



KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

BARBARA RICE
Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Barbara Rice, Executive Director

FROM: Dan Kelleher, Special Assistant for Economic Affairs

DATE: April 7, 2022

RE: Economic Services Unit Activities for January, February, and March 2022

Municipal Planning Assistance

Agency staff assisted the Town of North Elba and Village of Lake Placid in a review and update of the communities' joint zoning code. Staff attended several weekly meetings in January and will assist the Town and Village in the planned update of the communities' joint comprehensive plan.

Staff is participating on the Village of Tupper Lake's Waterfront Revitalization Plan committee as well as the "projects" subcommittee. Staff attended monthly and as-needed meetings throughout January, February, and March.

Staff is serving as a State Agency resource on the Village of Tupper Lake's Downtown Revitalization Initiative committee. Staff attended meetings of the committee on February 9 and March 1.

Staff is working with the Town of Johnsburg Local Development Corporation in the review and update of the Town of Johnsburg's Comprehensive Plan. Staff attended a kickoff meeting of the initiative on March 23.

Community Engagement

On February 25, staff attended a winter session of the Common Ground Alliance. Staff participated on a workgroup discussing strategies to expand housing opportunities in the region.

On March 3, staff attended a Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board (LCLGRP) symposium on ways to move the region's Regional Economic Recovery and Resiliency Plan for Clinton, Essex, Hamilton, Warren, and Washington Counties forward. In 2021, the LCLGRP received a \$400,000 CARES Act grant through the federal Economic Development Administration to address economic distress as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On March 4, staff attended the North Country Regional Chamber of Commerce's Annual Dinner in Plattsburgh, Clinton County.

On March 11, staff attended the Saranac Lake Chamber of Commerce's Business Afterhours networking event in Saranac Lake.

Housing Development

Staff is working with a Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board committee to develop a housing needs analysis and strategy for Essex, Hamilton, Clinton, and Franklin Counties. The committee has issued a Request for Proposals to identify a consultant to perform the analysis and develop the plan.

Staff is working with Point Positive Inc. and the Cloudsplitter Foundation to identify the opportunity to establish a modular housing facility in the region. Staff is currently conducting a market analysis to evaluate the feasibility of such a project.

North Country Regional Economic Development Council (NCREDC)

Staff continues to participate in initiatives related to the NCREDC's Innovation Workgroup. The workgroup is currently pursuing the development of innovation centers in the region, working to connect entrepreneurs to financing, and recruiting teleworkers in innovation sectors to the region. Staff attended digital events in support of this effort including Red Bear Angels investor meetings on January 20 and February 10. These events enable staff to learn about and meet entrepreneurs and businesses that may benefit from a North Country location.

Champlain Hudson Power Express Trust Governance Committee

Staff continues to serve on the Champlain Hudson Power Express (CHPE) Trust Governance Committee. The CHPE project will likely undergo a financial close in late Spring, unlocking the first tranche of over \$117 million in environmental remediation funds to be distributed over the next 35 years. The Trust has authorized the creation of technical working groups to evaluate the dispersal of CHPE funds. Staff is serving on the Lake Champlain Technical Working Group in addition to the Governance Committee.

North Country Center for Businesses in Transition

Staff continues to work with the North Country Center for Businesses in Transition (CBIT) in their ongoing work to help business owners exit out of their businesses by connecting them to either potential buyers or the resources to transition to employee ownership. Research performed by ANCA indicates that between 10,000 and 15,000 businesses in the North Country have owners who hope to retire and sell their businesses in the next five years. A major initiative in 2022 is training economic developers in the valuation and sale of existing business.

Regulatory Programs Support

Economic Services staff supported the Regulatory Programs Division on diverse projects including solar projects, two mineral extraction facilities, several housing projects, a hospitality project, and a military-grade ballistics testing facility.