreal-New York Corridor rail corridor is a vital link between two of the largest Metropolitan Centers in the Northeast. Upgrades to the rail line, and changes in border crossing procedures, can significantly reduce travel time and increase on-time performance of both passenger and freight traffic. The Council and partner organizations will continue to work with NYS Department of Transportation, Transport Quebec, the Department of Homeland Security, Canadian Border Services and elected officials in both the United States and Canada to move toward implementation of high speed rail service in this corridor.

**NATURAL GAS**

Some areas of the North Country do not have access to natural gas. Several large manufacturing facilities must use higher cost methods to power their plants and many residents have limited options for heating their homes. The Council will work to close the gaps be-

tween existing natural gas service areas.

**ACCESS TO CAPITAL**

The North Country region seeks to have the highest per-capita rate of business startups in New York State. To achieve this Vision, entrepreneurs must have access to capital and technical assistance. During the planning process, many of the Work Groups identified a need for loan/grant funds for small businesses, incubators for early stage companies, and development of small business support programs. The Council will collaborate with partner organizations to strengthen existing entrepreneurial assistance organizations, and develop new programs. The Council will work with New York State to find a way to capitalize small business loan/grant funds for the region.

**Strategies**

■ The pages that follow outline the North Country’s plan to advance these key initiatives, including action items tied to the North Country’s Vision and Strategies; lead agencies; key partners; and public and private resources required. Some strategies were combined because the resources and stakeholders are the same.



**Vision: Energize our micropolitan cities, building on growth in the aerospace, transit equipment, defense, biotech and manufacturing industries.**

**Strategy: Develop a strong workforce development system** to support the needs of employers in the targeted clusters using a combination of new and incumbent worker training, certificate programs, degree programs, and recruitment assistance.

ACTIVITIES

**Year 1:**

- In cooperation with industry sector businesses in the region to determine the skill sets needed by each cluster.
- Map workforce development assets in the region, focusing on programs that match the identified needs.
- Determine program gaps
- Work with industry leaders, educational institutions and service providers, to develop potential workforce development options
- Set benchmarks to measure success
- Determine what resources are needed to fund and sustain programs

**Year 2:**

- Gain commitments from training institutions and businesses to work together to develop training program curriculum
- Develop new curriculum or integrate elements of existing programs in new ways to better prepare workers for jobs in the target industries
- Determine cost per student/employee for each program
- Identify federal, state, local and private sector funding sources
- Market programs through – training provider’s normal methods, New York State Department of Labor Website, local newspapers, secondary schools, career fairs, and social media. Conduct the programs. The types of programs will vary by industry and geographic area.

- Work with One Stops to place graduates
- Success using benchmarks
- Get feedback from businesses, students

**Year 3 and Beyond:**

- Revise program as needed

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES

- Industry sector leaders and businesses
- Educational institutions
- Service providers
- Training institutions
- Federal, state, local and private sector funding sources
- New York State Department of Labor Website
- Local newspapers
- Secondary schools
- Career fairs
- Social media
- County One Stop offices
- Participating students

**Strategy: Expand the vendor base for large manufacturing facilities,** keeping more money in the region and the state and helping the manufacturers to better compete in the global marketplace.

ACTIVITIES

**Year 1:**

- Cooperate with industry sector representatives, determine services/products manufacturers are purchasing outside the region
- Identify sources in the region for the needed products and services
- Work with vendor companies in the region to determine whether they have the capacity to deliver the needed products or services with our without assistance
- If assistance is needed, work with service providers, funding sources and New York State Agencies to identify resources to help

**Year 2:**

- If no businesses currently located in the region are able to provide the needed products/services, work with the manufacturers to determine if there is enough demand to support a new supplier
- If a new vendor is sustainable, work with manufacturers to identify businesses from other areas of the state that could expand into the region or companies outside the state that could be recruited.
- Create a recruitment plan – identifying resources needed, sources for the resources and setting timelines/benchmarks

**Year 3:**

- Begin recruiting companies identified by manufacturers
- Identify regions both inside and outside the U.S. where vendors with the products and services are located.
- Develop a plan to market to vendors in the identified regions - identifying resources needed and sources for those resources

**Year 4:**

- Begin recruitment in regions identified in plan
- Measure success using benchmarks
- Institutionalize process and expand to other industry clusters

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES

- Industry sector representatives
- Vendor companies
- Service providers
- New York State Agencies
- Manufacturers

**Strategy: Airport Infrastructure Improvements**

ACTIVITIES

**Years 1-5:**

- Facilitate and promote continued development of facilities and infrastructure at Plattsburgh International Airport and communities adjacent to Fort Drum

- Support infrastructure improvements at other airports in the region

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES

- Airport Authorities
- FAA
- Chambers of Commerce
- Elected officials
- County governments
- Department of Transportation

**Strategy: Transportation Equipment Cluster Support**

ACTIVITIES

**Years 1-2:**

- Support finalization of a “Center of Excellence” for railcar and locomotive production at Bombardier Transportation

**Years 3-5:**

- Support contract opportunities for transportation equipment companies
- Advocate for a more focused and committed approach by NYS and its transportation authorities in support of maximizing retention of federal and state equipment contract dollars
- Work with Congressional delegation in support of approval of a multi-year federal transportation bill
- Work with transportation equipment companies to identify and support facility expansions, equipment and technology upgrades and changing workforce recruitment and training needs

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES

- Industry sector leaders and businesses
- Educational institutions
- Training institutions
- Federal, state, local and private sector funding sources
- Congressional delegation
- New York State Department of Labor
- Empire State Development
- Department of Transportation

**Strategy: Aerospace Marketing**

ACTIVITIES

**Years 1-5:**

- Seek a continuation of past and current partnership with Empire State Development in securing a visible and effective exhibition Paris Air Shows

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES

Industry sector leaders and businesses throughout the state

North Country Chamber of Commerce

Empire State Development

Clinton County

**Strategy: Support the existing small but dynamic biotechnology cluster**

in the Saranac Lake/Lake Placid area and encourage other biotech companies to locate in the region, including early-stage biomedical tool type companies. Having a larger bio-cluster presence in the region will help large and small bio facilities to stay, expand and thrive.

ACTIVITIES

- Establish a public/private Biotech Equity Investment Fund to assist existing biotech businesses and attract new companies to the region
  - Explore public and private funding sources
  - Develop an advisory board with expertise in both bioscience and finance to manage the fund
  - Determine benchmarks and measurements that will demonstrate the performance of the Fund
- Identify opportunities to attract early-stage biomedical tool type companies to the region
  - Construct a facility near or adjacent to existing biotech facilities to provide expansion space to existing companies or space for new early-stage companies

- Utilize equipment and capacity at Trudeau Institute to help companies develop new products
- Identify and address barriers to entry into the biotech cluster in New York to facilitate the attraction of new companies

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES

Prospective and existing biotech businesses

Public and Private funding sources

Advisory board to manage investment fund

**Strategy: Address the shortage of rental housing**

available for soldiers and their families in the Fort Drum area and, in turn, improve the quality of housing options for the community as a whole.

ACTIVITIES

**Year 1-2:**

- Continue to support the Community Housing Rental Program (CRHP) to create new housing stock
- Ensure that soldiers and family members are fully welcomed and included into North Country communities

**Year 2-5:**

- Represent the community to the outside development teams that frequent the changing scope of activity at Fort Drum
- Increase and expand the CRHP model to induce more rehabilitation of older housing stock

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES

DANC

FDLRO

Representatives of Fort Drum and the soldiers serving there

Federal, state, local and private sector funding sources

Developers

**Strategy: Provide a regional market plan and site selection options**

targeted toward businesses that

complement Fort Drum and the North Country

ACTIVITIES

**Year 1:**

- Add resources to the already established Drum Country Business marketing effort.
- Replicate the site selector marketing effort in other parts of the region when appropriate

**Years 2-5:**

- Target existing defense contractors not already in New York or regional market
- Promote cross border business by establishing regional offices and services that capitalize on “Drum Country”

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES

Greater Watertown North Country Chamber of Commerce

DANC

Marketing/Advertising Firms

Social Media sites

Empire State Development

Site Selectors

**Strategy: Optimize the fluidity at its commercial border crossings**

in terms of facilities, staffing, operations and processes, especially U.S. and Canadian investment at the Alexandria Bay, Ogdensburg and Massena ports of entry. Support maximization of economic value from distribution and supply chain management. Support transportation investments including but not limited to east-west highway investments.

ACTIVITIES

**Year 1-5:**

- Continue regional advocacy efforts in Washington and Ottawa
- Support action by the Village of Gouverneur to carry out water system improvements needed to secure the continued location of Kinney Drugs’ warehouse and distribution center.
- Support and take greater advantage of the

Global Supply Chain Management programs at SUNY Plattsburgh and Clarkson University.

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES

North Country Regional Economic Development Council

New York Department of Agriculture and Markets

New York Empire State Development Corporation

USDA Rural Development

County Industrial Development Agencies

Food manufacturing and processing companies

Local farmers

**Strategy: Create a Business Retention and Expansion Program**

for existing large manufacturers.

ACTIVITIES

**Year 1:**

- Identify those large manufacturers critical to the region’s economy
- Create plans to keep the manufacturers, local and regional government entities and economic development resources connected

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES

Representatives of large manufacturers

Economic Development Agencies

Local governments

Training institutions

Federal, state, local and private sector funding sources

**Strategy: Manufacturing Cluster Support**

ACTIVITIES

**Year 1-5:**

- Increase resources and methods for technology transfer from Clarkson University, Paul Smith’s College and other institutions both inside and outside the North Country Region to assist manufacturers in resolving issues and

becoming more competitive globally

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES

Researchers at Clarkson and other Universities

CITEC

Entrepreneurs

Technology companies

Federal, state, local and private sector funding sources

Incubators

**Vision:** *Attract and nurture entrepreneurial pioneers to cultivate innovative clusters in our rural communities, and catalyze the highest per capita rate of small business state-ups in the state.*

**Strategy:** *Foster development of small businesses* and entrepreneurial activities that add value to local resources.

ACTIVITIES

**Year 1:**

- Establish a regional microenterprise grants and loans program that complements state resources;
- Foster entrepreneur-friendly communities by providing user-friendly information and resources on navigating local regulations in a variety of mediums (e.g., website); and
- Expand the Business Incubator program located in Potsdam to better support the entire region.

**Year 2:**

- Establish a marketing and outreach program to inform young adults of the opportunities to work, live and play in the North Country. Create marketing materials in a variety of media that speak to the region's high quality of life, need for community leaders and skilled and professional workforce, opportunities for entrepreneurship, and resources available to those who choose to stay here;
- Establish a "Welcome Home to the North Country" program leader to host a "one-stop shop" of resources for potential returnees, including information on housing, small business development, workforce development and job placement;
- Establish a mentor network of successful community leaders and business people to

work hands-on with interested high school and college students to understand opportunities available to them; and

- Develop a plan for additional business incubator centers in other areas of the North Country Region.

**Year 3 and Beyond:**

- Establish and grow regionally based venture/equity funds for business start-ups

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES

- Small Business Development Centers
- Empire State Development Corporation
- Universities and Colleges
- Local Governments
- Chambers of Commerce
- Certain Private Industry
- Adirondack Economic Development Corporation
- North Country Alliance
- Adirondack North Country Association

**Vision:** *Mobilize the creativity and capacity of the graduates of our outstanding places of higher learning.*

**Strategy:** *Recognize the North Country's higher education cluster* and design and implement incentives for collaborative research and entrepreneurial activity among and between them.

ACTIVITIES

- Create an investment fund designed to provide seed capital and support for group scholarship and research which is undertaken jointly by two or more North Country educational institutions with commercial outcomes.
- Encourage the institutions of higher learning to become mixed-use centers of the North Country knowledge community by underwriting business incubators proximate to the institutions in the region. Beyond mere outreach, this strategy would welcome entrepreneurs into the array of amenities provided to the institution's faculty, students and staff, providing a truer and more lasting connection between the institutions and the entrepreneurial community.
- Dedicate staff and faculty resources for the solving of system problems of regional business issues in such areas of regional strength as supply chain, advanced materials and environmental analysis.

**Year 1:**

- Support a 3 year pilot project at Clarkson University and SUNY Plattsburgh to jointly undertake a commercialize supply chain solution involving both faculty and students.
- Investigate costs and obstacles to offering access to on-campus amenities like gyms, golf courses, pools, and faculty clubs to entrepreneurs active at university-based incubators.
- Investigate opportunities for arranging faculty work and teaching assignments so that group scholarship, research and faculty business consulting are more feasible.

**Year 2:**

- Market the amenities package to potential

entrepreneurs.

- Offer pro-bono legal and accounting assistance to faculty seeking to provide regional business or engineering consulting services.

**Year 3 and Beyond:**

- Seek foundation and governmental support to grow the investment fund.
- Market on-campus consulting services and opportunities for faculty-led student work on behalf of regional businesses.

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES

- Universities and colleges
- Participating faculty, students and staff
- Federal, state and foundation funding

**Strategy:** *Reduce obstacles so that North Country* residents can easily return to higher education or begin in their higher education at institutions in the region.

ACTIVITIES

- Ensure that all SUNY four-year campuses accept corresponding credits earned at any SUNY campus.
- Using a consortium approach, offer regionally accepted on-line and web-based courses acceptable at all other regional four-year and two-year institutions, respectively.
- Support universal North Country access to low cost, high-speed broadband and telecommunications.
- Organize a cross-region paid internship program for full-time students from the ten regional institutions.

**Year 1:**

- Identify existing articulation agreements between area institutions and evaluate their successes and the obstacles to success.
- Facilitate an inter-institution meeting of the internship staffs at all ten institutions with the goal of increasing opportunities for regional

**Vision:** Mobilize the creativity and capacity of the graduates of our outstanding places of higher learning.

students to secure paid internships within the region.

**Year 2:**

- Meet with SUNY Central to begin to discuss how to standardize SUNY on-line and web-based courses to make returning to school at a regional institution less problematic.
- Incentivize internship placement staff to seek inter-regional placements.

**Years 3 and Beyond:**

- Stage events at all regional institutions to market the ease of returning to higher education at any North Country institution.
- Provide incentives to North Country residents with less than two years of full-time higher education remaining to accomplish to qualify for a four-year degree to use on-line and web based courses to ease their return to the “classroom.”

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES  
Universities and colleges

Participating existing and prospective students

Internship placement staff

**Strategy:** Elevate the access of the residents of the North Country to arts and culture through integration of cultural activities for higher education students and North Country residents.

ACTIVITIES

- Provide cost effective on-campus venues for cultural activities.
- Integrate some on-campus cultural productions with community participants.
- Use off-campus venues for campus productions with little or no cost to regional audiences.

- Invest in the development of arts and culture venues for community-wide use.

**Year 1:**

- Using the SUNY Plattsburgh Choral Union - Champlain Valley Voices collaboration at SUNY Plattsburgh as a model. Survey staff, students and community participants to gain insight into the benefits and challenges of such campus-based collaborations.
- Experiment with offering student level prices to community members to increase audience size and to interest community members in cultural offerings on campus.

**Year 2:**

- Based on the research/surveys of the SUNY Plattsburgh program, develop an implementation template for other institutions.
- Offer financial and academic incentives to campus-based arts and cultural groups to bring activities to underserved areas, perhaps in association with regional arts councils.

**Years 3 and Beyond:**

- Monitor the increase in mutual recognition of the value of higher educational institutions to the region.
- Encourage businesses in the region to do on-campus recruitment events at all 10 institutions.

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES  
Campus play, music and arts programs and offices

Regional arts councils

Community performing arts venues

Community play, music and arts organizations

**Vision:** Elevate global recognition of the region as one of the special places on the planet to visit, live, work and study

**Strategy:** Create and manage a transformational regional “brand” which powerfully communicates the unique identity and resources of the people, places and products of the North Country region.

**Strategy:** Foster the development and enhancement of sub-regional plans and marketing analyses that identify opportunities to attract more businesses, students, and “boomer” retirees; drive new markets for agricultural and artisan producers; encourage new investment in the Region; create higher value-added opportunities for Regional products and services; grow the number of visitors to the Region, and; increase tax revenue to the State.

ACTIVITIES

**Year 1:**

- Prepare and administer qualitative and quantitative research surveys to select stakeholders, potential investors, past and potential visitors, current and prospective customers for regional artisans and manufacturers
- Involve 750 to 1000 residents through a series of 40-50 facilitated meetings to seek opinions and concepts for a brand identity, with local community leaders, representative organizations for local food production and distribution, cultural organizations, tourism promotion agencies, tourism destinations, hospitality venues, farmers, loggers, artisans, local communities, chambers of commerce, business owners, existing manufacturers, schools and universities, and potential investors in those strategic clusters identified by the North Country Regional Council that would benefit from a coordinated and coherent brand identity and marketing effort
- Analyze and synthesize the information

obtained

- Develop brand identity usage guidelines
- Develop authentication guidelines for food producers, artisans, manufacturers, “made in the region” stakeholders

**Year 2:**

- Complete research and outreach effort
- Identify creative resources necessary to assist with implementation of the program
- Create oversight brand team with representatives from the major stakeholders to provide perspective and advice on the implementation and success of the branding program
- Develop a complete brand identity system based on research and outreach
- Communicate the brand identity system to stakeholders and outreach meeting participants

- Develop brand messages based on research for both internal and external target audiences
- Develop and design collateral in digital, print, and electronic media; include focus group testing of messages and materials and fine-tuning as necessary.

- Coordinate global brand launch using media (all formats)

- Create sustainable web-based brand platform including a web 2.0 site and social media presence.

- Plan and implement media buys (all formats) to promote the brand to a global community and help recruit investors and entrepreneurs
- Hire and train staff to handle social media and website requirements

**Year 3 and Beyond:**

- Continuing research to measure and advance effectiveness
- Compile and communicate success metrics annually
- Adapt the messages to stay current

- Expand digital market penetration to measurably increase share of mind for the Region
- Enhance penetration of global markets with effective and targeted messages
- Recruit private sector investment share to more than 50% of annual program costs
- Negotiate sustained public sector financial support by a dedicated share of the increased revenues generated in the region

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES

Survey respondents such as stakeholders; potential investors; past and potential visitors; and current and prospective customers  
Local food producers, artisans and manufacturers  
Media resources

**Vision: Activate tourism as a driver to diversifying North Country economies.**

**Strategy: Put in place tools to attract private investment**

which will drive demand to revitalize and diversify communities and create a climate which allows entrepreneurs to flourish.

**ACTIONS**

**Year 1**

- Put in place a Tourism Investment Solicitor
- Contract for personal recruitment efforts with a tourism development specialist
- Develop background materials needed for tourism business plans
- Organize a North Country Tourism Investment marketing component to build on the State's Open For Business marketing effort

*Start a Regional Tourism Planning Initiative*

- Research and organize existing official plans related to tourism development in the North Country
- Identify key common themes and actions from existing plans

**Year 2**

- Maintain a Tourism Investment Solicitor
- Personal recruitment efforts with a tourism development specialist
- Maintain marketing materials and statewide involvement
- Organize a database of available tourism and hospitality properties
- Identify transformational projects within community plans and locate investment leads

*Maintain a Regional Tourism Planning Initiative*

- Develop and implement an Internet-based resource to share inventoried plans
- Encourage and organize collaborative efforts between organizations and municipalities with common interests

**Year 3**

- Maintain a Tourism Investment Solicitor
- Personal recruitment efforts with a tourism development specialist
- Maintain marketing materials and statewide involvement
- Maintain database of properties and transformational projects
- Organize a portfolio of market researched, investment-ready business plans

*Maintain a Regional Tourism Planning Initiative*

- Maintain data collection and Internet publication
- Encourage region-wide planning initiatives based on identified collaborative opportunities

**Year 4, onward**

- Continued recruitment, with maintenance of marketing components and databases, plus expansion of business plan portfolio

**POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS**

- Local governments
- Empire State Development
- Local planning departments and agencies
- Local economic development agencies
- Colleges and universities
- Tourism promotion agencies
- Chamber of Commerce
- Real Estate boards

**Strategy: Develop tourism infrastructure**

to transform the region by driving community development and leveraging private investment.

**ACTIONS**

**Year 1**

- Creation of performance driven Community Transformation Tourism Fund (CTTF)
- Create Green Energy Tourism Fund
- Create Tourism Business Revitalization Fund

*(see details on these actions in Tourism Working Group report)*

**Year 2**

- Ongoing management of funding tools to maximize return on investment
- Seek on-going investment in tourism-targeted funds
- Initiate evaluation and monitoring of funding projects

**Year 3 onward**

- Ongoing management of funds to maximize return on investment
- Seek on-going investment in tourism-targeted funds
- Organize new or revised programming based on evaluation and monitoring of funding projects

**POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES**

- Adirondack Economic Development Corporation
- Empire State Development
- Tourism businesses
- Tourism-driven nonprofits
- Local governments
- Local economic development agencies
- Tourism promotion agencies
- Chambers of Commerce
- Real estate boards
- Real estate developers
- Banks and other lenders
- Tourism related State agencies
- Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
- Environmental Conservation

**Strategy: Solicit national and international sporting and recreation events**

to use as a tool for regional recognition, tourism diversity and economic impact.

**ACTIONS**

**Year 1**

- Organize region-wide sport and recreation working group
- Identify existing sports and recreation national and international events and competitions in the region
- Identify regional resources capable of hosting national and international competitions and events.
- Identify potential events to be solicited
- Identify potential events to be created

**Year 2**

- Develop targeted plan for solicitation or creation of key events
- Develop intra-regional and extra-regional relationships needed to bid on targeted events
- Identify and solicit needed support for targeted bids
- Put in place a system to actively support bids and events on a regional basis

**Year 3 onward**

- Continue work

**POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES**

- Empire State Development
- Local Tourism Promotion Agencies
- Colleges and universities
- Olympic Regional Development Authority
- Sports venues
- Recreational resource managers
- Sport and recreation businesses
- Hospitality and tourism businesses
- Chambers of commerce
- Sport and recreation enthusiasts organizations
- Sponsoring commercial interests

**Vision: Propagate an agricultural revolution as we help feed the region and the world**

**Strategy: Maintain, establish and expand the presence of storage, processing and distribution facilities** in the region to promote the sales of value-added agricultural products that are sold locally and globally.

ACTIVITIES

**Year 1:**

- Coordinate with companies to sustain the continued operation of existing value-added processing facilities in the region, and assist with their modernization and expansion to increase production.
- Fund a market research and feasibility study that identifies opportunities for value-added production in the region. This study would: identify the number, location, type and capacity of existing storage, distribution and processing facilities in the region; quantify the type and volume of agricultural products that are exported outside the region for processing; and examine the demand and potential locations for new or expanded agricultural storage, distribution and value-added production facilities.

**Year 2:**

- Analyze project costs and public-private investments necessary to sustain, establish, modernize and expand storage, distribution and production facilities as outlined in the study.
- Collaborate with participating farmers to demonstrate the available supply of agricultural products needed for storage, distribution and value-added production purposes.
- Secure commitments from interested firms to establish new storage, value-added processing and distribution facilities.

**Year 3:**

- Compare accomplishments to performance measures, assess unanticipated barriers discovered to date, and amend strategies as needed.

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES  
 North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
 New York Department of Agriculture and Markets  
 New York Empire State Development Corporation  
 USDA Rural Development  
 County Industrial Development Agencies  
 Food manufacturing and processing companies  
 Local farmers

**Strategy: Increase and expand direct marketing sales with consumers, institutions, restaurants, and grocery stores to capitalize on the region's burgeoning local food movement.**

ACTIVITIES

**Years 1 to 5:**

- Fund projects that provide technical assistance and business planning to producers to: improve the quality of product grown; standardize the product; develop and increase consistent product availability; and implement strategies for branding and selling their products.
- Fund projects that provide cost sharing incentives to producers and agri-businesses for installing and/or modernizing facilities that are necessary for meeting wholesaler and consumer demand.
- Fund a multi-year marketing campaign that creates, publishes, distributes, and coordinates

a “North Country Grown” product label to producers and agri-businesses; and by profiling local farms/agri-businesses in the media and the products they sell.

**Year 2:**

- Fund a survey to identify direct marketing opportunities that can be established or expanded in the region.

**Years 3 to 5:**

- Fund projects that pursue opportunities identified in the direct marketing survey.

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES  
 North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
 New York Department of Agriculture and Markets  
 New York Empire State Development Corporation  
 USDA Rural Development  
 County Industrial Development Agencies  
 Small Business Development and Entrepreneurial Centers  
 County Cooperative Extension Offices  
 Chambers of Commerce  
 Participating Agribusiness operations and farmers

**Strategy: Increase the quantity and quality of agricultural products grown and processed in the region** by offering farmers and agri-businesses a comprehensive array of technical assistance services, education services, and cost-sharing incentives.

Activities

**Years 1 to 5:**

- Fund successful technical assistance, education programs and cost-sharing incentives that demonstrate a valuable return on investment

for the region's agricultural industry.

- Fund projects that advance the region's emerging biomass energy industry and support the region's farmers and agribusinesses that grow and process biomass energy crops.

**Year 2:**

- Fund an assessment that examines collaborative opportunities between organizations to meet the technical, educational and financial needs of the agricultural industry; and identify successful services and programs that provide a valuable return on investment that should be expanded and replicated throughout the region.

**Years 3 to 5:**

- Fund collaborative projects that address findings and implement recommendations in the assessment.

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES  
 North Country Regional Economic Development Council  
 New York Department of Agriculture and Markets  
 New York Empire State Development Corporation  
 NYSERDA  
 USDA Rural Development  
 County Industrial Development Agencies  
 Local universities and colleges  
 County Cooperative Extension Offices  
 Soil and Water Conservation Districts  
 Small Business Development and Entrepreneurial Centers  
 Miner Institute  
 County BOCES Programs  
 Participating agribusinesses and farmers

**Vision: Create the greenest energy economy in the State**

**Strategy: Work with existing power distribution companies to plan and build energy networks** to better link clean energy sources to the grid.

**Strategy: Promote Smart Growth principles** by encouraging adaptive reuse of existing structures and new residential construction in or near villages and hamlets

**ACTIONS**

**Year 1**

- Complete NYSERDA Cleaner Greener Community Phase 1, Sustainability Plan and GHG Inventory
- Develop List of Regional projects for funding
- Create a stronger community of residents who share an interest in energy savings and emission reductions and use that community to build movement for implementing region-wide improvements
- Complete principles, share with municipalities and pilot where appropriate

**Year 2**

- Develop management and support structure for incoming funds
  - Develop and use metrics for management of green initiatives for the Region.
  - Create local energy working groups within cities, towns and villages to support new ideas and upcoming projects
  - Share pilot results with state agencies and developers, improve program for rollout/sharing with other community leaders
- Year 3 and beyond

- Implement monitoring program and track implementation of programs
- Track developer interest, investment,

improve materials and rollout the additional North Country communities.

**POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES**  
NYSERDA

- County Planning offices
- Community leadership
- Community Power Network
- The Wild Center
- Adirondack North Country Association
- Regional legislators
- Ecology and Environment
- Other consultants as needed

**ACTIONS**

**Year 1**

- Outline challenges and limitations to existing infrastructure, break down issues into various categories: legislative, infrastructure type, regional challenges, local challenges.
- Hold meetings with electrical distributors and local governments on challenges and brainstorming possible solutions
- Produce best practices report for small scale power economics. Work with appropriate agencies on height restrictions for wind turbines, dam removal and other issues as needed. Complete constraint identification, constraint relief options and develop initial plan to work thru each option

**Year 2**

- Bring on statewide political support to engage in legislative process. Support legislators in drafting legislation changes.
  - Support legislation preparation and associated questions/answers
  - Goal: Legislation is adapted to allow for energy strategies to move forward
- Support legislation preparation and associated questions/answers

**Year 3 and beyond**

- Continue as needed to support legislative changes as needed
- Engage electrical distributors to begin

planning to upgrade infrastructure to support Region-wide projects which are underway (under other strategies)

- Develop and implement communications plan to engage North Country residents on changes.

**POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES**  
Utilities  
NYSERDA

- Local and County governments
- Wind power and small hydro businesses
- Adirondack North Country Association
- Regional legislators
- Public Service Commission

**Strategy: Maximize North Country utilization of energy efficiency resources** and programs to reduce total housing and energy costs

**ACTIONS**

**Year 1**

- Coordinate with existing programs such as NYSERDA's Green Jobs Green New York, NYSERDA's Energy Smart Communities, utilities, NYSERDA's Empower program, the Wild Center's Adirondack Climate Action Plan and other ongoing programs, to enhance the rate and scale of energy retrofits
- Conduct outreach to targeted communities including education and case studies and testimonials from homeowners and businesses on benefits of the programs.
- Identify and enlist community-based partners who will assist in outreach
- Identify BPI certified contractors to do the audits and retrofits within each County and within reasonable working distance in interested target communities
- Build contractor awareness of benefits of energy efficiency; offer access to training through SUNY Canton's Center for Energy Efficiency and Building Science and other training centers

- Coordinate with NYSDOL Career One-Stop Centers to steer unemployed individuals to training opportunities

**Year 2**

- Create referral program for energy retrofits from homeowner to homeowner and business to business. Encourage additional contractors, including MWBE to become BPI accredited
- Support continued growth of a strong foundation of accredited contractors to encourage workers to leverage training opportunities currently in place
- Connect trainees with contractor employers to increase employment in this sector
- Continue actions from Year 1

**Year 3 and beyond**

- Assess success of Years 1 and 2 and adjust strategies if necessary
- Measure, track and report on the number of buildings that have been retrofitted
- Measure, track and report on the reduction in energy cost and GHG emissions
- Work with BOCES and Community Colleges to increase training opportunities for new and upcoming workforce
- Continue actions from Years 1 and 2

**POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES**  
NYSERDA

- Workforce Development Institute
  - Cornell Cooperative Extension
  - Contractors
  - County Planning offices
  - Community leadership
  - Community Power Network
  - The Wild Center
  - Adirondack North Country Association
  - SUNY Canton & other education resources
- Vision: Create the greenest energy economy in the State

**Strategy: Invest in large and small clean energy technology businesses, including lighting and biomass**

**ACTIONS**

**Year 1**

**Biomass**

- Following up on past reviews, conduct a comprehensive assessment of biomass sources.
- Engage regional stakeholders on this issue including the existing and potential business sector, forest product companies, sustainability accreditation organizations, environmental interests and the public to reach common ground on the subject
- Identify residential, business or institutional partners who are interested in converting to biomass fuel

**Micro-Hydro**

- Gather data on existing dam infrastructure. Collect information on land-use, property, water conditions, local transmission infrastructure
- Develop report on equipment best practices, current technologies which can support small or micro-hydro installations
- Finalize report on identified sites

**Year 2**

**Biomass**

- Use outcomes of Strategy 1 to move forward with implementing a biomass production (both enhancement of existing companies, as well as encouraging new business development)
- Use NYSERDA and other funding to convert energy systems within the region to use biomass as a fuel source
- Work to sign up an initial set of residential, business and/or institutional partners to utilize locally sourced biomass fuel
- Produce best practices for small scale power economics. Work with appropriate agencies on height restrictions for wind turbines, dam

removal and other issues as needed.

**Micro-Hydro**

- Identify ten to twenty initial locations for further investigation, with the expectation that five to ten locations can be included in a first phase environmental and economic analysis
- Develop an information Toolkit for local landowners to support process
- Engage local construction and design companies on the program, and provide information on business opportunities

**Year 3 and beyond**

- Continue to grow biomass production. Expand and or explore business opportunities that will support local biomass production such as shipping, warehousing and retail systems
- Monitor and collect information on shifting energy use, conduct best practices, share improvements
- Through a media and local communications share the success stories of locally sourced energy
- Have five to ten hydro locations under development by private landowners, with support of electrical distributors

**POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES**

DEC, APA, NYSERDA, SUNY ESF

Local and County government, engineering firms

Adirondack North Country Association

Interested landowners with potential hydro sites

Green Tech businesses

**Vision: Our Dynamic International Border – Canadian Connection**

**Strategy: The North Country will lead initiatives to fully tap into the power of the dynamic international border**

by broadening and deepening the economic relationship with Ontario and Quebec, building on the two existing corridor coalitions to build its economic connectivity with Ontario and Quebec

**ACTIVITIES**

**Year 1:**

- Build on the framework of the 2001 Quebec-New York Corridor Agreement, establishing a fresh agenda of action items
- Work with Quebec and New York to organize and conduct a fifth Quebec-New York Economic Summit in 2012. The North Country Chamber of Commerce will take the lead in its established role as the state's business lead in the Quebec-New York Corridor process, engaging the Regional Council Canadian Connection Work Group so as to broaden participation and impacts throughout the North Country
- Build regional support for and engagement in the Capital Corridor. Work to identify and pursue opportunities to broaden and deepen economic connection with Ontario including consideration of the potential for a New York-Ontario Summit.

**Years 2-5:**

- Continuous facilitate relationship building between targeted interests in Quebec and Ontario. The Quebec-New York efforts will be led by the North Country Chamber of Commerce and the Ontario efforts will be led by the Capital Corridor, both in collaboration with the Council's Canadian Connection Work Group
- Define annual goals and action items

**POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES**

Capital Corridor

Quebec-New York Corridor Coalition

Empire State Development Corp

Quebec Government

Ontario Government

NYS Department of Transportation

Businesses

Economic Developers

**Strategy: The Council will enhance the effectiveness of the region's economic development activities in Canada**

by encouraging and facilitating collaborative team approaches.

**ACTIVITIES**

**Year 1:**

- The Canadian Connection Work Group will inventory existing marketing efforts in Canada by the North Country's economic development community
- Identify opportunities for collaborative marketing and shared trade show participation with a focus on Canadian based investment opportunities in Strategic Clusters identified in this plan
- Facilitate shared activities and strategies

**Years 2-5:**

- Continue the collaborative effort on an annual basis, building on each year's experience and progress

**POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES**

Quebec-New York Corridor Coalition

Capital Corridor

Empire State Development Corp

Quebec Government

Ontario Government

NYS Department of Transportation

Businesses

Economic Development Agencies

**Regional Implementation Network**

■ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Adirondack Economic Development Corporation  
Adirondack North Country Association  
Clinton County Planning Office  
Development Authority of the North Country  
Essex County IDA  
Essex County Planning Office  
Franklin County IDA  
Greater Watertown North Country Chamber of Commerce  
Hamilton County Economic Development & Tourism  
Jefferson County IDA  
Jefferson County Planning Office  
Lewis County Economic Development and Planning  
Lewis County IDA  
Malone Chamber of Commerce  
National Grid  
New York State Electric and Gas  
North Country Alliance

North Country Chamber of Commerce  
Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism  
Saranac Lake Chamber of Commerce  
St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce  
St. Lawrence County IDA  
St. Lawrence County Planning  
The Development Corporation of Clinton County  
Thousand Islands Tourism Council

■ WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Jefferson Lewis Workforce Investment Board  
National Grid  
New York State Electric & Gas  
North Country Workforce Partnership  
St. Lawrence County Workforce Investment Board

■ EDUCATION

Board of Cooperative Education Services  
High Schools throughout the Region

Clarkson University  
Clinton Community College  
Jefferson Community College  
North Country Community College  
Paul Smith's College  
Plattsburgh Aeronautical Institute  
St. Lawrence University  
SUNY Canton  
SUNY ESF Ranger School  
SUNY Plattsburgh  
SUNY Potsdam

■ RESEARCH

Clarkson University  
Cornell Cooperative Extension  
Miner Institute  
Trudeau Institute

*Note: Other Resources and Partners will be identified as the Strategic Plan is Implemented*

*Note: State agencies will be important partners in this initiative and will be involved in many aspects of the implementation of the plan*

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# *Regional Implementation Network:*

*Implementation of the North Country Strategic Plan will require the cooperative efforts of the organizations, businesses and residents of the region. Below is a list of some of the organizations that will be central to the success of the plan.*

## **Regional Economic Development Council Operations:**

■ The Council has developed processes to ensure that the Council is operated effectively, meets all of its obligations, develops creative solutions to challenges and strengthens the economy of the region. This section includes information about how the Council will function, a timeline for annual activities, a system for reviewing and revising the Plan, methods for obtaining commitment of the resources needed for implementation of the plan, how it will recruit and retain member to ensure the Council remains strong, the process it will follow for Priority Project Selection, what it will do to ensure priority projects area successful, and the process for reviewing and endorsing Consolidated Funding Applications.

### MONTHLY MEETINGS

Monthly meetings will be structured to allow time for planning and conducting the essential business of the Council. Meaningful participation in the process will ensure that Council members, stakeholders, businesses, the public and stakeholders remain informed, involved and committed for the future. During the meetings Council staff will report on priority project progress. Work Groups will

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report on progress and activities. Some or all of each meeting will be open to the public, depending on whether some business needs to be conducted in Executive Session. CFA's will be presented, discussed and voted on, as needed.

### ANNUAL TIMELINE

**Month 1** - Review the Strategic Planning process. Areas that can be made more efficient, inclusive or effective will be identified and the Planning Committee will work to improve the planning process.

**Month 2** - Begin discussion on the ongoing structure of the Council. The Council will define the roles of the Council members and Council staff. They will review the working groups to see which groups should be continued, which ones are no longer needed and if any new Work Groups should be formed. Members of the Work Groups will be appointed or reappointed as needed by the Co-Chairs. New members will attend an orientation session to brief them on their responsibilities, review the Plan, explain the funding and CFA process, answer questions and to disseminate other pertinent information.

**Month 2** - Review of the Strategic Plan document to identify areas which can be improved based on experience gained in the first year of Plan implementation and public comment. The Council will conduct a strategy session, discuss the Plan and recommend changes. The Planning Committee will revise the document and present it to the Council for discussion.

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Public input on the draft plan will be sought using the methods described in the Public Participation Plan. Once public input has been received, the revised draft plan will be presented again to the Council for consideration/ratification. If the Council requests it, further revisions will be made and the Plan will be resubmitted by the Planning Committee.

**Month 3** - Begin discussion about priority actions needed to achieve the goals of the Plan. Resources needed to implement regional strategies and priorities will be determined. Council members and Council staff will work to obtain commitment for the resources required. Constraints preventing the success of the Plan will be identified. Where possible creative solutions for the constraints will be developed. The constraints and solutions will be forwarded to the Governor's office through the Regional Council's Executive Director.

**Month 4** - The Plan will be finalized and approved by the Council. This will allow the Council to release the plan before the request for Priority Projects is done. It is of vital importance that the Plan be available because 50% of the Priority Project Criteria points are

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directly related to how well the project aligns with and advances the Plan.

**Month 5** - Request for Priority Projects will be issued. Public Forums will be held.

**Month 8** - Deadline for Priority Project Submission

**Month 9** - Priority Project Work Group will score the Priority Projects submitted in a timely manner and make recommendations to the Council.

**Month 10** - The Council will decide which projects will be submitted to the State for funding. The projects chosen by the Council will submit CFAs.

**Month 11** - The Council will submit the updated Plan and the Priority Projects to the State.

An annual planning retreat will be held each year. The retreat will give the Council members an opportunity to spend a day brainstorming and doing long range visioning. Facilitators will help guide the Council members through the process.

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# *Regional Council Operations*

**STRATEGIC PLAN REVISION PROCESS**

■ The Council has developed a comprehensive and innovative Plan with input from the public, assistance from Council staff and the work of dedicated volunteers from communities, businesses, educational institutions, economic development organizations, planning offices, labor unions and other stakeholders. The Council strongly believes that the Plan will be a tool for changing the economic landscape of Northern New York. The Council also knows that for the plan will need to be reviewed and revised on a regular basis, adjusting the plan based on new developments, technologies, changes in the economy and advances in technology. To accomplish this, the Council

has set up a process to review the Plan on an annual basis.

The Council will use a combination of methods to ensure revisions to the Plan strengthen the document and are well thought out including public input, evaluation by the Work Groups, discussion during Group meetings and presentations by representatives of the major economic clusters in the region. Using these methods, everyone involved will have a better understanding of the region and can use this knowledge to help the region grow and prosper.

Council members have varying degrees of expertise about economic development, the major clusters represented in the region, critical issues, and workforce development. All of

the members bring valuable experience to the Council. Increased knowledge about strategic planning and the economy of the North Country will help the members to develop sound and innovative strategies for the region. Several times each year, the Council will invite members or guests to speak to the group. Speakers may make a presentation about a particular cluster, explain the existing conditions of the region, discuss economic development best practices from other areas of the country or the world, or inform the Council about issues relevant to their part of the region.

**OBTAINING COMMITMENTS**

■ Using the New York Open for Business

Strategic Planning process, the NCREDC has identified priority projects, priority actions and critical impediments that can be transformative for the region. Strategies for implementing the plan have been developed. To actualize the Vision outlined in the Plan, the Council must obtain commitments from people and entities able to help advance the Plan. The Council will identify the resources needed to achieve the goals, including intellectual and human capital. The Council will then work to secure the commitments.

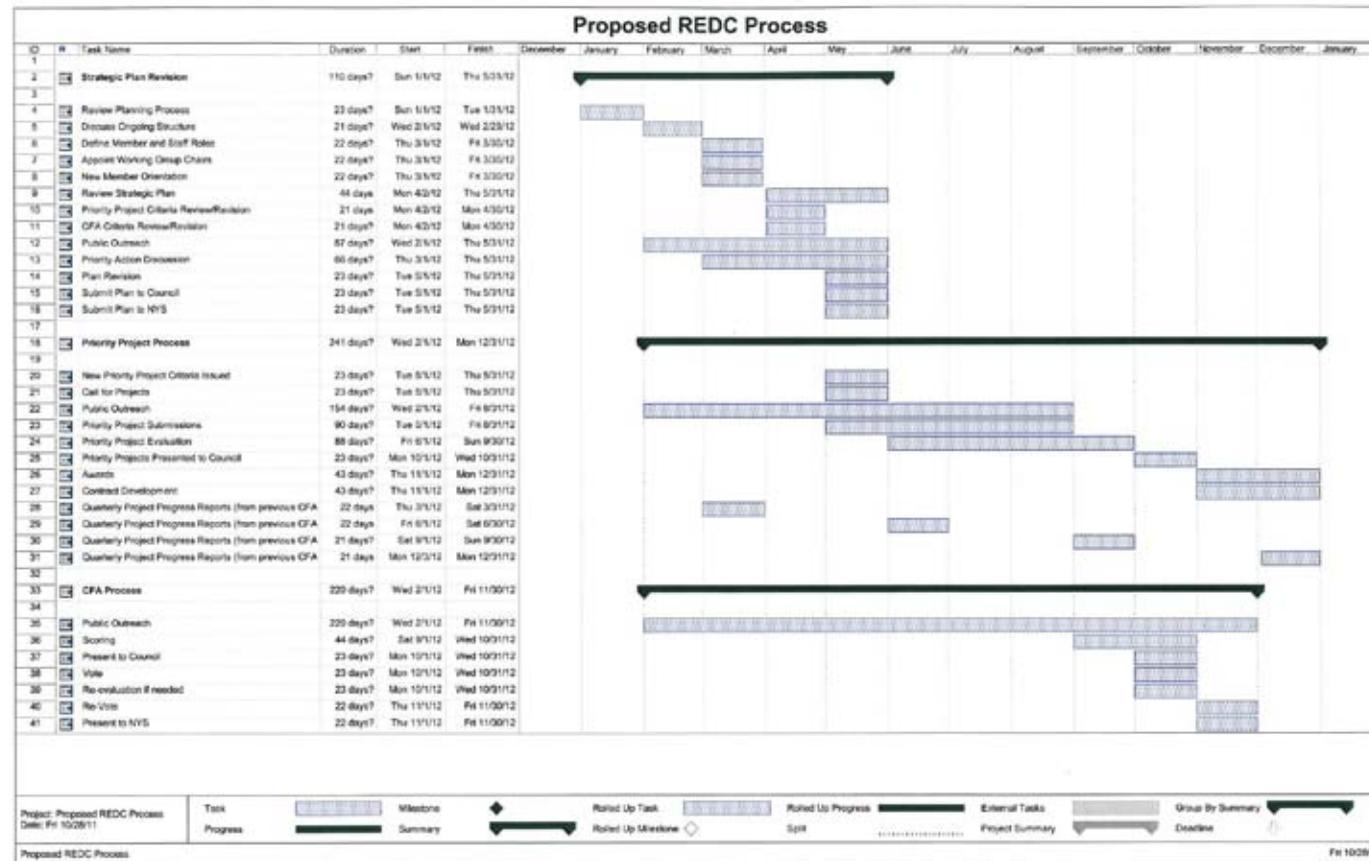
**COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP**

■ From time to time, Council members may leave and need to be replaced. A strong and

committed Council is essential to the continued economic success of the Region. Council members and the Co-Chairs will work to identify talented individuals who will be an asset to the Council and the Region and recommend them to the Governor's office for consideration when vacancies occur. Recruitment and retention of Council member will be an ongoing task.

**PRIORITY PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS**

■ The Council will reassess the priority project criteria each year. The Council will utilize a combination of input obtained through the public participation process, analysis of outcomes of projects implemented during the year, and a review of the submissions received to see if the criteria produced the desired results. The



criteria will be adjusted, if needed, based on the analysis. The deadline to finalize and approve new criteria will be month four of the implementation year.

The criteria and a request for projects will be released on day one of month five each year. To ensure stakeholders, the public and project developers can access the pertinent criteria as it will be posted on the northcountryopenforbusiness.com webpage and Facebook page and sent out by Council staff to the database of email addresses developed through the public participation process. A matrix describing the information which must be included for each project submitted for consideration, New York State programs available under the New York Open for Business program, deadlines, and contact information will also be made available at this time.

All projects will be submitted to the Regional Council's Executive Director. Deadline for project submission will be the last day of the eighth month of the implementation year to ensure that the Priority Project Selection Group has adequate time to thoroughly examine the projects and that the chosen project developers have enough time to submit all required documents. After screening the proposed projects for compliance with State criteria and removing all confidential information, Council staff will forward the proposed projects to the Priority Project Selection Group for evaluation using the Priority Project Criteria scoring sheets. The Council staff will complete the screening process and forward the projects to the Group by the 15th day of the ninth month of the implementation year.

The Priority Project Selection Group is appointed by the Council co-chairs. The group will include one person from each of the seven counties in the region to ensure all parts of the region are well represented. The Group will complete its evaluation by the last day of the ninth month of the implementation year. The Group will present recommended list of priority projects to the Council at the first meeting to be held in the tenth month of the implementation year. Project leaders will submit a Consolidated Funding Application by the deadline set by the State of New York.

After New York State has informed the Council that funding has been awarded to the region for the projects, the Council staff will notify the leader of each project selected of its award and begin the contract development process. A timeline and milestones for the projects will be developed and agreed upon by all parties. Council staff will present quarterly reports on project progress to the Council.

**PRIORITY PROJECT ASSISTANCE AND MONITORING PROCESS**

Priority Projects and Actions are chosen by the Council because they have the potential to transform the North County region, improve the living conditions of the area's residents and contribute to the economic renaissance of the State. It is essential that the projects be successful, so the Council has developed a process for monitoring and assisting the projects during contract development and implementation.

Each project will be assigned a liaison from the Regional Council staff or the Agency funding the project. The liaison will be available for

technical assistance on CFA preparation. He or she will assist with the contract development process, as needed. A timeline with milestones will be created. The liaison will monitor the project and report on a monthly basis on progress at Council meetings. If the project is not progressing as expected the liaison will, in cooperation with project leaders, determine what can be done to get the project back on track. The liaison will identify other sources of assistance, either from the private sector or within the New York State government, and recommend corrective action if necessary.

**CONSOLIDATED FUNDING APPLICATION PROCESS**

The Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process will help the Regional Council

develop a funding strategy that will help the Council and the State meet the most critical needs of the communities in the region, help businesses grow jobs and foster on-going strategic planning that will ensure the economic health and viability of the region. The roles of the Council members, CFA scorers, Co-Chairs, Executive Director, Council staff and State Agency Resource Team members are described below.

The Council will review all qualified applications and approve endorsement scores. Ex officio members maybe present but may not participate in the discussion or scoring of CFAs.

Eligible members of the Council will individually review and score CFAs from which they are not recused.

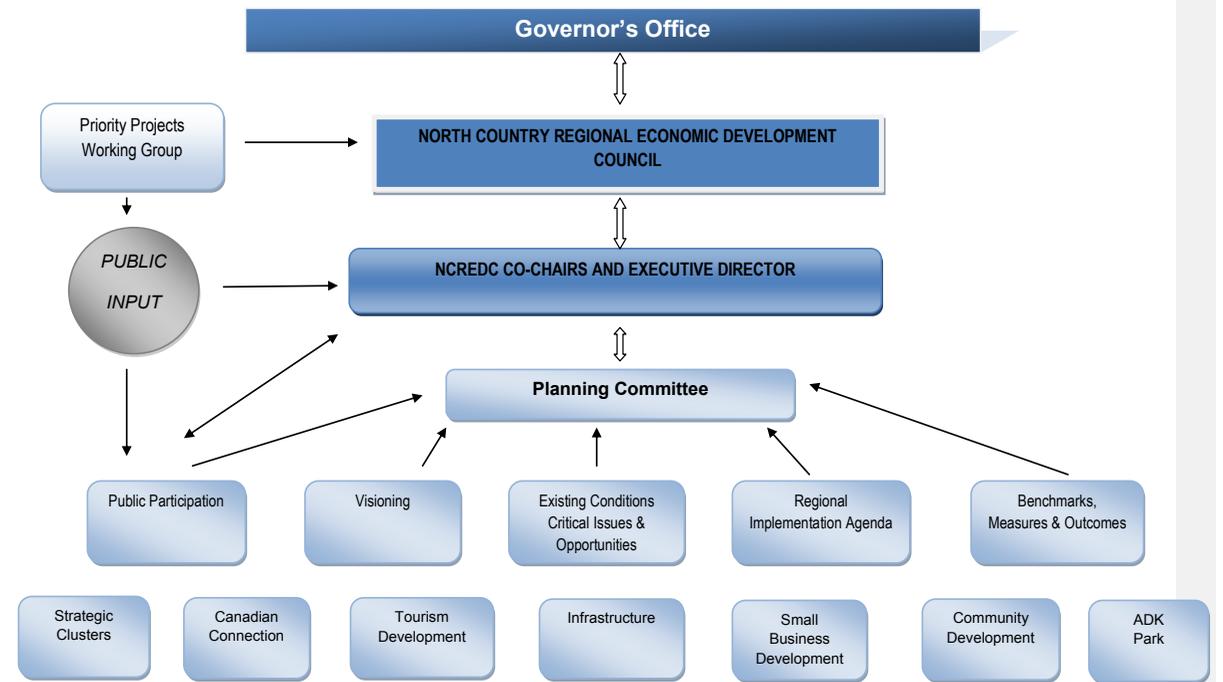
The Co-Chairs will coordinate with the Ex-

ecutive Director or designee regarding managerial, administrative and organizational tasks related to Council member recusals and the CFA endorsement scoring.

The Executive Director (ESD Regional Director) or designee will coordinate and oversee administrative duties relating to the CFAs and the recusal of Council members and coordinate assistance from Council staff and State Agency Resource Team members.

Council staff and State Agency Resource Team Members will assist the Executive Director in the administrative duties relating to the review of CFAs; they will provide clarification and facilitate the rapid determination of application eligibility for funding programs administered by their respective agency; and they will provide information relating to their funding programs to potential applicants.

**NORTH COUNTRY REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**



## ***Strategic Plan Implementation Public Participation Plan***

■ IN RECOGNITION of the important role the public plays in the success of the Plan, the NCREDC will continue to solicit public input during the plan implementation phase by utilizing a combination of public outreach and electronic communication. Continuation of active public engagement is core to the future implementation and success of the Strategic Plan.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH:**

To kick off the strategic planning process, NCREDC scheduled seven public meetings throughout the seven counties in the North Country region. The public meetings informed the public of the Plan details and included a session to receive public comments regarding ideas to update the Plan. The NCREDC used the email database collected during the initial round of public outreach, press releases and public service announcements to notify a broad base of constituents of meeting times, locations and dates.

The Council Co-Chairs are to be the main spokespersons and chaired the seven forums. It is anticipated that the seven public meetings will be scheduled on an annual basis during the five years of the plan implementation.

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In addition, the Council will use a Speaker's Bureau that will include NCREDC Co-Chairs and members. Presentations will be scheduled to promote the Plan and solicit public comment in venues that include NGO's, Chambers, service clubs, local governments, IDAs, trade organizations, educational entities and State agencies. On an ongoing basis Council members will communicate all public outreach to staff at Empire State Development. A log will be maintained of all public presentations.

Concurrently, the NCREDC Co-Chairs scheduled editorial board meetings with the major news outlets in the region to help broadcast key elements of the plan and ensure maximum coverage. This included print media, radio and public television. For example, Co-Chairs will record an information piece for a segment on

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"Mountain Lakes Journal", to air on Mountain Lake Public Broadcasting Station.

At the conclusion of each NCREDC monthly meeting, the general public in attendance has the opportunity to present oral comments, submit written comments and ask questions of the NCREDC members. All comments and questions are recorded and reviewed by NCREDC. At these meetings, the Co-Chairs emphasize the importance of public participation and encourage public comment.

Each year, the Council will inform the public about priority projects through the preparation and distribution of a press release of each Council meeting. Each release will be posted on northcountryopenforbusiness.com and at the North Country Facebook page. In addition, the Council will explain the process for submitting awards and will solicit comment on the priority projects and ideas for future priority projects, actions and strategies using the methods of communication outlined in the Public Participation Plan.

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### **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION:**

#### **WEBSITE:**

The Plan will be uploaded to the NCREDC's website, www.northcountryopenforbusiness.com. NCREDC will notify the general public of its availability by press release. NCREDC will also upload an electronic survey to capture public reaction to the Plan. The results of the survey will be posted in the Council document section of the website.

The Council will explore the option of webstreaming for each of the seven annual forums to be hosted in each county. Webstreaming will be coordinated by the Public Participation Committee with assistance from the Empire State Development staff.

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# *Public Participation Plan*

NCREDC's website will include functionality to receive public comment, including an online interactive forum and a Frequently Asked Question section (FAQ). Empire State Development staff will support the website and respond to comments posted through the forum or FAQ section.

*LIVE CHATS:*

The Council's website and social media use will generate additional opportunities for Live Chat exchanges with the public. Website and Facebook users will be directed to scheduled times where Live Chats are available to answer questions the public will have about the plan implementation. The Live Chats will complement the seven forums that will be scheduled following the development of the plan. The timely and public interaction will foster a high degree of transparency about the work of the Council and its impact on businesses, residents and communities of the North Country. Council staff will assist with the Live Chat.

*SOCIAL MEDIA:*

The social media sites Facebook and Twitter will be utilized through support of Clarkson University with the assistance of designated Council staff. These sites will include key components of the strategic plan and links to NCREDC's website. Through these social media tools, the public will have the opportunity to actively engage with NCREDC. Social media will enable NCREDC to directly respond to the public and expand its ability to capture public comment.

“We lived in the big city for 25 years and we never understood what it meant to be part of an engaged community before moving to Keene eight years ago. The quality of life here, being connected with your neighbors, with nature and with the cycle of the burgeoning local food industry has made us younger and healthier.”

*Jim Herman and Dave Mason  
Management Consultants  
Essex County*

*EMAIL DATABASE:*

Throughout the planning process, NCREDC collected stakeholder emails and established a comprehensive data base of email addresses. The database includes municipal, business, community, NGOs and private citizens who attended public meetings. NCREDC staff will continue to build this email database by collecting emails at public meetings and through the website and social media sites. Information about plan highlights, project funding and scheduled outreach will be disseminated on an ongoing basis utilizing this extensive address database.

The Council will continue to use a Public Participation Committee to address ongoing communication needs. Membership will be expanded to include representatives of the media who can assist in the areas of Council public communications, regional marketing, web and social media interactions. The engagement of media professionals will enable the Council to ensure an effective and ongoing regional presentation that informs and involves the public during the next five years.

Additionally, the Council will continue to use the very active and extensive system of Work Groups to receive public input about the wide range of development opportunities in the region. Similar to the work conducted during the planning phase, these Groups will be charged to maintain interaction with the public and stakeholder interests throughout the Plan implementation.

The Council will continue to conduct monthly meetings that will be open to the public. Public commentary and a question and answer period will be scheduled at the end of each monthly meeting.



VI

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How Are We Doing?

*Performance Measurement*

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### ***Performance Measures***

■ THE NORTH COUNTRY REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL will assess the performance of its strategies to accomplish its economic renaissance at several levels and, therefore, will employ a three-tiered approach to assess the performance and impact of its strategies. The three tiers will be structured as follows:

TIER I – REGIONAL OVERVIEW. At least annually, the Council will conduct an assessment of the overall economic condition of the region utilizing direct and appropriate surrogate data sets – most of which are currently being aggregated and reported and are generally available, consistent and longitudinal in nature.

TIER II – SECTOR OR ISSUE LEVEL. At least annually, a supplemental and more detailed assessment of the overall progress in the specific and strategic areas of interest particular to the region will be prepared and analyzed. This assessment will require collection of sector specific data, some utilization of more detailed survey (or other) data collection tools and/or utilization of and appropriate analysis of more obtuse surrogate data which may help inform the assessment.

TIER III – PROJECT SPECIFIC LEVEL. At least quarterly, the assisted projects will self-report on progress against project specific benchmarks and timetables established by the Council's project implementation team, including but not limited to such items as investment leverage, employment levels, implantation timeframes and unanticipated issues. The purpose will be to inform project management from the Council's perspective, to aid projects in overcoming implementation hurdles and to help the Council refine both its performance measures and prioritization standards for future funding rounds. ■

## Tier I

■ AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL the Council will measure progress against the three macro-level strategies of the Plan, specifically:

- Increase jobs in industries that export products and import dollars, including traditional value-added manufacturing jobs as well as jobs in sectors including tourism, biotech, agriculture and renewable energy.

Monitoring the change in:

- Number of business establishments
- Employment (by sector)
- Aggregate employment payroll by industry sector
- Wage rates (by sector)

(as documented in the New York Department of Labor's Quarterly Census of Employment and Wage reports)

- Build wealth in the region by building capacity, strengthening existing resources and fostering entrepreneurial opportunities.

Monitor the changes in:

- Regional employment and unemployment rates (as provided by the Department of Labor)
- Regional poverty rate (as provided by the Census Bureau's American Community Survey)
- Number of school children receiving free/reduced lunches (as documented in the New York Department of Education's annual School District Report Cards)
- UCC registrations (Survey of County Clerks)
- Leverage the North Country economic development strategy to contribute measureable value to the resurgence of New York State's economy through the increased tax revenues the newly created jobs will generate.

Monitor the changes in:

- Number of establishments, jobs, and employment payroll by industry sector (as documented in the New York Department of Labor's Quarterly Census of Employment and Wage reports)
- Annual sales, bed and property tax revenue collected in the North Country Region (annual survey of County Treasurer's Offices) (or from the New York State Comptroller)
- Change in aggregate taxable valuations (annual survey of the County Real Property Tax Offices after taxable status date)
- Track change attributable to new construction whether fully taxable of subject to a PILOT agreement (as reported in the Tax Base Growth Factors for Counties issued annually by New York State as part of the Tax cap calculation)

## Tier II

■ AT THE SECTOR AND ISSUES LEVEL, the implementation team will obtain relevant direct and surrogate data to allow the Council to assess progress on regionally significant opportunities and issues. Specific data collections for each area are identified below by work group area.

### CANADIAN CONNECTION

- Number of passenger vehicles and truck containers traveling through the Region's border crossings with Canada (as reported by the US Bureau of Transportation Statistics)
- Number of loaded rail containers passing through border crossings into Canada (as

reported by the US Bureau of Transportation Statistics)

- Number of firms established and expanded in Foreign Trade Zones (by annual reports of the local foreign trade zone administrators).
- Number of acres or square miles of expanded Foreign Trade Zones (by annual reports of the local foreign trade zone administrators).
- Number of foreign bank accounts established in Region (as obtained by survey of regional banking institutions)

### TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

- Number of requests for information from Chambers of Commerce (survey of County Chambers of Commerce)
- Number of non-resident fishing and hunting licenses issued by the DEC (survey by County of issuance)
- Annual bed tax revenue and tax generating stay events as collected and reported in the Region and number of new lodging rooms by County (survey of County Treasurers and TPA organizations)
- Number of registrants at DEC trailheads and campsites (request to the DEC for trail use head counts and public campsite rentals, by season)
- Attendance at other regional attractions (museums, theaters, etc.) (survey of County Chambers of Commerce)
- Review of annual NYS Empire State Development data on tourism trends including:
  - Total dollars spent by visitors
  - Food and beverage
  - Retail sales
- Local and State sales tax generated
- Occupancy tax receipts

- Second home expenditures
- Labor force earnings
- Estimated employment

(review of annual report on tourism prepared by Oxford Economics for Empire State Development Corporation)

### INFRASTRUCTURE

- Dollars invested by local governments for new or rebuilt road construction (survey of municipal budgets (analysis of data maintained annually by the NYS Comptroller on local government finances)
- Dollars invested by local governments for increased capacity in municipal water and sewer systems (analysis of data maintained annually by the NYS Comptroller on local government finances)
- Private dollar investment by telecommunication companies in capital improvements to provide high speed internet (annual survey of service providers)

### SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

- Aggregate number and value of microenterprise loans issued (survey of community-based microenterprise lenders)
- Number of requests for assistance at small business assistance centers (provided by the SBDC offices in Watertown, Plattsburgh and Canton)
- Enrollment numbers in "My Small Business 101" at Clarkson's Reh Center for Entrepreneurship (provided by Clarkson University)
- Number of UCCs filed in County Clerks' offices for new businesses (survey of County Clerks)
- Number of small firms submitting quarterly unemployment reports to the Department of Labor (as documented in the New York Department of Labor's Quarterly Census of Employment and Wage reports)

ment of Labor's Quarterly Census of Employment and Wage reports)

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Number of low to moderate income households receiving housing rehabilitation assistance (annual survey of regional RPCs, municipally run housing rehabilitation programs, and other non-profit service providers)
- Number of LMI households receiving first time homebuyer assistance (annual survey of regional RPCs, municipally run housing rehabilitation programs, and other non-profit service providers)
- Number of community planning and/or project implementation awards funded by Office of Community Renewal, Department of State (e.g. LWRP project grants), Agriculture and Markets, and the DEC (APA Smart Growth) (direct agency query and/or obtaining data from on-line summary reports)
- Number of downtown store fronts rehabilitated (annual survey of regional RPCs, municipally run "Mainstreet" rehabilitation programs, and other profit or non-profit service providers)
- Number of historic buildings restored/preserved (annual survey of regional RPCs, municipally run "Mainstreet" rehabilitation programs, and other profit or non-profit service providers)
- Number of affordable housing units constructed (annual survey of regional RPCs, municipally run housing affordable housing corporations, NYS OCR (Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) awards and other non-profit service providers)
- Review of Building permit data (annual survey of municipal code enforcement offices)



ADIRONDACK PARK

- Number of land use permits issued for residential and commercial/business and industrial activity by the APA (*data provided by the Adirondack Park Agency*)
- Establish the APA as a reporting unit for business and employment tracking purposes by the DOL (*request of the NYS DOL*)

DEFENSE

- Number and value of service and goods contracts between Fort Drum and local businesses (*review of annual Ft. Drum Economic Impact report*)
- Dollar value of Fort Drum’s presence as determined in FDRLO’s annual economic impact statement (*review of annual Ft. Drum Economic Impact report*)
- Number of children enrolled in surrounding school districts (*information to be provided by the Jefferson-Lewis BOCES office on an annual basis*)
- Number of soldiers on post, and length of assignment at Ft. Drum (*query Ft. Drum*)
- Number and dollar value of homes sold in the vicinity of the base (*review of annual Ft. Drum Economic Impact report and data provided by Jefferson-Lewis Board of Realtors and St. Lawrence County Board of Realtors for sales in adjacent towns*)
- Number of apartment units constructed in the vicinity of the base (*annual review of building permits for adjacent municipalities*)

AGRICULTURE

- Number of value-added processing firms established and expanded in region (*as documented in the New York Department of Labor’s Quarterly Census of Employment and Wage reports*)
- Number of farmers and dollar value of engaging in direct marketing sales (*track changes in five-year agricultural census reports*)

CLEAN ENERGY

- Installed rated capacity of alternative energy systems in region, including wind, hydro, and biomass as identified by the New York Public Service Commission and other sources e.g.
  - [http://www.powerplantjobs.com/ppj.nsf/powerplants1?openform&cat=ny&Count=500](http://windpowerlaw.info/wind-power-law-resources/new-york-state-wind-projects)

- <http://www.powerplantjobs.com/ppj.nsf/powerplants1?openform&cat=ny&Count=500>
- Number of residential and commercial buildings assisted with NYSERDA funding (*query NYSERDA for program beneficiaries by program, investment total and total estimated energy savings by County*)
- Number of residential units assisted through the Weatherization Assistance Program (*survey of WAP providers within the region*)
- Calculated combined heat and power demand (*tons per year*)

596,000,000

Dollars of farm products that are produced annually  
in the North Country.

**Tier III**

■ CONSISTENT WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION section of this Plan, the third tier will focus on project-specific benchmarks self-identified by Council assisted projects, in consultation with the regional implementation team. The specific purpose is to monitor progress against the benchmarks, to identify obstacles and potential mitigations to progress and to evaluate the appropriateness of rating and ranking criteria for future funding rounds. As such, these reports and performance reviews will occur on a quarterly basis throughout the funding year.

TAKEN TOGETHER, the NCREDC believes it will be well-positioned to assess its progress toward achieving its Vision, identify course corrections that will improve projects and strategies and measure the impact the NCREDC’s Strategic Plan has on the State’s renaissance.



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