

WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

NORTH COUNTRY REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL **PROGRESS REPORT 2013-14 & PLANS FOR 2015**

Teddy Roosevelt, an Adirondack enthusiast, provided this guidance to those questing to achieve great things:



“The room for choice is so limitless...”

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THE VISION

The North Country Will Lead the Economic Renaissance of New York State's Small Cities and Rural Communities.

WE WILL

Energize our communities by building on growth in the aerospace, transit equipment, defense, biotech, energy, and manufacturing industries

Leverage our gateway to Canada, the nation's largest trading partner, to lead the State in global investment

Attract and nurture entrepreneurs through innovation to catalyze the highest per capita rate of small business start-ups and expansions in the state

Invest in community development infrastructure that expands opportunities and capacity

Innovate effective rural healthcare and education delivery networks

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 by creating demand to accelerate private investment

Invest in agriculture as we help feed the region and the world

Create the greenest energy economy in the state

Without Boundaries... **Limitless**

Limitations. Both real and imagined.

All regions have them, but the North Country's have been unique within New York in terms of geography, distances, infrastructure and more. Yet we have long been a region that has excelled in many ways, ignoring and overcoming seeming limitations, or converting them to opportunities, through innovation, partnership and natural determination.

Just four years ago, our two greatest economic development limitations were:

- The need for unprecedented collaboration across our seven county region to place our collective talents and energies behind both common objectives and one another's needs.
- The need for a state approach to economic development that would embrace our region's great differences and unique opportunities and then trust, empower and support us.

Perhaps more than any other region, the North Country had long awaited and embraced with enthusiasm the regional economic development approach launched by Governor Cuomo in 2011. The early result was the demolition of each of these major limitations — fostering an unprecedented regional collaboration engaged in multiple ways in an historic partnership with the state.

And as we now achieve both transformation and velocity together, we also approach a horizon where the limitlessness of our future can be seen ever more clearly, with the real and imagined limitations of the past becoming ever more faded:

- **Without Boundaries:**
Transforming a national border into an international meeting place of economic opportunity and global connectivity on behalf of the entire state.
- **Without Boundaries:**
Transforming an amazing but too often disconnected and aging set of world class tourism assets into a unified and powerful destination, repositioning to meet the ways and demands of the future.
- **Without Boundaries:**
Transforming identified emerging clusters such as transportation equipment and biotech into growing realities with increasing critical mass. And transforming the competitive conditions of existing industries such as metal and paper to create a stronger future.
- **Without Boundaries:**
Transforming an immense and diverse agricultural landscape into an engine of added value, sustainability and economic growth. And transforming our natural landscape into the beginnings of an economy built in part on renewable energy production, including biomass.
- **Without Boundaries:**
Transforming the Adirondacks from technology isolation to an emerging national success story in the development of broadband access, together with new ingredients for the transformation of the Adirondack economy and the sustainability of its communities.
- **Without Boundaries:**
Transforming the support systems for Fort Drum, from housing to energy, in ways that serve our military personnel and their families while strengthening the future of New York's #1 base and employment site.

For 2015 and beyond, we are united, determined and ready — with the continued partnership of the state — to move even further beyond the past notions of North Country limitations. Together, we have created a national and international model of state/regional collaboration, planning and economic action. And together, we are now positioned to accelerate our progress both for ourselves and, increasingly, as a region whose strategies and assets contribute to the entire state.

Together...
Without boundaries.

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OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS



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Refining the Vision

The North Country Regional Economic Development Council (NCREDC) reviewed and enhanced the vision adopted in 2011 to reflect new initiatives and current conditions in the region. The new vision statement includes the regional priorities for global investment, healthcare, and attracting more private investment.

Adjusting Regional Council Committees to Address 2014 Priorities

The NCREDC met February 14th at SUNY Plattsburgh to organize for the following 2014 priorities:

Global Marketing and Export Strategy; Integrated Workforce Development Planning; Veterans; NYSUNY 2020; and NY Rising.

Global Marketing, Export and Foreign Direct Investment Strategies

The Council's newly formed Global North Country Alliance has developed strategies that will help our companies introduce their products in foreign markets or increase sales overseas. Key to our success will be the development of support services and increased utilization of existing assistance programs including:

- The Export-Import Bank has not had a presence in the North Country; therefore, awareness and utilization of the organization's services has been low. To address this, a forum was held in Ogdensburg and the Development Authority of the North Country is entering into an agreement with the Ex-Im Bank to establish a City-State Partnership in the region. The North Country Chamber of Commerce and CITEC will assist with the effort.
- The rural nature of the North Country lends itself to the use of technology for educational programs on exporting subjects. The region plans to utilize a combination of webinars, seminars, websites, overseas trade missions and a speaker bureau as tools for increasing exports.
- Develop an inventory of resources, including funding resources to be posted on the NCREDC website and those of partner organizations.
- Develop opportunities for Trade Missions and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) workshops in key sectors.
- Work with our colleges and universities, including HEARD and Innovation Hot Spot.
- Improve access to export data to help us benchmark our progress.
- Utilize our Foreign Trade Zones and EB-5 Regional Center where appropriate.
- Increase industrial and business park capacity.
- Utilize Start-Up NY as a tool for FDI.

I. OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS

Regional Workforce Development

The Council charged its Workforce Development Group to create refined and new strategies, and focus on key sectors in the region that can create opportunities for employment and advancement of workers. The Council also directed the Opportunity Agenda Work Group to report to the Workforce Development Group on specific opportunities to meet the needs of the region's unemployed and under-employed workers. The region's workforce development network recognizes that it must support the needs of small, medium and large businesses in targeted clusters and sectors. To that end, the Council has tasked the Workforce Development Group to focus on the following economic sectors:

- Increase and retain jobs in industries that attract foreign direct investment, export products and import dollars including: aerospace, transit equipment, biotech, renewable energy and manufacturing industries.
- Strengthening the region's hospitality and tourism sector. The region's assets include Lake Placid, Saranac Lake, the Tug Hill Region, Thousand Islands, St. Lawrence River, Lake Ontario, Lake Champlain, Black River, and other outdoor recreation attractions that add to the pleasure of year round activities. The region should be investing in workforce efforts that meet the needs of employees in this growing sector.

- Agriculture, particularly the dairy industry, remains an anchor industry in the region. The area is seeking to develop niche agriculture opportunities that are related to the export, tourism, and hospitality sectors with the increase in agribusiness such as wine and spirits, home grown products, and local meat, vegetable and fruit production.
- Build wealth by strengthening existing resources, building capacity and fostering entrepreneurial opportunities related to the region's extensive renewable energy sector.
- Leverage investment in broadband development in order to contribute a significant portion to the resurgence of the state's economy through increased jobs and tax revenues generated by this technology.

The three local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) have a representation of the priority sectors on their boards and are integrated into the Workforce Development Group linking training and business led partnerships to address workforce needs.

Veterans Participation in the Workforce

The Council formed a new work group composed of the region's county-based veterans' organizations, the Department of Labor Veterans representatives, and Homeward Bound based in Saranac Lake, to identify ways to better integrate veterans into the workforce and develop means by which to coordinate with the state on implementation of new veterans' initiatives. In addition, the Council directed the Workforce Development Group to coordinate with the new Veterans Work Group. The Council will be sending information on the state's veterans' incentive programs to all economic development agencies, businesses and local governments in the North Country region. The workgroup met several times to develop a strategy that will integrate veteran and workforce development services into the regional plan. The Council also actively promoted the consideration of veterans in the preparation of CFA submissions.



SUNY 2020

The Council directed the Higher Education and Research Development (HEARD) work group to strengthen its coordination with the seven SUNY campuses in the region. This relationship will strengthen the connections between the university and college 2020 plans and how they can spur local economic development through technology transfer. With their sights set on the future, several universities in New York's North Country collaborated on two applications to Round III of the SUNY 2020 program this past year. Through their proposed programs, these universities will lead strategic partnerships to catalyze economic growth in the region while strengthening their academic programs and creating a workforce to advance the North Country and New York State into the future.

NY Rising

Council member Randy Douglas, Supervisor of the Town of Jay and Chairman of the Essex County Board of Legislators, was selected to serve as NCREDC liaison to the region's two NY Rising communities (Keene and Jay) and was tasked with coordinating NCREDC support for their efforts.

Public Engagement in 2013-14

The Regional Council Public Participation process is a key component of driving our vision and ensuring the Council is achieving a bottom-up approach.

Given the geographic size of our region, we have emphasized the need to stay connected to our constituents to bring the diverse nature of our economy into North Country planning. Council Co-Chairs Garry Douglas and Tony Collins take special pride in visiting the seven counties of our region on an annual basis to connect with the communities and seek public input. The Public Participation Committee for the Regional Council consists of a committed core including Council members, the Co-Chairs, state and local agency representatives. The committee has met throughout 2014 and has continued successful past efforts in public outreach along with new strategies for community engagement. The committee and the Council are committed to ensuring the citizens and businesses in the North Country are involved and aware of the Regional Council's activity.

Public Forums, Council Meetings

The NCREDC has been very aggressive and successful in seeking feedback at the local level. These sessions are open to all citizens and have attracted private individuals, private businesses, representatives of non-profit agencies, and local government officials. The Council has visited each of its seven counties for a public meeting for its fourth consecutive year. Co-Chairs Tony Collins and Garry Douglas lead these forums with additional council members in attendance. We note that these sessions have been held in different locations each year and we do not always return to the same community and venue to ensure the Council is visible throughout the region. In 2014, Public Forums were held at the following locations:

Date	County	Location	City
June 3, 2014	Lewis	Lowville Fire Hall	Lowville
June 3, 2014	Jefferson	Dulles State Office Building	Watertown
June 3, 2014	St. Lawrence	Clarkson University	Potsdam
June 4, 2014	Clinton	SUNY Plattsburgh	Plattsburgh
June 4, 2014	Hamilton	Indian Lake Theater	Indian Lake
June 4, 2014	Franklin	The Wild Center	Tupper Lake
June 5, 2014	Essex	ORDA Conference Center	Lake Placid

Our public forums are an opportunity to provide information to the public on the regional council process. The Council members also hear updates on past funded projects and listen to public comments on potential projects and current issues.

The NCREDC meetings are held in various locations across the region and each meeting includes a time for open public comment. In addition, our Council, through the Public Participation Committee, provides specific regional information at the NYS sponsored CFA workshops. These workshops were held in Watertown on May 20th and Plattsburgh on May 27th.

The Regional Council has been successful with this effort to go directly into our communities via Public Forums, Council meetings and training sessions. With the vast size of our region, it is not possible to hold a few meetings in central locations to reach our citizens. We have gone above and beyond the norm to reach into all sectors of our area.

I. OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS

Other Events and Organizations

The NCREDC has focused on participation in a variety of community and municipal events. We have been active participants or exhibitors at the Common Ground Alliance in Long Lake, the North Country Clean Energy Conference in Lake Placid, the Tug Hill Local Government Conference in Watertown, the APA Local Government Conference in Lake Placid, the St. Lawrence County Symposium in Canton and the Lewis County Development Conference in Lowville. We are present at local chamber of commerce events and business fairs. The Council has active work groups in tourism, agriculture, the Adirondack Park, clean energy, global commerce. Through these work groups we connect with dozens of community members across the region. The NCREDC is working closely with the North Country Alliance (NCA), the Adirondack Economic Development Council (AEDC), seven county industrial development agencies, Development Authority of the North Country, the North Country Chamber of Commerce and others to provide outreach to businesses in the region. In 2014, the Council continued its strong interaction with the higher education community. Our Higher Education Research and Development (HEARD) consortium continues to shepherd cooperative efforts by our region's colleges and universities. Council members and staff have worked actively with these institutions and NYS representatives on the Start-Up NY initiative and institutional plans.

The NCREDC and its HEARD members joined with the Rockefeller Institute and the two regional public television stations to host two seminars for the community to learn more about the ways in which the colleges, universities and research institutes across the region contribute to the economic renaissance of the North Country. On Thursday, September 26th, Clinton Community College (CCC) with SUNY Plattsburgh hosted "How Two Colleges Have Helped Plattsburgh Become Montreal's U.S. Suburb" and on October 7th "Building the North Country's Innovation Economy Through Technology Commercialization & New Business Start-Ups" was held at Clarkson University with St.

Lawrence University, Jefferson Community College (JCC), the Trudeau Institute, SUNY Potsdam, Paul Smith's College and SUNY Canton. The local public television stations made documentaries from both of these sessions, which were aired regionally and are available on their websites.

Public Outreach

The Council has maintained an active and informative website: regionalcouncils.ny.gov/content/north-country. During 2013 we initiated e-mail newsletters and this was a successful method to disseminate information. However, in 2014, the Council migrated to a regular blog posting. Via this medium, available at www.ncredc.wordpress.com we regularly communicate with approximately 1,500 private individuals, business owners, local municipal officials, etc. Blog postings are released multiple times per month and cover information on Council sponsored projects, key information about the CFA process and other information. In addition, the Council has a Facebook site www.facebook.com/NCOpen4Business that is maintained by Clarkson University. Our page has over 300 "likes" and receives dozens of views for every new item posted.

The NCREDC, in cooperation with the Empire State Development (ESD) press office, provides media updates regarding Council meetings and events and also news stories on key project activities throughout the year. These news releases are provided to the major newspapers, radio and television stations and other media in the region.

Regional Council representatives hosted a number of celebratory ground breakings at state funded projects throughout the region during the past year. The public was invited to events such as the 1000 Islands Clayton Harbor Hotel, ReEnergy Black River Fort Drum biomass project, Lyons Falls paper mill, Mercy Hospital redevelopment, Whiteface Veterans Memorial Highway Revitalization, Trudeau Institute and Clarkson University partnership with New York State. Although we have a vast region and no central media market, the Council has an effective public outreach program.

North Country Outdoor Promotions

The NCREDC hosted Governor Cuomo in a variety of opportunities to engage the public and recognize the tremendous outdoor recreation assets in our region.

- The second Adirondack Whitewater Challenge was held on July 20, 2014 in Indian Lake, NY.
- Winter recreation was highlighted by visits to the Tug Hill in Lewis County on December 30, 2013.
- The Adirondack Winter Challenge was held in Lake Placid on March 9, 2014.

By highlighting the natural beauty and outdoor resources of our region, our Council and the state continue to demonstrate to the public their commitment to growth in the North Country economy.

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The NCREDC and its HEARD members joined with the Rockefeller Institute and the two regional public television stations to host two seminars for the community to learn more about the ways in which the colleges, universities and research institutes across the region contribute to the economic renaissance of the North Country.

Keeping the Pipeline Flowing

In 2012, the Council established the Pipeline Committee to collect information about projects and initiatives in various stages of development that may become critical to the future economy of the region. The Pipeline Committee continued its work in 2014.

The Council endorsed the North Country Alliance (NCA) as a partner organization to identify and develop project intelligence for the region. The NCA – an organization covering the seven county North County Region, comprised of professionals representing 26 economic development agencies – serves as the conduit for project identification. The Council relies on the professional expertise of the NCA members to assess the viability and readiness of the projects entering the pipeline, including those that are eligible for Excelsior Jobs Tax Credits or Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRBs).

Project submission can come from a variety of organizations including, but not limited to, the private sector, economic development groups, non-profit organizations and municipalities. Pipeline submissions are logged in a database and help the Priority Project Selection Group as well as the Council identify potential projects that advance regional strategies or create new ones.

Since 2012, the Pipeline Committee has identified 83 projects across the region. Of the 83 projects in the pipeline, 22 have been successfully funded through the CFA process. Overall, 11 projects have been identified as potentially eligible for Excelsior Jobs and 15 projects as potentially eligible for IRBs. Examples of pipeline projects, funded through the CFA process, that have leveraged private sector investment and created or retain jobs include:

2012 PIPELINE PROJECT

364 Unit Housing Upgrade for Ft. Drum:

- Jobs: ~490 Construction
- Grant Award: \$4,000,000
- Total Project Cost: \$94,760,000
- Leverage: \$90,760,000

2013 PIPELINE PROJECT

Adirondack Meat Company:

- Jobs: 17 Created
- Grant Awards: \$300,000 (ESD)/ \$165,000 (Ag-Mkts)
- Total Project Costs: \$1,293,000
- Leverage: \$828,000

2013 PIPELINE PROJECT

Bombardier Training/Center for Excellence:

- Jobs: 97 Retained through Training
- Grant Award: \$40,922
- Total Project Cost: \$204,612
- Leverage: \$163,690

One project, Adirondack Teleworks in Hamilton County, was funded under the Opportunity Agenda (OA) in 2013 and two additional pipeline projects could be considered in future rounds. One project could be considered under the Veterans Agenda.

As projects in the pipeline mature, they may be considered for CFA funding or Priority Project designation by the Council.

Expanding the Project Pipeline

One of the exciting results of the strategic planning process has been the discovery of so many innovative and transformative projects being developed by companies, entrepreneurs and communities from all over the region. Realization of the Council's Vision will depend on our ability to continue to broaden the project pipeline scope when new and exciting opportunities arise.

The Council's overall project pipeline now includes proposals derived from the SUNY 2020 Challenge Grants, Clarkson University's Innovation Hot Spot and the Start-Up NY program. The ability to continue to identify and assist projects at various stages of development is key to the Council's strategy for fostering sustainable economic growth.

Strategy Implementation Overview & Opportunities

Energize our communities by building on growth in the aerospace, transit equipment, defense, biotech, energy, and manufacturing industries.

The NCREDC continues to support our small, medium, and large-sized manufacturers to stimulate job growth in key industry sectors. Addressing threats to their regional and global competitiveness is a key strategy of the Council. The Council realizes that the region's vast area and decentralized population present major challenges to the companies that it relies on to energize the region's communities.

Progress in 2013-14

These investments have made it possible for the Council's existing key industrial sectors to execute projects, such as:

- Expansion of the Bombardier plant produced new manufacturing jobs with funding from Round II. In Round III, funding helped to upgrade the skills of employees to improve efficiencies and provide new opportunities for the workers.
- New York Air Brake recently announced the consolidation of their Canadian Kingston operation to the Watertown plant, thereby creating 50 new jobs.
- SterRx, a new pharmaceutical plant, opened in Plattsburgh with the assistance of funding from Round III.
- Funding for Assembly Industry: Manufacturing and Education (AIME) provided manufacturing skills for 240 residents. 13 sessions have been conducted and 192 workers — all low and moderate income persons — have been hired by local companies. 100% of the people who attended the last session obtained employment. The lowest placement percentage for any of the courses was 85%. Industry partners include Nova Bus, Mold-Rite, B3CG, Schluter Systems, Spencer ARL, North American Door, Swarovski, Bombardier and Champlain Plastics.
- In Jefferson and Lewis counties, a Round III Opportunity Agenda project provided machinist training. Attendees learned machining, CNC operation, print reading and other skills needed to qualify for jobs as machine operators and manual programmers.
- Bombardier Transit, Nova Bus and Prevost Car all secured new contracts for their products, creating new jobs in their facilities and attracting more than 15 new vendors
- Four housing projects in the Fort Drum impact area are nearing completion, creating 1,100 new units.



I. OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS

- New York State provided \$1.5 M for the Army Compatible Use Buffer program.
- Bionique Testing, partly funded by a Round III grant, is doubling the size of its world-leading mycoplasma testing facility in Lake Clear.
- 3 DRPD, a Canadian owned 3D printing company, opened a new facility in Rouses Point to produce removable partial dentures. This type of product has been produced almost exclusively in China for the last decade. Using the innovative processes developed by the company, those jobs are now returning to the U.S.
- Corning, Inc. is undertaking a major expansion at its Canton plant to fabricate innovative glass products.
- Alcoa in Massena partnered with Clarkson University to create a smart manufacturing program designed to achieve a higher level of manufacturing intelligence and decision making to enhance global competitiveness.
- Maxam has started construction of a \$5 M oxidizer plant in Ogdensburg, to be served by a new rail siding that will be financed by the River Valley Redevelopment Agency.
- Merging their respective strengths, immunologists from the Trudeau Institute and engineers from Clarkson University are working together to develop novel technologies for preventing and treating infectious diseases and immune-related disorders and to train researchers and engineers in the rapidly emerging field of immunoengineering.

Round IV Opportunities

Opportunities for the Council to advance the North Country's manufacturing industry on a global scale include:

- Expanding the manufacturing capacity of North American Tapes is anticipated to increase the international market share of one of the largest suppliers of hockey and athletic tapes in the world.
- Financing the installation of manufacturing equipment at Grand Slam Safety — a manufacturer of baseball and softball outfield fencing — is expected to expand the company's sales in domestic and foreign markets.
- Modernizing the Carthage/West Carthage municipal wastewater treatment facility to support the global competitive advantage of Carthage Specialty Paperboard, a premiere international manufacturer of matboard, pharmaceutical package sealing, and specialty packaging for internationally known products, including Godiva Chocolates.



Leverage our gateway to Canada, the nation's largest trading partner, to lead the State in global investment.

The Council's vision is to recognize and develop the North Country in its evolving association with Quebec and eastern Ontario. As part of an increasingly integrated bi-national economic region, there remains a border which is an inconvenience that must be managed but which no longer defines economic regionalism. While many areas may approach global business as a set of services and activities, for the North Country our approach begins with a day in, day out commitment to "strategic positioning" — focusing on endeavors which strategically position the North Country to maximize the opportunities inherent in its special international location.

Progress in 2013-14

The fluidity and capacity of the major border crossings directly affect FDI and exporting in not only the North Country but the entire state.

- Building on the \$170 million investment in the U.S. border facility at Champlain, the Canadian government has committed \$49 million in the current budget for major facility enhancements at Lacolle (Canadian side of the U.S. Champlain crossing).
- \$60 million approved in Canada's budget last year and \$105 million approved by the U.S. House for long sought improvements at the Thousand Islands Bridge/Ontario border facility.
- Obtaining 40 additional U.S. Customs and Border Protection personnel at major North Country crossings to improve operations and movement.
- Major reconstruction of the north span of the Massena-Cornwall Bridge and the Customs facility in Cornwall.

Investment in the region's airports has improved the facilities' ability to draw Canadian travelers to the North Country. Recent improvements include:

- A priority project investment of \$4.5 million leveraged more than \$50 million in federal and local investment to triple the size of the terminal at Plattsburgh International Airport and build a new Customs Clearance facility that will permit flights to and from foreign destinations.
- Federal investments of \$475,000 at the airport in Ogdensburg for runway improvements.
- NYS ESD invested \$1.5 million in a hangar at Watertown International Airport.

Investment by Canadian businesses has fueled growth in North Country employment for decades. Economic development partners in the region have developed tools that help them to maximize the natural advantage of our proximity to Quebec and Ontario. Recent examples include:

- ACCO International consolidated their Canadian and North Country operations in Ogdensburg creating 70 new jobs and retaining 130 jobs.
- Canadian companies Spencer ARL, Imeco, Prevost, Bombardier, BFG, and Salerno all expanded their operations.

Round IV Opportunities

- Continuation of the Quebec-New York and Ontario-New York Summit process.
- Resumption of a NYS ESD presence in both Toronto and Montreal.
- Coordinated outreach and marketing activities to attract investment by Canadian companies.
- Explore opportunities for sharing and cooperation between the North Country EB-5 Regional Center in Plattsburgh and the new EB-5 Regional Center in the Capital Region.
- Work with our Canadian partners to maximize utilization of our expertise through both organized workshops/missions and one-on-one sessions with interested companies.
- Market the Start-Up NY program to Canadian companies.

Attract and nurture entrepreneurs through innovation to catalyze the highest per capita rate of small business start-ups and expansions in the State.

The NCREDC continues to focus on attracting and nurturing innovative entrepreneurs as the surest way to catalyze the highest per capita rate of small business start-ups and expansions in the state.

The NCREDC's initiatives help to assure that the North Country remains an amazingly attractive place to start a business. Ample and affordable property, a capable workforce, reasonable labor and utility rates, appropriate assistance and a business climate that is enthusiastic about small business – all create fertile ground for starting and growing a business.

Supplementing these natural advantages, in 2013 New York State made an Innovation Hotspot initiative award to Clarkson University resulting in a marriage of innovation and small business designed to regionalize entrepreneurial development of small businesses all across the North Country. The hub-and-spoke system, a crucial element in the North Country's Innovation Hotspot initiative, supplies a disciplined and universal system to create small businesses based on new ideas, technologies, and business methods. Already there are 11 businesses availing themselves of the Hotspot services and dozens more in the queue.

As has been reported before, the North Country has, for years, depended on a robust network of small business assistance programs. Among them are the region's three Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) and regional development entities like CITEC, the Development Authority of the North Country, AEDC and a host of IDAs and LDCs. Some of the innovative new businesses created within this context include:

- Parker Maple Syrup in Canton – the story of a high school student using a wood-pellet fueled evaporator system to create a business that in its first year produced 1,100 gallons of maple syrup.
- Red Barn Meats in Croghan – an existing small business expanded to a new facility and received USDA certification that enabled the company to expand its customer base among local stock raisers and to sell locally produced meats to end users like restaurants and institutions.
- Frazer Computing in Canton – a 50-employee company in Canton that has developed a cloud-based, business management software package used by car dealers nationally to keep track of their costs and inventories and manage all aspects of their paperwork responsibilities.

With examples like this as models, it's no accident that entrepreneurs continue to invest and thrive in the North Country. And in turn the North Country is prepared to invest in their success.

Progress in 2013-14

Previous funding through the Regional Council program has augmented the region's entrepreneurial and small business culture and sends a message that the state understands that small business creation and growth is a key driver of economic growth in the state's most rural region. The variety of projects assisted by the Regional Council program's resources testifies to the dramatic diversity of the region's small business foundations including:

- The Adirondack Meat Company, a Round II NCREDC priority project awarded \$465,000 in funding plus \$315,000 of other regional development funding, started operations in February 2014 and currently has 10 full-time employees.
- Ansen Corporation (Round II, \$120,000) has expanded to more than 200 employees, partly as a result of Council funding.
- Florelle Tissue (Round I, \$25,000) used its award to restart operations at the Brownville Specialty Paper mill.
- Metal Craft Marine (Round I) has used its \$400,000 award to more than double its boat building operation in Cape Vincent.
- North Country Pastured, a Round I priority project awarded \$130,000 started operations in mid-2013, employing three people.
- St. Lawrence Brewing (Round II, \$65,000) opened its beer production facility in mid-2013 and now employs eight people.

I. OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS

Projects previously funded through the NCREDC constitute a small sample of the entrepreneurial activity in the region. Standard statistical measures supplement anecdotal suggestions that an exciting renaissance is occurring in the North Country's small business universe. Some of them include:

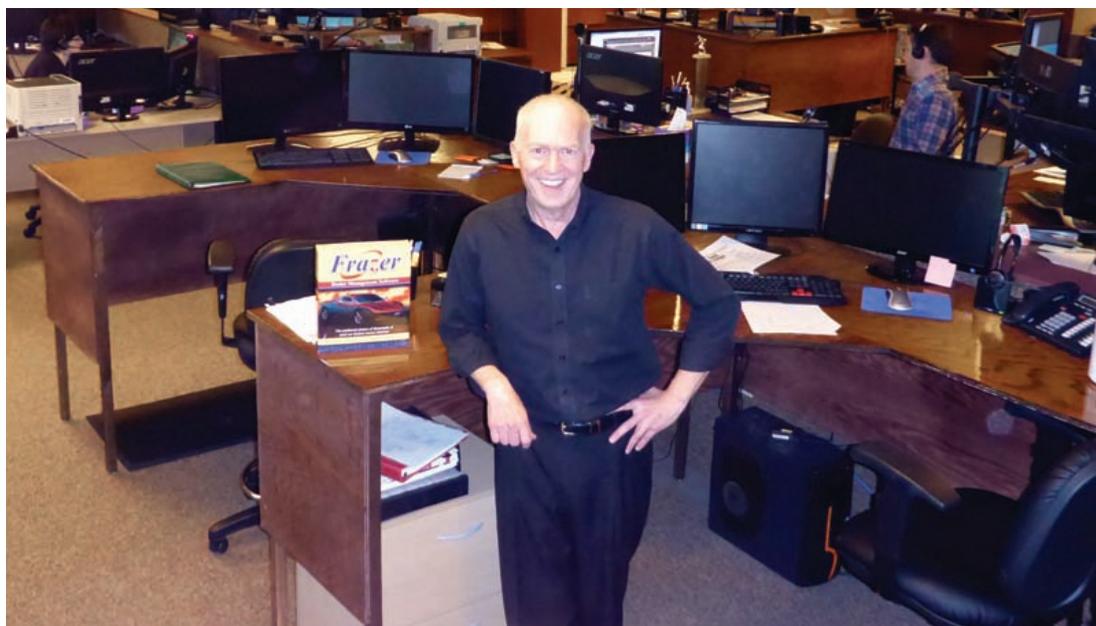
- The region's three small business development centers report that they have counseled over 1,500 small business owners and prospective small business start-ups.
- Since May, 2013, AEDC lent over \$350,000 to 27 small businesses - the majority of which were start-ups located in the Adirondack Park.
- In 2013, the NCA lent \$902,800 to projects totaling \$5.5 million. Projects proposed to create 55 jobs and retain 76. These small businesses are located in Jefferson, St. Lawrence, Essex and Clinton counties.

The Regional Council program has created an "umbrella" under which new state and private investment for small business development has occurred. Examples of new initiatives include:

- The North Country Value-Added Agricultural Fund, funded in Round III, has started business and plans to provide financing assistance to 50 small businesses in year one.
- The Tourism Transformation Fund, funded in Round II, has received a dozen project inquiries and has approved its first loan.
- The North Country held its first North Country Venture Forum, building connections with venture capital sources interested in investing in the region.
- Many small businesses - most of them very recent start-ups - are already operating in the Peyton Hall Incubator in Potsdam, which was designated in 2013 as one of the first five Innovation Hotspots in the state.
- The SUNY institutions in Canton, Plattsburgh, Potsdam, and Watertown, together with Clarkson University - have been accepted into the Start-Up NY program. All are actively negotiating with small businesses.
- Point Positive, a new angel fund, has formed in the tri-lakes area and aims to fund early start-ups.
- The Go Digital or Go Dark campaign (partly funded in 2012) was a huge success, generating \$1.29 million in grants, personal contributions, and creation of a loan fund. Seven small community theaters have accessed the funds to install new digital projection equipment, and in the process have remained viable businesses contributing to their local economy.

Round IV Opportunities

- Partnerships within SUNY may provide advancement opportunities in high-demand cyber-security occupations. These partnerships will create On-the-Job Training (OJT) and access to high-tech jobs for low and moderate income (LMI) individuals and returning veterans.
- Technology advancements in agriculture create opportunities for small business start-ups. Examples include robotics, GPS, and materials recycling.
- The Council seeks to identify and assist entrepreneurs' innovative commercial ideas in the region. Integration with the Clarkson Innovation Hot Spot and our designated Start-Up NY will make these opportunities more viable.



“

A huge part of our success is because we are working here in the North Country. We're able to hire outstanding people, at a salary that we can afford. Our people could earn much more in a more populated place but they want to live and work here because of the high quality of life and the low cost of living. Even though we pay above average wages for the area, our work force costs us much less than that of our competitors, while at the same time the quality of our work force is much higher than our competitors. It's a tremendous combination that works for us and works for our employees.

- Michael Frazer
Frazer Computing, Inc.

Invest in community development infrastructure that expands opportunity and capacity.

It is difficult to attract businesses to a community that has a deteriorating appearance or inadequate infrastructure capacity. Local governments therefore play a significant role in creating and maintaining a climate that supports workforce attraction and economic growth in the region. These roles include, but are not limited to:

- Expanding and maintaining essential infrastructure to support major employers and increase opportunity and capacity for economic development (water, wastewater, roads, sidewalks, and broadband)
- Maintaining safe and attractive public spaces
- Revitalizing downtown districts to promote infill development and sustain a community's commercial core

The NCREDC support for local government projects secured more than \$15.4 million in Round III CFA funding for community planning and revitalization and for development of essential infrastructure throughout the North Country Region. Sewer and water investments, including the region's implementation of the \$2.5 million Infrastructure Fund, have leveraged business investment and retention across the region, from Kinney Drugs in Governor, to the Clayton Harbor Hotel on the St. Lawrence River, to commercial development attracting additional Canadian shoppers in Plattsburgh.

The region also recognizes the importance of investing in regional infrastructure by preserving, maintaining, and upgrading existing highway, rail, water, sewer, telecommunications, and air facilities; improving supply chain and distribution networks; and connecting communities within the region.

Progress in 2013-14

- Jefferson County, the Jefferson County Industrial Development Agency, and the Town of Hounsfield have coordinated efforts to facilitate business growth at the Watertown International Airport through extension of the municipal water supply to areas adjacent to the airport.
- Water and wastewater capacity development and new roads necessary to accommodate housing development essential to Fort Drum have been constructed.
- The Development Authority of the North Country's Open Access Telecom Network continues to expand across the region, utilizing federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 funds and state CFA awards.
- Hamilton County, with funding from the 2013 CFA round is in the process of extending broadband connectivity to most hamlets in the county where none previously existed.
- Connect NY has funded expansion of broadband bringing communities in Franklin and St. Lawrence Counties into the digital age.
- Public and private stakeholders from Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence counties came together at a regional rail conference in 2014 to identify strategies for improving railroad infrastructure and services for economic development.
- Reconstruction of railroads serving Tahawus and Newton Falls.
- Construction of a new rail siding serving the Massena Industrial Park, and CSX's reconstruction of a key section of its mainline rail services in the region.
- Construction of the new access road to the Port of Ogdensburg.
- Canadian investments in reconstructing its border crossing facilities at Rouses Point and Massena.
- Reconstruction of the Whiteface Mountain Veteran's Memorial Highway.
- Upgrades to the Plattsburgh, Lake Clear, and Ogdensburg airports.
- Dredging at the Port of Ogdensburg.
- Nicholville-based Slic Network Solutions received the state sponsored Extraordinary Broadband Leadership Award. The award recognized Slic's success in bringing "fastest-in-the nation" technology to rural New York.

Round IV Opportunities

- The villages of Carthage & West Carthage, Carthage Specialty Papers, and Development Authority of the North Country have noted the need for plant upgrades at the Carthage-West Carthage Joint Wastewater Treatment Facility. These improvements will leverage a \$3 million internal investment by the company to increase its production capacity and grow exports.
- Clinton and Franklin counties continue to utilize Local Waterfront Revitalization funds to leverage small scale tourism business development in the region's downtowns.
- The Mercy Hospital redevelopment project in Watertown will support further revitalization of the city's core by providing downtown housing within walking distance of major employers.
- Raquette River communities from St. Lawrence, Franklin and Hamilton Counties continue to develop their whitewater assets, including Class 5 rapids, and build tourism infrastructure necessary to draw tourists to the region.

Additionally, the Not-for-Profit Organization (NFPO) sector is an important part of the North Country economy. The NFPO sector is a significant job creator, offering livable wages and good benefits, and NFPOs, through fees for services, philanthropy, membership dues, and state and federal grants, import dollars into the local economy. According to a recent study by SUNY Oswego, the estimated annual economic impact of the NFPO sector in the region is \$422 million.

Since 2011, 137 NFPOs have applied for funding through the CFA process, and 56 have been awarded funds. For smaller NFPOs that may have problems executing their CFA due to the fact that the state awarded funds are disbursed either in intervals or at the completion of the project, the NCREDC is working to establish a Bridge Loan Fund that will be capitalized with private donations.



Innovate effective rural healthcare and education delivery networks.

Healthcare Overview

The geographic vastness of the North Country region, lack of major metropolitan areas and relatively sparse population creates some unique challenges relative to the effective delivery of healthcare and education throughout the region. Our regional health care system is operating with significant deficits and many school districts are educationally bankrupt, and several are heading toward fiscal insolvency. The changes required to improve the situation hinge on both local initiative and State action on policy and legislation. This is rapidly becoming one of the region's biggest economic development issues in terms of workforce and recruitment/retention. These challenges require creative thinking about structured collaborations and the use of technology to fully allow the region to surmount existing obstacles.

The North Country's health care delivery system is facing challenges from within the region and from afar. Our aging population, combined with workforce and provider shortages, stress the system from both directions. Further, our vast geography has resulted in a delivery system that is too expensive to maintain under the current reimbursement programs.

Within the North Country region, there are 16 hospitals, 21 diagnostic and treatment centers, and 29 nursing homes. As a region we have too many hospital beds for our populations, and many of them in the wrong places, which creates access problems. At the same time, primary and preventative care is inadequate.

The health care industry is a major employer in our region. In every community with a hospital, it is a mainstay of the local economy. However, hospitals in the North Country have struggled to adapt to a changing reimbursement climate, and as a result, the 16 hospitals in the region have a combined operating deficit of \$20 million annually.

An innovative, integrated approach to health care must be developed in order for North Country residents to have consistent access to affordable, high quality services.

Progress in 2013-14

- The North Country Health Systems Redesign Commission was convened to consider the many facets of the region's health care delivery system, identify issues and constraints in the current paradigm, and make recommendations for improvements that will have both immediate and long-term effects.
- Regional Council members served on the Commission and the Commission's final report was adopted by the Council as its comprehensive health care strategy.

Round IV Opportunities

- The NYS Delivery System Redesign Incentive Payment Program is providing an opportunity to improve coordination among providers and to develop regionally integrated health care delivery systems in both the western part of the region — driven by Fort Drum related issues — and in the eastern part of the region, where the remote geography of the Adirondack Park impacts access to care.
- The quality and availability of appropriate information technology across the region is critical to the success of health care system reform. Practices and clinics need to be utilizing electronic medical records systems that are common across the region, and are linked to a records information exchange and disease registry. The health planning organizations in the North Country will undertake a needs analysis to fully understand the technology gaps that stand in the way of our progress.

Education Overview

The region's institutions of higher learning and research continue to function as engines of international, intellectual and cultural exchange. They are key players in collaborative international research and development, learning, job-readiness training, and as incubators of new thinking, innovation and technology for start-up enterprises.

Progress in 2013-14

Cultural and Intellectual Exchanges

- Regional higher education institutions welcome more than 1,000 foreign-born students to take advantage of the quality and diversity of the educational offerings and to share our American culture with the world's scholars. Our North Country higher education institutions send our students to study all around the world.

Collaborative International Research and Development

- The Miner Institute is continuing its long-term international research and development efforts with the University of Bologna in Italy (improving forage use by dairy cattle); the ZenNoh Agricultural Cooperative in Tokyo, Japan (dairy cattle nutrition and management) and with Lallemand in Toulouse, France (improving silage quality). It has also provided technical assistance and research for projects in Italy, Canada, Japan and France this past year.
- SUNY Plattsburgh is collaborating with a University in China on research on variants of the tuberculosis bacteria.

- SUNY Potsdam maintains letters of academic cooperation in mathematical research with Nis University in Serbia and St. Petersburg University in Russia.
- St. Lawrence University undertakes astronomical research at the Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico.
- Clarkson University is lending its expertise to an international research consortium of universities from Italy, Armenia, Romania and Slovenia regarding emerging technologies in aeronautics. It is also working with staff at a University in Rome researching vibration on super-long bridge spans. On the business learning front, Clarkson is also working with the University of Applied Sciences in Koblenz Germany on the dynamics of supply-chain management.

Inter-regional Partnerships in Research, Learning and Job-Readiness Training

- CCC and Clarkson University have partnered with three Clinton County high schools to deliver a grades 9-14 program (P-TECH) that rewards graduates with an associated degree and prospective job placement in a STEM career field.
- St. Lawrence University is also a part of the "New York Six" consortium of colleges collaborating on e-learning initiatives.
- SUNY Plattsburgh is cooperating in a regional water quality initiative with both the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Lake Champlain Basin Program.

- Champlain Valley Educational Services (CVES) Career and Technical Educational Program (CTEP) serves high school aged students and adult learners that need re-training. Non-college bound students can gain skills in areas that include health services, welding, hospitality and tourism, agriculture, and natural resources careers. In July 2014, CVES earned accreditation from the Commission of the Council on Occupational Education. This designation allows adults who enroll in programs at the school to apply for federal Title IV financial aid such as TAP, PELL and National Direct Student Loans.
- SUNY Potsdam has joined with SUNY Binghamton on a project to research the use of nanoprobe in the detection and imaging of DNA. SUNY Potsdam has also created its own research institute – the Potsdam Institute for Applied Research and it has worked with several school districts statewide on a number of research fronts.
- SUNY Canton is operating a workforce skill development project called CREST (Career-Ready Education and Success) for the residents of the Mohawk nation at Akwesasne.
- Clarkson is working with researchers at Syracuse University and Cornell Cooperative Extension on assessing the economic viability of anaerobic digesters for use on small-scale farming operations. It is also collaborating with staff from SUNY Oswego and SUNY Fredonia on monitoring pollutants present in the Great Lakes fishery.

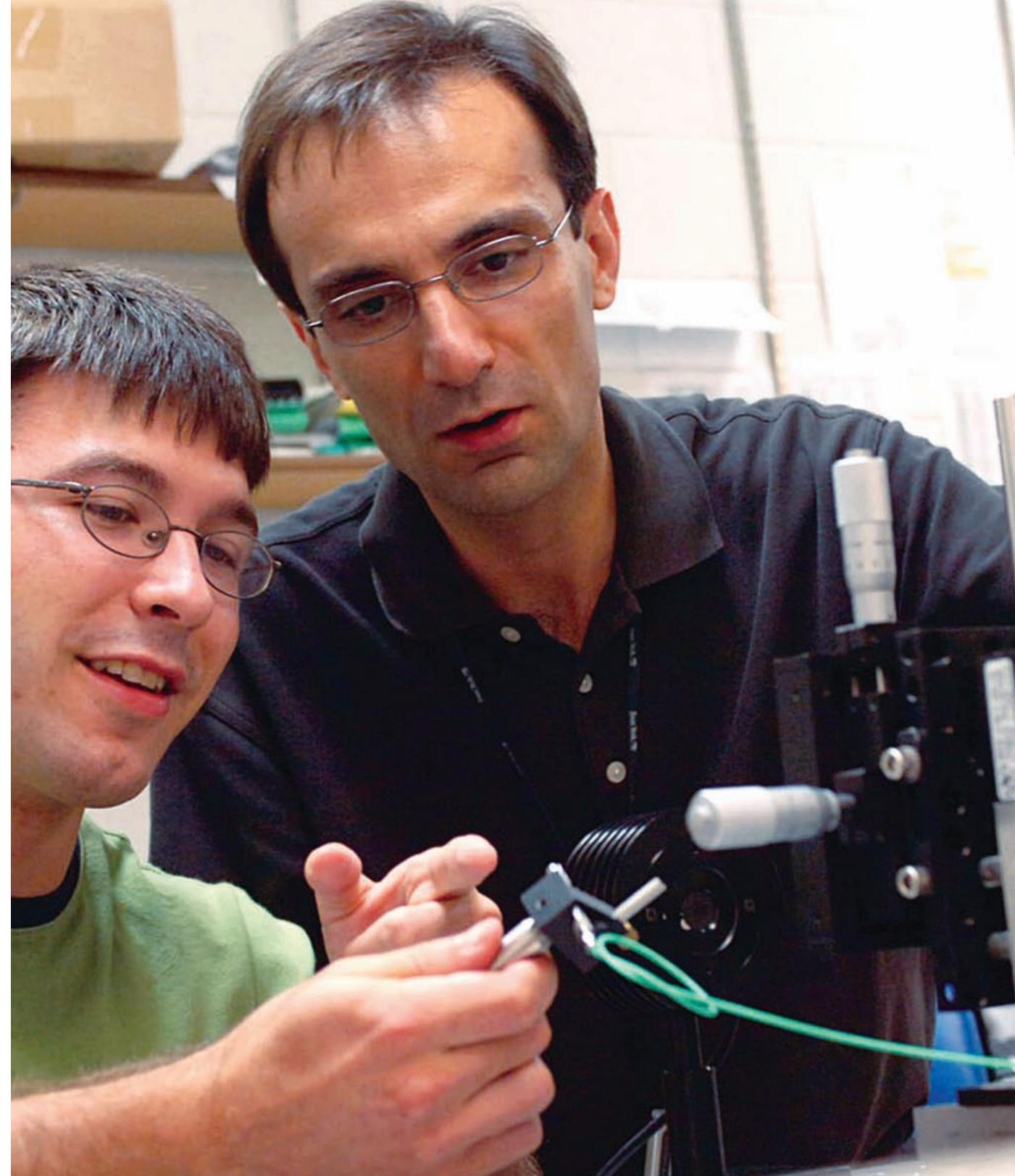
I. OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS

Incubators for New Technology, Innovation and Business Enterprises

- The Shipley Center at Clarkson University and its sister organization, the Reh Center for Entrepreneurship, are working with entrepreneurs on the development of new business opportunities that could be located in the North Country.
- Even more importantly, four SUNY campuses as well as Clarkson University have approved Start-Up NY campus plans and work is underway to begin delivering projects under the Start-Up NY business incentive rubric. JCC has also submitted a plan that will be considered if an appropriate space for an appropriate business can be identified for the campus.
- One of the Regional Council's goals has been to find a way to tap into and retain the creativity percolating on our campuses and to create opportunities for the region's young graduates to build their dreams and careers right here. Partnership agreements between all the higher education institutions enables students to tap into the assistance provided by the innovation hot spot services model and allows them to also work with the Shipley and Reh centers directly. There are a number of new, innovative and promising businesses that are being developed by both the region's recent and pending graduates.
- Forbes magazine ranked Clarkson University as one of America's Top 50 most entrepreneurial universities in their August 18, 2014 issue.

Round IV Opportunities

- Clarkson University and SUNY Canton have proposed a public-private partnership to develop and host the NYS College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cyber-security. A decision by the State is pending.
- To date, the Shipley Center has and/or continues to assist 247 prospective businesses – all of which are in various stages of development. Included in the mix are more than: 50 regional projects; 20 alumni projects; 4 hospital-initiated projects; several projects being advanced by University professors and staff; and more than 140 projects initiated by students.
- The Council will work with the region's educational institutions and manufacturers to identify opportunities upgrade worker skills. Opportunities exist in the classroom as well as on the job. LMI families and veterans will benefit from this training.
- Public-private partnerships between the region's higher education institutions and industry will continue to be a priority for the Council.



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

The North Country continues to grow its national and global presence. Winning Best Plan and Best Performer status from the state for three years running has caused a palpable shift towards greater optimism and confidence among the region's businesses, communities and organizations.

Through the increased awareness generated by the Governor and increased marketing resources made available through the CFA process, successes in raising the profile of the North Country as a global destination abound:

- The Ironman, held annually in Lake Placid, draws 2700 athletes from over 25 nations and 42 states, and brings an additional 10,000 people to the community as volunteers and family members.
- According to the Traveler Today website, the Adirondacks is a top 10 trending destination in the US, ranking 7th, with Airbnb bookings up 316% for the summer of 2014.
- Skyward at Whiteface ranks as the 7th best ski run in the world, as featured in a January 2014 CNN report.
- Forbes Travel Guide lists Lake Placid as one of "Five Summer Lake Getaways To Book Now" (April 2014)

Millennials, or those born between 1977 and 2000, make up 25 percent of the U.S. population, making their generation larger than Baby Boomers. The NCREDC's Strategic Plan includes numerous strategies that will assist the state in retaining and attracting Millennials as entrepreneurs, encourage them to visit as tourists to the region, and tap into their power as a consumer market.

Businesses and non-profits in the North Country are shifting marketing efforts to understand and address the needs of this generation. For example, Kraft Foods, whose largest cream cheese manufacturing plant is in the North Country, is leading the pack when it comes to brand innovation to appeal to the Millennial mindset consumer. An article in the Chicago Tribune, recently reported that Kraft reinvented its entire corporate culture to reflect more of a start-up vibe that has proven to be successful in Silicon Valley. This new environment has led to a stronger digital presence, which has increased awareness and sales.

Progress in 2013-14

- The 'Competitive Product Branding' project which received funding as a priority project in Round III is attracting the involvement of global brand developers with deep roots in the region who are focusing their formidable talents on research and planning for a product brand that will create a competitive price advantage for the region's producers.
- The Adirondack Winter Challenge, hosted by Governor Cuomo, an event highlighting winter tourism in the North Country, drew over 400 state and local elected officials, staff, and winter sports enthusiasts from across New York State.
- The award-winning Seagle Music Colony, another recipient of Round III funding, is the oldest summer vocal training program in the United States and the premier opera and musical theater producing organization in Upstate New York.
- The 2013 national level Bassmasters Tournament in Waddington, had a record crowd of 34,000 over four days and generated over \$1 million in impact. The Bassmaster Northern Open tournament is making its way back to Lake Champlain for the first time in four years. Anglers from 35 different states/countries including the United States, France, Japan, and Canada are expected to compete.
- FLW Series is a three-day bass fishing tournament held every year on Lake Champlain that brings approximately 300 anglers from all parts of the United States.

- The Adirondack Coast Pro-Am EVP Volleyball Tournament attracted 200 pro, amateur, and junior level athletes – including US Olympic gold medalist Lloy Ball. They will be returning to the Adirondack Coast for a 2015 tournament.
- War of 1812 commemorative events will be held throughout the Region. The Battle of Plattsburgh Weekend, for instance, showcases some of the most pivotal pieces of history from the era and brings in visitors from across the United States to witness history coming to life on Lake Champlain.
- 2014 will mark the third year of the Adirondack Coast Wine, Cider & Beer Festival. Every October, this event draws approximately 17 New York State vineyards and an estimated 1,000 visitors from Canada and the United States to showcase agri-tourism.

Round IV Opportunities

- The Empire State Winter Games, run by the region's communities since 2011, are going global in 2016. Over 1450 athletes competed in this event in 2014 with 5000 spectators. The Global Games are expected draw 2000 – 2500 athletes from New York, Canada and Europe.
- Competitive Product Brand. 2015 will launch the product brand that will increase market share for North Country products and services.
- Building on the North Country's network of scenic byways and Blueway Trails, the Council is looking for opportunities to strengthen the region's artisan, agricultural, recreation and military history.

Activate tourism as a driver to diversify our economies by creating demand to accelerate private investment.

The tourism industry, with access to more than 120 million prospective tourists within a one-day drive, has been a cornerstone of the NCREDC strategies. The region has an abundance of internationally and regionally significant resources from the Adirondacks to the 1000 Islands, from the Champlain Valley to Tug Hill Plateau. These natural assets cross the regions of the state — Capital, Central New York, Mohawk Valley and North Country — and the NCREDC has capitalized on this momentum.

The region has a history of hospitality and several tourism hubs that have leveraged the private investment which is key to the tourism strategy. While the region has secured substantial local, state and federal dollars to improve public amenities (e.g. 20 awards, over \$12 million in 2013 CFA awards for public parks, recreation and infrastructure assets and improvements) the Council has always emphasized that leveraging private sector investment was the key to unleashing the region's tourism sector potential.

“ *The region has an abundance of internationally and regionally significant resources from the Adirondacks to the 1000 Islands, from the Champlain Valley to Tug Hill Plateau.*

There is no doubt that this focus on leverage and strategic investments in amenities and support infrastructure is paying off. Over the past three years:

- The Governor's 2013 and 2014 Adirondack Challenges in Indian Lake and snowmobile promotions on Tug Hill have generated national media exposure and increased travel throughout the North Country.
- The Council's investment in tourism priority projects has leveraged over \$70 million in other investment.
- Annual average "Leisure and Hospitality" employment has grown, from 14,600 in 2010 to 16,200 in 2013, adding 1,600 jobs ranging from LMI to management level jobs.
- 4.6 million Canadian visitors crossed the North Country borders in 2013. Of those, 2.1 million visitors stayed at least one night.

Progress in 2013-14

- The 4-star 1000 Islands Harbor Hotel in Clayton, a \$23 million project funded in 2012, held its ribbon cutting on July 9, 2014. More than 90 new jobs were created at the hotel, and elsewhere in the village's downtown a brew pub, new restaurant and two new retailers have opened in the summer of 2014.
- Hampton Inn & Suites in Lake Placid opened in July 2013, increasing room availability in Essex County by 4.9%. In addition, the Lake Placid Pub and Brewery opened their newly expanded facility.
- Cycle Adirondacks, a 2013 award, will launch in 2015 focusing on the connections between the Adirondacks and Tug Hill Plateau with an anticipated visitation of 600 riders. A Phase II, 2016 ride is already being planned for the Adirondacks and 1000 Island Region.
- Supported by 2013 CFA funding, renovations have begun at the historic Hotel Saranac, and the Lake Flower Inn is progressing with its development plans.
- The North Country Tourism Loan Fund, a 2012 priority project, has been implemented by the Development Authority of the North Country. There have been over a dozen inquiries and the first loan was approved in June 2014.
- The Wild Center's Wild Walk and Whiteface Mountain Veteran's Memorial Highway projects are being implemented with expected completion in 2016.
- As a model for tourism development across the state, the NCREDC's Tourism Destination Nomination workbooks are in the field with ten community nominations received and dozens more in development.
- Long Lake, Minerva, Indian Lake, Newcomb and North Hudson have organized a 5-Towns Upper Recreational Hub identifying regional opportunities for tourism investment that complement the state's recent \$5.7 million purchase of the Finch Pruyn lands, and the commitment of \$500,000 from The Nature Conservancy.

Round IV Opportunities

The North Country's Tourism sector and the Council look forward to mobilizing public and private investment for continued growth. The NCREDC will work towards:

- Implementation of a Tourism Investment Marketing Program which will lead to private sector investment in tourism throughout the North Country.
- A goal of completing two dozen Tourism Destination Area nominations, informing local opportunities and collating region-wide trends and needs.
- Completion of the \$1.1million MarketNY North Country Plan from the 2013 CFA, reaching recreational enthusiasts with particular emphasis on the Canadian market.
- Development of region-wide tools to attract visitors from overseas, with an emphasis on "responsible travel" that includes outdoor recreation, heritage and green experiences.
- Investment in public facilities and business enterprises consistent with Path through History, Taste of New York, Blueways, and other regional priorities.
- The NCREDC passed a resolution supporting a Franklin County occupancy tax, in both 2013 and 2014, which needs state support for enabling this important tourism development resource to be enacted.



Invest in agriculture as we help feed the region and the world.

Agriculture is the largest private industry sector in the North Country, consisting of 3,848 farm operations with agricultural sales that exceeded \$753 million in 2012. Over the past three years the NCREDC made strategic investments to sustain the North Country as one of the top agricultural and agri-business contributors to the state's economy, and to advance and diversify the agricultural industry's presence in the region.

Recent Legislative and Budgetary Achievements

In October 2013, Governor Cuomo and the NYS Legislature enacted legislation to cap increases in agricultural land assessments at two percent per year, which achieves a more predictable tax climate for New York's robust agricultural sector.

This spring, Governor Cuomo and North Country Senator and Senate Agriculture Committee Chair, Patty Richie, announced funds for the "Young Farmers NY" initiative to attract a new generation of farmers in the state. These programs include a "Beginning Farmers Fund" to assist with agri-business expansion projects, and a student loan forgiveness fund to benefit college graduates in agriculture who commit to farming careers. Two additional initiatives include a revolving loan fund for new farmers to help finance the purchase of land and equipment, and the identification of lands that are suitable for farming.

The "St. Lawrence Wine Trail" was approved by the Governor and enables the participating wineries and craft breweries along this 80-mile route to take advantage of the significant role these trails have in promoting agri-tourism and elevating New York as a major wine and craft brewing state. This the third Wine Trail to be established in the region.

National Achievements

Following the Governor's Yogurt Summit, the state modified its Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations regulations in 2013 which raised the threshold of mid-size farms from 199 to 299 dairy cows without requiring extra investments by the operator. This change accelerated milk production and allowed the state to be ranked first in the country in yogurt production for the second straight year. In 2013, New York farmers produced 741 million pounds of yogurt, and accounted for 15.7% of total yogurt production in the United States. North Country farms account for 20% of the milk cows in the state and were a major contributor to this achievement.

Progress in 2013-14

Throughout the North Country, small farms are emerging and young entrepreneurs are entering the business. These small, locally-owned operations are producing a variety of specialty products across the spectrum of agriculture, and in the last five years experienced a 50% increase in the value of products that are sold directly to consumers. New wineries, breweries and distilleries are opening from Lake Ontario to Lake Champlain. The Council has responded to these emerging niche opportunities by:

- Investing \$40,000 into Tug Hill Vineyards to expand their wine production facilities in Lewis County.
- Supporting value-added maple production including a Lewis County based maple candy operation that is exploring exports to China.
- Establishing a North Country regional brand to increase public awareness of the local foods and products that are prepared and sold to consumers outside the region.
- Establishing a \$1 million Value-Added Agricultural Loan program that is anticipated to assist 50 farms and agri-businesses during its first year of operation.

- The installation of a 1.3 million gallon anaerobic digester at Greenwood Dairy in St. Lawrence County which improves the business efficiencies of a large farm operation by generating renewable energy through effective animal waste management.
- A \$225,000 award to develop storage and shipment facilities at the Ogdensburg Bridge and Port Authority to help farmers aggregate and export field crops to global markets.

Stakeholder organizations throughout the North Country, meanwhile, worked cooperatively on a number of research efforts to enhance agricultural diversity, prevent disease and bring technology to agriculture production. Achievements in this past year are:

- A partnership between the USDA, the Miner Institute and Clarkson University on bringing technology from the laboratory to farms to increase production of livestock and crops. These include the emerging deployment of GPS and robotics into the region's agricultural production.

Round IV Opportunities

- Ongoing services and programs by Cornell Cooperative Extension and the NY Farm Viability Institute to maximize efficiencies in farm operations, dairy profit teams, farmer business and cooperative formations.
- Supply chain research by Cornell Cooperative Extension to better connect farmers, transportation, aggregation and retail opportunities for food markets both within and outside the region.
- The dissemination of Northern New York Agriculture Research Projects, including: dairy water quality and pathogen studies; pasture management and pest controls for livestock; utilizing non-conventional crop covers and tunnel crops to extend North Country growing seasons; and adopting a variety of crop production methodologies to address crop diseases and nutrient management.

To continue and build on the region's recent advancements in agriculture, opportunities for the NCREDC include:

- Continued expansion of storage, processing and distribution facilities.
- Technical assistance and training programs to add value to food products.
- Launching the North Country brand by developing digital promotional materials that market wood products, community supported agriculture, livestock, food pantries, and wholesale buying clubs.
- Disseminating Best Management Practices for expanding dairy herds from 200 to 500 cows.
- Incorporating proven technologies such as tile drainage, irrigation and high tunnels that increase return on investment.
- Increase availability of maple products for global export.
- Continued support for the Northern New York Agricultural Development Program, which includes research and development in biomass pellet production and marketing; cold climate; clay soils; distance to markets; pest tracking; and nutrient management to reduce water pollution.
- Creating a model robotic agricultural system for northern New York.



“ The availability of rich, healthy Northern NY Maple forests has made my dream of beginning a large scale maple operation possible. Building upon this dream has been promoted by the business-friendly and prevailing farm culture of our region.

- Joshua Parker
Parker Maple Farm, LLC.

Create the greenest energy economy in the State

Progress in 2013-14

Since 2011, over \$41 million has been invested into 74 Clean Energy projects by the NCREDC. Due to its extensive work on green economic development, it is also poised to drive the implementation of several new state energy programs, including Renewable Heat NY, NY-Sun and implementation of Executive Order 88. Cleaner Greener funds in 2013 are accelerating the installation of biomass systems in institutional and residential buildings as pilot projects that will inform Renewable Heat NY strategies.



- Two multi-project Cleaner Greener Communities projects were funded in 2013 totaling over \$3 million. Thirteen individual pilot projects are underway, including seven biomass projects; a small scale food waste bio-digester; solar thermal greenhouses; a hydro upgrade; and energy efficient systems at the Hotel Saranac currently under renovation.
- An energy recovery systems was installed at the St. Lawrence Brewing company.
- The third annual North Country Clean Energy Conference connected clean energy businesses and systems to potential customers in biomass, wind, hydro and efficiency.
- A pipeline from Massena through Franklin County will provide low-cost natural gas to communities and businesses that did not have access before.
- Davidson Auto in Watertown is nearing completion of the installation of 5,600 solar panels with a capacity of 1.4 million kW, supplying solar electricity to seven buildings. The completion of this final phase will reduce electrical consumption by 80%.
- NYPA and SUNY Canton are installing a \$7 million wind power project on campus.
- Kraft Cheese Plant in Lowville is utilizing a bio-digester (using whey by-product) to produce electricity for the plant.
- Curran Renewable Energy in Massena was one of only two mills in the country to receive Pellet Fuels Institute certification in the production of its premium-grade wood pellets.
- For LMI families, New York's Weatherization program now requires all auditors to be Building Performance Institute certified. Community Action Agencies in the North Country are conducting energy audits and authorizing repairs for eligible homes. Over 404 housing units in the region are eligible for assistance.
- Community Energy Solar is working with Clarkson University to develop a state of the art solar facility at Potsdam Municipal Airport. The project is partially funded by NYSERDA.
- Clarkson University has been awarded a NYSERDA grant to plan a Microgrid around the Village of Potsdam in partnership with National Grid, GE, Canton Potsdam Hospital and SUNY Potsdam under the NY-Sun initiative.

Round IV Opportunities

- The Council is interested in pursuing pilot projects to implement smart grid technology and a distributive energy system that will utilize renewable energy technologies.
- ReEnergy's Lyonsdale plant is requesting to continue participation in the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) as a maintenance tier resource beyond 2014, with the option to alternatively choose to participate in NYSERDA's next Main Tier solicitation. The NCREDC encourages the Public Service Commission to award a contract at a price that would allow the facility to continue operating and also supports ReEnergy Chateaugay's petition to become authorized to participate in the next Main Tier solicitation. Both facilities support the region's energy and economic development goals.
- The NCREDC wants to improve the efficiencies of the bio-mass energy sector from forest to mill that support energy and paper manufacturing industries.

Overview of Job Creation and Investment

Since 2010, the NYS Department of Labor reports five industries in the North Country each experienced job growth in excess of 100 employees. The region's Accommodation and Food Services industry experienced the largest net growth of 1,223 positions, followed by 299 positions in Agriculture and Forestry, and 268 positions in Education. Administrative and Waste Services gained 255 new jobs, and 123 jobs were added to Arts, Entertainment and Recreation. Five industries suffering the largest job losses were Construction (-657), Manufacturing (-442), Transportation and Warehousing (-393), Retail Trade (-347), and Finance and Insurance

(-224) and is a result of low consumer demand that continues to recover from the national recession. Overall, the North Country experienced a net loss of 127 positions among private industries.

The NCREDC's 71 priority projects have generated significant outcomes for the Region. The Council's strategic investment of over \$101 million achieved a 4 to 1 ratio of outside investment for every state dollar awarded, leveraging financing of \$437.5 million or four times the Regional Council's commitment. ESD has determined 75% of this leveraged investment originated from the private sector. More than 3,000 jobs are directly tied to these investments and more than one-third of these are new positions — a highly valued commodity to the North Country's rural economy. The Council's achievement to retain over 1,800 jobs also champions a basic tenet in economic development to support what you have.

Since Round 1 in 2011, priority projects in the North Country generated 1,176 new jobs. A majority of these new positions advanced the Region's vision in defense (400 jobs), manufacturing (282), and tourism (221). For the past three rounds, the Council invested \$5.7 million in the creation or expansion of six manufacturing priority projects which leveraged more than \$78 million of investment, retained 688 jobs, and created 282 new positions. The Council also accelerated the North Country's tourism industry by strategically investing more than \$17.6 million in 14 priority projects which includes the new Thousand Islands Harbor Hotel that generated 90 new jobs in Clayton. Overall, the Council's investments in tourism-related priority projects leveraged over \$70 million and created 221 new jobs in the North Country.

The NCREDC continues to extend its support for Fort Drum, the largest employer in Northern New York with 21,955 civilian and military personnel and an annual payroll that exceeds \$1 billion. After meeting the critical demand for housing in Round 1, the Council endorsed investments totaling \$4.1 million in Rounds 2 and 3 to redevelop the former Mercy Hospital in downtown Watertown, which leveraged more than \$65 million and is anticipated to generate 400 new jobs. To strengthen our position as the gateway to Canada, the Council invested \$4.5 million in the expansion of the Plattsburgh International Airport which leveraged more than \$50 million and is anticipated to more than double commercial airline enplanements from 150,000 to over 300,000 passengers.

Priority Projects	71
REDC Investment	\$101.2 million
Total Project Costs	\$508.5 million
Outside Investment	\$407.3 million
Outside Private Investment	\$306 million
Jobs, Direct	3068
	1892 retained
	1176 created
Jobs, Indirect	1044



Indirect Economic Impacts

Another element of success is found in the multiplier impacts these projects generated for the North Country's legacy employers. The Council's investments in priority projects strengthened the competitive advantage of the Region's industry clusters by stabilizing their business operations; supporting advancements to a next-generation of operations and production; spurring emerging industries and supply chains; and yielding critical environmental benefits for the Region. Some examples include:

- **Transportation Manufacturing**

Awarding funds to Bombardier and Prevost Car US supported investments in the next generation of production; growth in employment and the transfer of new products from Canada to the US; and increased the industry's supply chain in the region by 15 to 20 suppliers that hired more than 150 new employees.

- **Paper Manufacturing:**

Our investment in International Paper will stabilize its Ticonderoga operation through the facility's conversion to natural gas, an investment of more than \$70 million. This project will strengthen the company's competitive advantage in paper manufacturing; retain more than 600 direct jobs; continue the company's support of over 600 logging jobs that are tied to its operations; and result in one of the largest reductions in the Region's carbon footprint.

- **Renewable Energy:**

ReEnergy Black River is fully operational and is meeting all of Fort Drum's renewable electricity needs, one of the Region's key industry clusters. The company's sale of renewable energy credits (RECs) to NYSERDA under New York's Renewable Portfolio Standard supports the State's goal to obtain 30% of its electricity from renewable sources by 2015. In addition to creating 33 jobs at the generation plant, over 144 forestry jobs are directly tied to its operations and supports an additional 130 indirect jobs. ReEnergy has actively worked on the development of financing and training opportunities for the company's logging industry and has assisted with the formation of tree farms to supply its bio-mass operations.

- **Tourism:**

The construction of the Clayton 1000 Islands Harbor Hotel symbolizes an economic resurrection of communities along the St. Lawrence River. This project accelerated the development of a deep-water port and the restoration of Clayton's dock to accept cruise ships and commercial or military vessels – an amenity that was a critical factor in the selection of a location to develop the luxury hotel. This anchor facility stimulated growth in Clayton's visitor infrastructure through the opening of new shops and restaurants, and the rehabilitation of an historic inn, all of which enhance the visitor's experience to New York's Thousand Islands region.

- **Biotechnology:**

A transformational outcome from the NCREDC's initial investment in the Trudeau Institute is the innovative partnership Governor Cuomo established between the Trudeau Institute and Clarkson University. This partnership combines Trudeau's world-renowned immunology expertise and Clarkson's historical leadership in engineering to model diseases and disease outcomes; develop new modeling tools, strategies, and products that will improve the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of infectious diseases; and will advance the world's fundamental understanding of immunology. This vanguard effort will yield a new generation of cutting edge scientists and elevate the North Country's research institutions as the global leader in the emerging field of immunoengineering.

Actions Taken to Encourage Job Creation and Investment

The success of the region's priority projects ability to infuse the North Country's economy with leveraged funds and new jobs can be attributed to the Council's adoption of priority project scoring criteria that has been consistently applied since the initial funding round in 2011. This scoring criteria evaluates a priority project submission based on its transformational ability to advance the Council's vision, its readiness for immediate implementation; the amount of funding leveraged to bring a project to fruition; and its economic impact through job creation and retention. The dissemination of this criteria to Project Pipeline Committee members; at annual CFA workshops and public forums; its posting on the Council's website; and its consistent application during each funding round allowed the Council to achieve an overall leverage ratio of \$4 for every State dollar invested, and trained, retained or created 3,068 jobs throughout the North Country.

Current Status of Priority Projects

The Council is pleased to report with the exception of four awards (6% of total), all Round 1, Round 2, and Round 3 priority projects are initiated. Of the 71 funded projects, 69% of all priority projects are underway; 20% of all projects are complete; contracts for four projects (6%) are signed. A spreadsheet that details current status, timeline, project costs and jobs impact of all priority projects is appended to this report.

Performance Measures

During the inception of its *Transformational Plan*, the NCREDC identified three tiers of performance measures to assess the implementation of the Plan's vision and the advancement of selected strategies.

Tier I performance measures include statistics that give a general overview of the Region's overall economic health. Tier II and III performance measures, meanwhile, gauge each component of the Plan's vision. Tier II measures consist of state or federal data that focus on certain industries of the Region's economy, and Tier III measures detail the Council's priority projects and regular CFAs (priority project figures are based on executed grant agreements, while CFA awards are based on published funding announcements). In aggregate, data trends for all three tiers (which is appended to this report) were analyzed and helped inform the Council's nomination of priority projects for Round IV.

The Council maintains a positive and productive working relationship with ESD staff to monitor the successful implementation of Tier III performance measures. For the last three rounds, ESD staff communicated regularly with Council and committee members by phone, email, and in-person to review and discuss: the parameters of each funding round, the issuance of awards, the acceptance of contracts, project initiation and anticipated completion dates, unforeseen challenges and modifications to project scopes as needed, and the reallocation of funds to

other regionally significant, "shovel-ready" projects when necessary. In Round III, Council committee members and ESD staff also collaborated to: develop criteria for the review and selection of projects for the Council's \$2.5 million Infrastructure fund; endorse projects for the \$6 million broadband fund; and develop and implement the Council's Opportunity Agenda.

Tier I and Tier II indicators included in this year's report were readily available online or provided by state or partnering agencies upon request, and are listed from 2010 (the year before the Regional Council process was initiated) to 2013 (Round III). All Round III projects awarded in the North Country are listed as Tier III performance measures and categorized by vision. As in the previous rounds, some projects are cross listed as they simultaneously advance more than one component of the Council's vision. Highlights for performance measures for this funding round include:

From 2010-13, the North Country experienced a 1% decline in business firms and 2% decline in jobs which can be primarily attributed to the slow recovery from the national recession. The Region's unemployment and poverty rates for the same time period changed

by less than 1%, and remain higher than the state and national averages. Neither figure comes as a surprise; the North Country has the unfortunate distinction of traditionally having some of the highest unemployment and poverty rates in New York State. In response, representatives and delegates from all over the North Country responded to the Governor's challenge in 2011 and collaborated together to prepare a strategic plan that strives to overcome these economic challenges. The results of this endeavor have proven successful; the NCREDC is the only Regional Council in the state with the unique honor of being recognized as "Best Plan Awardee" for each funding round. Based on published award announcements for CFAs and grant contracts for priority projects, this designation has yielded a direct investment of more than \$125 million in 234 projects and created nearly 4,000 jobs throughout the North Country. A lasting reduction in the region's unemployment and poverty rates remains a long-term goal for the Council, and will require a continued investment of sufficient local, state and federal resources to successfully address both issues.

Energizing our communities...

The economic impact of Fort Drum's presence in the region is clearly evident in its annual employee payroll. In 2013, the Fort's total military and civilian payroll exceeded \$1 billion. In the same year, the value of contracts with Lewis, Jefferson and St. Lawrence counties based businesses was \$16.7 million, down by more than 50% from the previous year due to the completion of the base's "build-out" to accommodate a third brigade. While median home sales in Jefferson and Lewis counties increased by 11% and 9% over the past three years, the number of units sold in Jefferson County declined by 8% and is correlated to the increased availability of housing options that were funded in Rounds I and II. Initially, military personnel purchased homes due to the limited availability of rental units in the greater Watertown area. Since the successful construction of additional housing units, home purchases declined as anticipated.

While the Fort was strategically diversified for the rapid deployment of light infantry divisions over the past decade, the surrounding community forged a model public-private partnership with the base to provide essential services that support the Fort's operations

I. OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS

and sustain its soldiers. Today, 100% of the base's primary educational needs are provided by local school districts; 60% of the military's housing needs are off base; and 90% of the Fort's medical services are provided by local hospitals and clinics. In Round III, more than \$5.6 million was invested in projects that continue to enhance and preserve the high quality of life military personnel and the greater community enjoy in Jefferson and Lewis Counties. A Round III priority project is the adaptive reuse of the former Mercy Health Medical Center in downtown Watertown that will generate 400 new jobs, boost the region's economy, and construct an additional 164 housing units.

The Plan's vision identifies the manufacturing industry as a critical sector to preserve and strengthen in the North Country. In Round III, the NCREDC invested more \$2.6 million to expand and modernize manufacturing facilities, and to strengthen the qualifications of the Region's workforce, both of which provided a direct benefit to 332 jobs. In addition to these awards, New York State, Clarkson University and the Trudeau Institute announced the formation of a world-class biotech partnership that will invest \$35 million over the next five years to accelerate the North Country as a premier center of biotechnology research and development.

In 2013 and 2014, the region benefitted from more than \$8.5 million awarded to increase access to broadband services throughout the North Country. \$3.3 million of this amount was directly invested to expand broadband in Essex County; extend vital public safety services to 21 public emergency locations and to 20 municipal buildings that support public emergency operations; and create a \$1 million revolving loan fund to support the last mile build-out of telecommunications facilities in Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties. In Round III, 51 awards totaling more than \$15 million was allocated throughout the region to develop and implement community planning projects; revitalize downtown districts; install essential infrastructure that support business and community operations; and support the development and maintenance of numerous recreational trails. All of these investments enhance the North Country's overall quality of life, provide a reliable infrastructure that is critical for the conduct of business operations, and promote economic development in the region's micropolitan communities.

Community development and revitalization projects represent the largest funding category through the Regional Council competition, and are a critical component to sustaining and improving the high quality of life that is enjoyed in the North Country. To extend this success of these investments, the Council nominates the creation of a North Country Regional Revitalization Fund that will be used to assist with the financing of transformational projects as they arise throughout the seven-county region. Those projects would include the redevelopment of sites that require demolition and clean up; the installation of essential infrastructure; and the rehabilitation of blighted properties to accommodate economic development. Eligible projects would be expected to leverage a significant amount of private investment; generate or sustain employment; and revitalize the surrounding community.

This year, the Council is nominating an investment of capital funding and Excelsior Tax Credits to Grand Slam Safety, which designs and manufactures outfield safety fences for baseball and softball fields for their domestic and foreign markets. The NCREDC is also recommending capital funding and Excelsior Tax Credits for North American Tapes, which manufactures a variety of adhesive tapes, and is the second largest supplier of hockey tape in the world. These investments are anticipated to yield 15 new jobs over three years at Grand Slam Safety, and an additional 15 jobs over three years at North American Tapes. The Council also endorses allocating funds to the Villages of Carthage and West Carthage to modernize their municipal wastewater treatment facility. Half of this facility operates to support Carthage Specialty Paperboard, a premiere international matboard supplier, package sealer, and manufacturer of specialty packages, including Godiva Chocolates. Without this allocation, the company's share of the expense to upgrade the facility would place the business at a competitive disadvantage in its international markets and would result in a loss of 80 jobs.

Attract and nurture entrepreneurial pioneers...

Despite the national recession's overall impact on the North Country's economy, the region grew in the number of small business firms (companies with up to 10 employees) and number of small business employees. Businesses assisted through Clarkson University's Shipley Center for Innovation nearly tripled from 11 firms, in 2010, to 29 firms in 2013, and annual job creation nearly doubled, from 23 jobs to 43, jobs in the same time frame. Clarkson University received \$250,000 in Round III to establish the region's Innovation Hot Spot, which is expected to create an additional 50 jobs. Other strategic investments in small business development include a seven-county marketing program for the Adirondack Regional Art Trail, which will benefit 500 local artisans around the region.

In Round IV, the Council anticipates the continued success of the region's entrepreneurial pioneers who will benefit from the state's Start-Up NY program. The region's SUNY schools as well as Clarkson University are all capitalizing on plans to assist new and expanding business that will advance the academic mission of each host school. The impact of Clarkson's participation alone is expected to create 75 new jobs over the next three to five years. The NCREDC is nominating an award to Twinstare Technologies to finalize its security operations center that will allow the company to deliver IT and cyber security services worldwide. The Council also recommends awarding the Regional Arts and Interactive Learning (RAIL) project in downtown Potsdam. The project will convert and adaptively reuse two former Clarkson University buildings into a mixed-use facility that will include graduate student housing, market rate residential units, a business center, and house the St. Lawrence Arts Council and the North Country Children's Museum as two anchor tenants. RAIL will provide emerging and established artisans with access and service to artist business incubators, professionally equipped arts studios, and a rotating exhibition gallery that will feature North Country artwork and crafts.

I. OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS

Activate tourism as an economic driver...

From 2010-13, the region benefitted from an 8% increase in visitor spending, a 9% increase in tourism jobs, and a 9% increase in tourism-related taxes that were generated at the local and state level. North Country state parks and DEC campgrounds also recorded an overall 6% increase in attendance during the same time period. In 2013, the North Country hosted the Bassmaster 2013 Elite Series Evan Williams Bourbon Showdown on the St. Lawrence River. Governor Cuomo traveled to the North Country to announce the state's marketing partnerships with B.A.S.S. and ORDA, among others, to promote fishing and vacation destinations across the state.

In Round III, the Council invested more than \$9.7 million in regionally significant landmarks and hospitality facilities that are critical to the development of destination hubs. Those projects include renovations to Hotel Saranac; establishing boutique accommodations in Saranac Lake and Schroon Lake; and renovating and modernizing exhibits at the Adirondack Museum. The Council also invested more than \$1 million in a regional partnership of Tourism Promotion Agencies that will market a variety of assets to attract visitors to the North Country. This year, the NCREDC endorses additional investments in the visitor industry that will continue to elevate the region's profile and boost tourism. These strategic investments include: launching a North Country brand to elevate consumer awareness of items produced in the region; establishing a tourism marketing program for communities designated as "Tourism Destinations"; expanding the Empire State Winter Games; and investing in critical components to expand tourism in Hamilton County. The Council also recognizes and supports the Town of North Elba's efforts to secure state funding to renovate and modernize Lake Placid's Olympic Facilities so that it may continue to attract and host both national and international winter competitions.

Invest in Agriculture...

Despite a 10% decrease in the total number of farms operating in the region since 2010, acres of farmland used in production grew by 6%, and the value of agricultural products grown in the North Country rose by 26% to more than \$753 million. Dairy products continue to dominate the region's agricultural industry; milk cows in the North Country account for 20% of the state's total. The number of farms selling products directly to consumer, meanwhile, grew by 25% to 778, and the value of their products sold jumped by 50% over the past three years. To stimulate value-added production and increase revenue among North Country farmers, the Council allocated \$1 million to establish a regional value-added loan fund to assist agricultural producers and processors in all seven counties, and awarded \$225,000 to the Port of Ogdensburg to increase its capacity for global shipping exports.

This year, the Council is nominating an award to dairy cooperative Agri-Mark – the largest milk supplier in New England – to replace its dairy processing facility in Chateaugay that will increase production capacity by 20% and retain 106 jobs. The NCREDC also recommends investing in Tri-Town Packing Company to upgrade the business' slaughtering and meat processing equipment that will improve its operational efficiencies and allow the company to expand its specialty products. Tri-Town Packing is a venerated value-added business in northern New York that provides livestock slaughtering and processing services to numerous meat marketers and farm operations throughout the North Country. This investment will support the company's efforts to comply with USDA's humane handling and food safety requirements, retain 14 jobs at the plant, and sustain the region's burgeoning direct marketing operations.





Create the Greenest Energy Economy...

In 2010, approximately 94% of the grid-tied electricity commercially produced in the North Country came from renewable energy resources. Within the last three years, electricity generated from commercial wind facilities in the North Country increased by 31% to 924 megawatts, and biomass energy production nearly doubled to 82 megawatts. The North Country also experienced increases in renewable energy generation through Customer Sited Tier (CST) installations. On-site renewable energy generation which includes the installation of solar panels and small scale wind turbines leaped 181%, from 104 sites in 2010, to 292 sites in 2013. During the same time period, the number of low-income homes that were weatherized to decrease energy consumption declined from 604 units in 2010, to 349 units in 2013, which is associated with the discontinuation of federal funds through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

In Round III, the Council invested more than \$4.3 million in five projects to reduce carbon emissions and the region's dependence on fossil fuels; improve operational efficiencies; and accelerate renewable energy production in the North Country. This included funding innovative demonstration projects throughout the North Country that will advance key aspects of the region's Cleaner Greener Communities Sustainability Plan. In this funding round, the Council recommends an award for the Adirondack North Country Association to continue its successful implementation of the Sustainability Plan, and funding to complement energy efficiencies that will be made to the Grand Slam Safety manufacturing facility in Lewis County.

In addition to these awards, the Council recognizes ReEnergy's Lyonsdale co-generation plant as an integral component of the state's renewable energy portfolio. The NCREDC endorses the extension of the facility's renewable energy credits to allow the plant's continued operation, which supports more than 100 jobs in the region's emerging biomass industry and infuses \$6.6 million in to the North Country economy.

Leverage our Gateway to Canada...

Both the number of trucks and loaded truck containers entering through the region's border crossings with Canada declined by 2% and 14%, respectively, which is primarily attributed to the national recession and rising gas prices. Trains, loaded rail containers, passenger vehicles and number of passengers, however, all experienced gains over the past three years. More than 51,000 rail passengers entered the U.S. through the North Country ports of entry, which represents a 21% increase since 2010. The number of loaded rail containers entering the North Country grew by 72% and is primarily due to the more than doubling of containers (41,947 in 2010 to 83,832 in 2013).



In Round III, the Council invested more than \$4.3 million in five projects to reduce carbon emissions and the region's dependence on fossil fuels; improve operational efficiencies; and accelerate renewable energy production in the North Country.

II

IMPLEMENTATION



The Council made significant achievements with the implementation of strategies that advance the Region's current priorities, and successfully developed new strategies to advance State priorities that were included in Round IV. The Council's accomplishments with the development and implementation of these strategies are detailed below.

Global Marketing and Export Strategies

Bi-National Partnerships

- **Summits:**

We seek continuation of the Quebec-New York Economic Summit process in 2015 in partnership with New York State, Quebec, and our Quebec business allies, to include progress toward an eventual full Summit while identifying and pursuing other collaborative opportunities in the interim. We also join with Western New York in encouraging planning for an Ontario-New York Summit, while stressing that New York has two regions of connection with Ontario and the North Country of course must be party to all related meetings and discussions going forward.

- **Toronto and Montreal:**

We support state plans for the resumption of a presence in both Toronto and Montreal, creating a further resource in support of shared aims with Canada. It is essential that this new operation be defined appropriately to Canada as opposed to operations elsewhere in the world. It will also be important that these two offices have an active and collaborative working partnership with the North Country.

Foreign Direct Investment

- **Coordination:**

Our Global North Country Alliance will coordinate outreach and marketing activities. This will include sharing and coordination related to our teams of experts.

- **EB-5 Regional Center:**

We will explore opportunities for sharing and cooperation with the new EB-5 Regional Center in the Capital Region via our partners at the Center for Economic Growth. We will also seek and encourage a statewide conversation, including ESD, about how best to collaboratively utilize this economic development tool in New York State.

- **Workshops/Seminars/Missions:**

We will continue to work with our Canadian partners to maximize utilization of our expertise through both organized workshops/missions and in one-on-one sessions with interested companies. We will seek to establish a relationship with one or more new partner organizations in Ontario and/or Quebec in 2015.

- **Strategic Sectors:**

We will further focus our outreach and marketing in pursuit of FDI opportunities in targeted regional strategic sectors, including Aerospace, Transportation Equipment, Renewable Energy, Biotech, Forest Products and General Manufacturing. A coordinated regional plan will be developed by the end of the year for 2015-16, including trade shows in various sectors and other initiatives, open to cross regional sharing and cooperation.

- **Start-Up NY:**

The Quebec and Ontario markets have become very aware of the new Start-Up NY program. This program will become an active part of our marketing strategy. Also of note is the exemption of most New York manufacturers from state corporate franchise taxes — a move that really raises eyebrows with Canadians.

- **Site Preparation:**

Investment in additional industrial and business park capacity to have the readiness to effectively recruit FDI and to meet the anticipated increase in demand from Canada over the next few years.



II. IMPLEMENTATION

Exporting

- **U.S. Export-Import Bank:**

This major federal tool in support of exporting is currently underutilized in the North Country. With this in mind, we hosted a Forum in Ogdensburg this year with Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, Congressman Bill Owens and the President/Chairman of the Ex-Im Bank, Fred P. Hochberg. It was a first step toward enhancing awareness and utilization of the bank's services that will also include establishment of a "City State Partnership" in the North Country for the first time — basically an informational and communication link with the Ex-Im Bank. Development Authority of the North Country will be the lead in securing and hosting this initiative, and CITEC and the North Country Chamber of Commerce will become partners.

- **International Business Alliance:**

Discussions have begun with CenterState CEO in Syracuse and their International Business Alliance regarding utilization of some of their export support services in the North Country. CITEC will take the lead in defining and carrying out opportunities for sharing starting in 2015, expected to include access to their educational seminars via webinars and other means, access to Market Research Assistance for North Country companies (via funding from the U.S. Commercial Service through the IBA), access for interested North Country companies to occasional Overseas Trade Missions to be actively publicized in our region, access to their Speakers Bureau, and an exploration of opportunities for one on one counseling as practical.

- **Coordination:**

Enhanced coordination and marketing of the export related services and programs of all of the North Country partner organizations and agencies. We will also develop an inventory of resources, including funding resources, to be posted on-line on the NCREDC website as well as elsewhere, in collaboration with ESD. Global North Country Alliance and its partners will also consult with its banking community and other sources of finance to identify ways to assist small businesses in the region to begin or expand export activity.

- **Trade Missions:**

We will explore opportunities for Trade Missions in key sectors, including Wood Products, Agriculture & Food, Transportation Equipment, and Services, potentially in alignment with other state regions.

- **Universities:**

We will look to more fully utilize resources available through our colleges and universities and coordinate activities with them. Potential partners include our HEARD consortium and our Innovation Hot Spot.

- **Data:**

As a non-metro area, export related data is limited in the North Country from general federal sources. Our Global North Country Alliance is committed to the development by 2015 of a comprehensive inventory of companies in our region currently engaged in exporting, with appropriate contacts and basic information. Partners in the creation of this inventory will include ESD, Development Authority of the North Country, North Country Chamber of Commerce, CITEC, the county IDA's and the Ogdensburg Bridge and Port Authority, with expected assistance from other partners.

- **Foreign Trade Zones:**

The North Country has a number of approved and active Foreign Trade Zones across the region. Information regarding these zones will be coordinated and placed on line, and consideration will be given to opportunities to further highlight them for potential expanded utilization.

II. IMPLEMENTATION

Aerospace

- **A Regional and State Mission:**
Continue to take the lead role for ESD at the Farnborough and Paris International Air Shows, while looking to further build statewide participation in this strategic marketing effort.

Bordering on Progress

- **Border Fluidity:**
Continuation of our strong commitment to the North Country's border facilities and operations, on behalf of the entire state. This includes, but is not limited to, finalization of remaining elements in the federal Beyond the Border Action Plan.
- **Facilities:**
Closely monitor plans and designs for upcoming facility work at Lacolle, Landsdowne and Alexandria Bay in the interest of helping to advocate for and achieve optimum fluidity.
- **Other Facilities:**
Advocate (in Washington and Ottawa) for future investment in our region's border crossings and international bridge connections as an economic priority. This includes active support for \$100 million required for the rehabilitation of the Ogdensburg-Prescott International Bridge.
- **Ambassador Visit:**
We are currently working with Congressman Owens to achieve a visit to the North Country before year's end by the new U.S. Ambassador to Canada, Bruce Heyman.

Transportation

- **CSX and CP:**
Support further improvements to the region's two major north-south railways as well as spurs and feeder lines.
- **Massena:**
Continue to support development of intermodal facilities at Massena under the CSX Select initiative or by other means, if necessary.
- **St. Lawrence County:**
Support the much needed rehabilitation of two key rail bridges in Norwood and Madrid. These are part of a 30-mile rail line owned by the Ogdensburg Bridge & Port Authority and their current condition restricts global trade activity due to bridge weight restrictions.
- **Plattsburgh International Airport:**
Continued support for development of the airport, including its international passenger and aerospace/air industrial development opportunities. This includes rehabilitation and conversion of former Air Force buildings into industrial sites.
- **Airport Development:**
Support for the development of cross border and global air and industrial development at Watertown, Ogdensburg and Massena Airports.
- **Port of Ogdensburg:**
Continued enhancement of facilities and equipment at the North Country's key international port.
- **AMTRAK:**
Support for continued investment in the achievement of higher speed and more reliable passenger rail service on the Montreal-Albany-New York City corridor. Also, continued progress toward U.S.-Canadian pre-clearance of New York bound Amtrak passengers from Montreal.

- **Highway:**
Support for active joint planning by New York State-Quebec and New York State-Ontario regarding opportunities for enhancing the I-81 and I-87 international highway corridors, including the further identification and implementation of "Green Transportation" measures on a bi-national basis.
- **Authorization:**
Strong support in 2015 for a new federal Transportation Authorization Bill that is as robust as possible in its allocation of resources for transportation infrastructure and mass transit equipment and which is also multi-year in duration.

International Tourism

- Continual refinement of targeted approaches in the Ontario and Quebec markets including paid media, social media, and cross border cooperative marketing programs.
- Continued commitment to enhancing hospitality in ways supportive of the visitor experience for Canadians -- language, culture, understanding of various differences.
- Cultivation of other international market opportunities. In collaboration with ESD and Brand USA, the region's tourism promotion and development agencies are undertaking new programs aimed at increasing travel to the North Country from the U.K. and Germany, and also from China.

II. IMPLEMENTATION

Agriculture

- **Inventory:**
Support and work with Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) and the NCREDC's Agriculture Work Group on plans for surveys of our region's farmers, aggregators, delivery services, food producers and others, using this opportunity to help define current agricultural exports as well as identify opportunities for new or expanded exports. This information will then help to guide the development of specific strategies and services for this sector.
- **Maple:**
Working with CCE and our region's maple producers, the NCREDC will support growing a market for North Country maple products in China.
- **Food Export Training:**
As a special component of our planned export support efforts, we will organize and conduct a seminar in the North Country on food exporting, including linkages with service providers and sources of information and guidance.
- **Dairy:**
The North Country already enjoys exports of its outstanding cheese products. We will fully support plans for the modernization and expansion of the Agri-Mark/McCadam Cheese plant in Chateaugay, which in turn will allow this site to produce more cheese products for export, utilizing North Country dairy farm output.
- **Apples:**
Already a significant export, we will seek in our export outreach endeavors and planned surveys by CCE any opportunities to enhance and support further apple and fruit exports from the North Country. We took an important step last year by working through Congressman Bill Owens and Senator Charles Schumer to obtain a provision in the new Agriculture Bill that simplifies and facilitates apple shipments to and through Canada from the U.S.

- **Wine:**
With NCREDC support, the North Country now has three state-designated Wine Trails, in the 1000 Islands, St. Lawrence County and Champlain Valley. We will work to maximize the visibility and marketing of these trails as attractions, particularly for Canadian and other international visitors. We also will continue to work to lower Canadian impediments on U.S. wine purchases.
- **Miner Institute:**
Support in all possible ways the research collaborations and work of the Miner Institute, and engage Miner in planned assessments of export opportunities for North Country agriculture.
- **Agri-Tourism:**
A key component of the NCREDC's Tourism Development agenda, agri-tourism development and marketing holds a special opportunity for leveraging foreign and particularly Canadian visitor dollars. This will continue to be reflected in our region's tourism plans and strategies.

Energy

- **Clean Energy Development:**
We will continue to actively target Canada for desired investment in the development of clean and renewable energy related activities in the North Country, including biomass and hydro.
- **Natural Gas:**
We will continue to actively promote and support efforts to further extend North Country access to natural gas via our natural connectivity with Canada.

International Sports

- Identify the capital needs related to ORDA's sports venues as a regional priority and encourage a state commitment to a multi-year capital plan to carry out all of the needed repairs and modernizations.
- Support Lake Placid's potential bid for the World Youth Olympics, as well as continued exploration of the potential for hosting a third Winter Olympics.
- Actively support the retention of existing international events and competitions to the maximum extent possible, while regionally supporting bids and proposals to attract additional events and competitions to the North Country.
- Support plans to "globalize" the Empire State Winter Games.



Collaboration with Local Governments

Collaboration by and between local governments makes sense in the North Country. In a geographically large region with low population, pooling limited resources and working together is often the only way to achieve economies of scale and accomplish common goals. For many of the projects cited throughout this report, collaboration with local governments is a key to success. From public infrastructure investments, to Tourism Destination Area Planning, to leveraging private sector investment, engagement of local governments and project development and implementation has been essential.

As a direct result of the regional understandings and relationships developed through the Regional Council process, the North Country now benefits from increased collaboration between local governments:

- Canton Central and Potsdam Central School Districts, with funding from the Round III CFA, are undertaking a study to examine the consolidation of districts to provide primary and secondary education services at reasonable and sustainable cost to local taxpayers.
- Clinton County is advancing a public-private partnership with the Adirondack Coast Visitors Bureau to assist local communities in implementing waterfront and downtown revitalization plans and the Tourism Destination Master Plan.
- The region is developing and promoting “Blueway Trails” along the Black, Grasse, Oswegatchie, and Raquette river corridors, and also along the Fulton Chain of Lakes 90-miler Canoe Route, uniting local communities in marketing efforts to spur tourism-based business development.
- The Adirondack Economic Development Strategy offers Adirondack communities a road map to cooperate on the development of “Trail Town” tourism infrastructure.
- Through connections formed through the Regional Council process, and with the support of Governor Cuomo, the communities of the central Adirondacks have joined together to market the world class recreational assets of the Upper Hudson Recreation Hub.
- Annual events held across the region continue to bring local officials together. The Tug Hill Local Government Conference, St. Lawrence County Local Government Conference, Adirondack Park Local Government Day, the Common Ground Alliance, and the Lewis County Economic Development Conference provide opportunities for training local government officials in inter-municipal cooperation, sharing of services and planning. These events, attended and coordinated by NCREDC members and partners, also build local capacity by informing local officials about community and economic development opportunities and NCREDC activities.



Support for NY Rising

With assistance from New York State, the Essex County Towns of Jay and Keene have exhibited characteristic North Country tenacity and community spirit in joining together to rebuild following the devastating flooding the communities experienced during Hurricane Irene in 2011.

The communities have utilized NY Rising Community Reconstruction funds to conduct extensive public outreach and develop a plan to build resiliency and reduce potential damage caused by future weather events.

The region's SBDC has continued to assist businesses impacted by Hurricane Irene in accessing NY Rising Community Reconstruction funds. Staff met with impacted businesses to determine eligibility and then assist businesses in gathering required documentation and in completing and submitting applications to the NY Rising program.

The Regional Council is actively supporting its NY Rising communities in undertaking priority projects to reduce future flood hazards, plan for flood safe neighborhoods, meet the needs of residents, and build a strong economy with employment opportunities, vibrant main streets and communities, world class recreation and sustainable farms and forestry. The Council received a briefing from the Chairperson of the Essex County Board of Supervisors at their June 6th meeting on the status of NY Rising efforts.

Governor Cuomo and NYS Senator Betty Little inspect highway damage caused by Hurricane Irene.



Regional Workforce Needs for Key Sectors

The Council recognizes the importance of progressive workforce development initiatives in order to stimulate economic growth.

The Council also recognizes that it is paramount to focus on key sectors in the North Country's economy. As noted earlier these sectors include: manufacturing, hospitality and tourism, agriculture, renewable energy and broadband deployment.

The availability of a ready and well-trained workforce is paramount to the attraction, expansion and retention of business and industry in the region. Moreover, understanding the needs of existing and future employers is critical to the long-term viability and sustainability of the region's human capital potential. The Council will continue its support and monitoring of several local and Regional programs designed to directly impact the training needs of the North Country's workforce for today and tomorrow. These programs include, but are not limited to: the North Country STEM Network, P-TECH initiative, Workforce 2020, AIME, IMPACTT, Entrepreneurial Day, Thrive in Clinton County, Clinton Community College's (CCC) National Work Readiness program, PBS's Made in Clinton County series, Manufacturing Awareness Day, and the establishment of an

Advanced Manufacturing Institute at CCC that will build on their Manufacturing Skills Standard Certificate (MSSC) offerings.

Training and education services are needed for farm operators and agribusiness employees to advance the region's agricultural industry. They include: skills training for slaughter and meat processing plant employees; technical assistance programs to add value to food products; disseminating Best Management Practices to expand medium-size dairy herds and to increase milk production; disseminating proven research and development results in biomass crop production; cold climate growing techniques; soils, pest and nutrient management to improve productivity and minimize pollution; and incorporating proven technologies such as tile drainage, irrigation and high tunnels that yield greater returns on investment.

Provide customer service training for "front desk" employees in the hospitality and tourism industry. The North Country Chamber of Commerce conducts training for frontline hospitality employees annually. In addition, beginning French language courses are offered each year.

Support training for BPI certification to enhance weatherization programs throughout the region. Furthermore, the Council will continue to support workforce training focused on use of broadband infrastructure for tele-commuting in rural areas such as the Adirondack Tele-Works project.

Progress in 2013-14

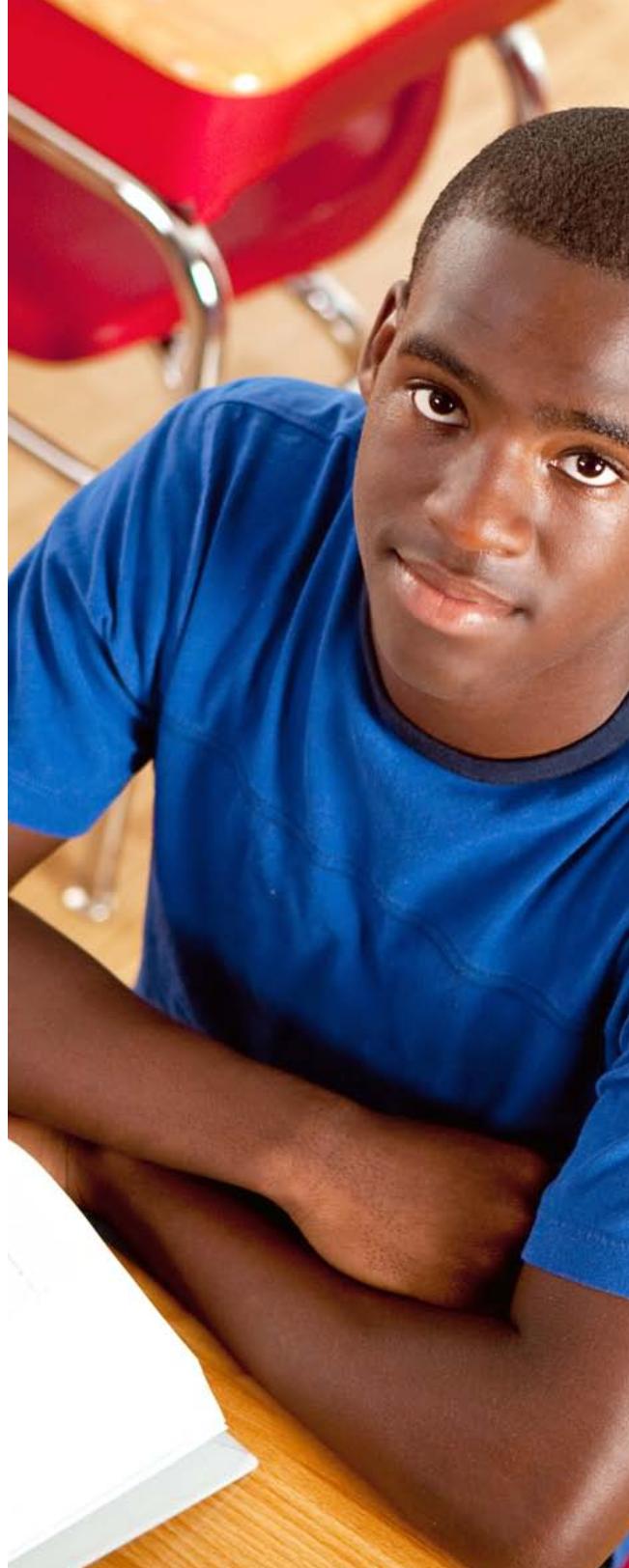
- Workforce Development Group completed the survey of the North Country employers.
- Jefferson-Lewis WIB graduated the first class of Manufacturing Technology program in June 2014.
- P-TECH is currently in the planning year before launching the first program.
- Completed the second annual Manufacturing Awareness Day with events in 3 locations across the region.
- Manufacturing Technology program with CV-TECH called AIME, MSCC Workforce Training had 240 complete the course and 192 hired.
- Jefferson County, in partnership with Jefferson County Community Action Planning Council in a "Ready to Work" grant, served 33 people with household incomes below 125% of poverty level in support of the Opportunity Agenda.
- To forge a relationship with Workforce Development in Canada, an initial meeting was held at the Annual Ontario Province Workforce Development Conference.

II. IMPLEMENTATION

- Utilizing State & National Emergency Grant OJT funds, the region served 128 long-term unemployed, totaling \$627,400 in wage subsidies to 45 employers.
- The region's nine One-Stop Career Centers served 16,765 individuals and helped lower unemployment in the region.
- \$20,000 awarded to Ansen Corporation for lean and advance technology training.
- \$40,900 awarded to CV-TEC for software training for employees of Bombardier.
- The Jeff-Lewis WIB supported the 1000 Islands Harbor Hotel in Clayton, by helping the hotel recruit and train 90 new hires.
- Watertown PBS won an Education Category silver award in the 2014 Annual Communicator Awards for its production of "Made in the USA: Career Opportunities in Manufacturing." The video, commissioned by the Jefferson County LDC Manufacturing Council, focused on the manufacturers in Jefferson and Lewis counties.
- CCC graduated the first class in MSSC certified manufacturing certificates in the spring of 2014.
- CVES in partnership with CCC was awarded \$100,000 for training long-term unemployed in assembly industrial manufacturing & education.

Round IV Opportunities

- Implement \$6 million in broadband projects funding through Connect NY.
- Create opportunities to pull together a number of employers together to better facilitate training. Build on the success of the Jefferson-Lewis Manufacturing Technology, P-TECH & AIME models and develop employer driven training programs.
- Provide meaningful career exploration opportunities for students to better prepare them for tomorrows in demand careers
- Support and promote STEM education and 21st Century skill-sets in pre-school through college.
- Provide OJT opportunities for LMI individuals to create upward mobility and career ladders out of poverty.
- Increase and retain jobs in industries that export products and import dollars including value-added manufacturing and agricultural jobs, as well as jobs in sectors including tourism, biotech, and renewable energy.



Opportunity Agenda

The Opportunity Agenda (OA) remains one of the most exciting new initiatives included in the State's Regional Council Program.

Its purpose is "to help poor communities overcome the challenges that prevent them from fully participating in the State's economic revitalization."

Poor communities are scattered across the North Country region; economic marginalization is decentralized. Service delivery to rectify the situation is confounded by the sheer size of the region. Over the past year, NCREDC has continued to advance its OA to expand the benefits of the North Country's economic renaissance more fully to all of the region's residents. The NCREDC's 2013 OA Priority Projects have progressed, advancing the region's efforts to provide accessible pathways to improved economic status for those currently living in poverty.

- Under the sponsorship of the Indian Lake Chamber of Commerce, Adirondack Tele-Works has organized and is preparing to launch its initial training class.
- The Jefferson-Lewis BOCES successfully graduated its first class of Manufacturing Technology Program students in June.

II. IMPLEMENTATION

OA Revised Strategies

Both of these programs will provide low income individuals with essential skills needed by the businesses of the region, closing a “skill-gap” that has resulted in persistent unemployment in the past.

In addition, the Opportunity Agenda Work Group met to review and revise the initial OA to reflect newly identified issues and opportunities. The OA Work Group expanded to include local government economic developers, building collaboration between the NCREDC and the local governments of the region, and yielding new perspectives, including the importance of offering opportunities for self-employment as a pathway out of poverty. The essential importance of additional training opportunities, both in employability and in advanced manufacturing skills, is highlighted in the revised OA, as reflected in the CFAs submitted across the region that seek to bridge this training gap. And, to ensure that OA priorities are reflected and supported throughout the plan, the Council adjusted its priority project scoring process to increase the score of projects advancing the region’s OA strategies.

The North Country’s support of the Opportunity Agenda throughout the plan has enhanced the importance of, and encouraged public-private partnerships that promote elimination of barriers for, the economically disadvantaged. For Round IV, the Council revised strategies that address circumstances that prevent disadvantaged individuals from fully participating in the state’s economic revitalization. These strategies include:

- Provision of incentives for individuals completing high school and enrolling in higher education.
- Promotion of OJT programs that included skills gap reversal measures, apprenticeships and career awareness opportunities.
- Establishment of advanced manufacturing programs to remediate skill gaps and prepare the workforce for current employer needs.
- Collaboration with the community to remove transportation or quality early childhood care barriers.
- Establishment of partnerships with services to create incentives for small business start-up and that support micro-business and self-employment opportunities.
- Establishment of funding, services, and/or energy conservation, resource and financial literacy education to assist low-income populations that are adversely affected by escalating costs of home heating services, home repair, quality housing, and home safety repairs.
- Benefit to households where the average age is over 55 years of age.
- Benefit to communities with an outmigration rate for persons under the age of 35 that exceeds the regional average.

Round IV Opportunities

- Joint Council for Economic Opportunity (JCEO) of Clinton and Franklin Counties, Inc. is proposing a collaborative approach to address environmental issues, workforce development, and clean energy, growth in agriculture, and jobs and economic development. The Planting Hope Project will be located in Franklin County but be serving food pantries in Clinton, Franklin, Essex, and St. Lawrence Counties. This project will provide jobs through the construction phase, provide for 8 positions that will run the greenhouse and its operations, and work closely with the agencies Transition to Independence Program which provides case management and skill development training to those who lack education, job skills, or life skills necessary to compete in today’s job market.
- The Community Action Planning Council of Jefferson County’s proposal for Workforce Connections. This proposal addresses the issues of unemployment and poverty by connecting low-income individuals with employment opportunities. It is a partnership with the Jefferson-Lewis Workforce Investment Board and local employers. The services will include skills gap analyses, career counseling, OJT placement, and individual case management including support services such as budgeting, child care referrals, soft skills development, and coaching.
- Essex County Community Action Agency Workforce Development Project. The goal is to empower low-income, unemployed/underemployed individuals to achieve long-term economic self-sufficiency. Outcomes include improved job readiness skills, obtainment of marketable skills in high demand occupations including customer service/hospitality and CAN/home health aide, recruitment and training of new child care providers, job placement and retention through subsidized work experience/OJT, and increase number of low-income individuals who gain employment and on-going economic security, training, new child care slots created, job search and interviewing skills, and subsidized work experiences.

Veterans Participation in the Workforce

The economy of the North Country Region is advanced by the successful reintegration and retention of veterans into their communities after leaving the military.

The NCREDC is committed to veterans as a strategic priority within its plan. The NCREDC will work to improve access to multiple sources of support within the North Country.

Military veterans currently have over 25 local programs and services throughout the North Country that can be easily accessed during their transition from military service. The One-Stop Career Centers are set up to provide the linkage between transitional veterans, employment services, employers and additional support services. The One-Stop Career Center in Watertown is equipped to provide this linkage between Fort Drum, the state's largest military installation, and soldiers who are transitioning out of the military or retirees living in the North Country.

The Watertown One-Stop Career Center is the only location in New York State that has established its own Veterans Employment Service Center. This center operates as a premier one-of-a kind resource center to link veterans with available programs in the North Country. The NYS DOL provides a Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER), located in the Army Career Alumni Program office at Fort Drum to assist all branches of the military with further one-on-one vocational counseling. This One-Stop transition assistance program and its workshops have provided services to separating members and their spouses, veterans, and retiring military members and their spouses' since 1990.

For the last three years, Clarkson University has hosted an annual Veterans Appreciation Day to acknowledge the service of approximately 47,500 veterans living in Lewis, Jefferson, St. Lawrence, Franklin and Clinton counties in our region in collaboration with local veterans' groups. The event provides awareness of the services and benefits veterans are entitled to receive and offers introductions to the agency and nonprofit personnel who can help them access services effectively. Employers, educators and providers of workforce development programs also attend to strengthen the economic opportunities and career development of these men and women.

The Council has adopted strategies to serve the North Country's 39,000 veterans including:

- Working with not-for-profit organizations throughout the North Country to increase support for veterans and veteran families in the areas of treatment, housing, recreation and reintegration skills development.
- Working with state officials to implement the new Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Act
- Working with the three local WIBs, the chambers of commerce, and other related business organizations, conduct a targeted outreach campaign to employers promoting the benefits of hiring veterans, including federal tax breaks and veterans' occupational skills.
- All One-Stop Career Centers provide a "Veterans Transition Program" (VTP), to better address a holistic approach to the social, financial and employment needs of the veterans departing from the military.
- Provision of services through the Jobs for Veterans program including one-on-one case management services to assist with job referrals, vocational exploration, resume preparation, interviewing techniques and job seeking strategies.
- Publicize availability of state funds and incentives through the regional council program, and encourage veterans to apply.
- Outreach by SBDC for veterans interested in starting a small business or becoming a franchisee.
- Ensure that the SUNY system recognizes real life experience, advanced military training and other credits earned from institutions of higher learning around the country while in the military. This will accelerate the needed credentials for transitional service members so they can quickly re-enter the workforce.

Ongoing State Programs

SUNY 2020

With their sights set on the future, several universities in the North Country collaborated on two applications in Round III of the SUNY 2020 program.

Progress in 2013-14

- The first application, requests \$12,740,600 in funding that would establish an Advanced Manufacturing Institute (AMI) on the campus of CCC. Clinton Community has partnered with SUNY Plattsburgh, Clarkson University, CITEC, the North Country Chamber of Commerce, the North Country WIB, The Development Corporation, CV-TEC and a number of area manufacturers to develop the AMI.
- A second application, endorsed by the Regional Council, requested \$6,346,840 in SUNY 2020 funding support to establish the SUNY Clean Energy Partnership Program, a wind energy research and training program housed at SUNY Canton, SUNY Potsdam, and Clinton Community College.

The program builds on development of the strategic cluster of alternative energy production and marries the strengths of existing program specialization at regional SUNYs to support this sector. The establishment of the SUNY Clean Energy Partnership Program would advance the development of alternative energy in the North Country while providing the region's workforce with the skills and knowledge for this key sector of our emerging economy.

Cleaner Greener Community Sustainability Plan

The Cleaner Greener Communities program has been a central component of the NCREDC strategic plan since Round I. This award-winning plan, aptly titled "Our Economy," has been integrated as the framework for driving towards the NCREDC's Vision of "Creating the Greenest Energy Economy in the State." The Sustainability Plan goals have been built into Priority Project and CFA scoring criteria. The strong focus on Cleaner Greener Communities (CGC) has fostered greater commitment to energy efficiency in new building construction and renovations as well as use of renewable energy in housing, new construction and community development projects. In 2013-14, there were 279 photo voltaic and solar thermal installations across the region.

Two applicants in the North Country applied for and received \$3,333,841 in CGC funds for a total of 13 projects, ranging from small scale hydro upgrades to solar thermal greenhouses to residential scale biomass systems.

In 2014, a new approach to addressing sustainability challenges is being proposed for the North Country – specifically designed to address the three largest barriers that municipalities face in implementing sustainability measures: insufficient staff, expertise, and financing.

This Community Sustainability project will offer the following:

- Community outreach through trained Energy Circuit Riders who will work with communities to provide technical assistance in determining the best options for reducing their energy costs.
- A technology neutral portfolio of energy and renewable energy options for municipal buildings including NYSEDA programs, NYPA programs, local utility programs, and private PPA options.
- The formation of a North Country Public Purpose Energy Services Company (NC-PPESCO) that would offer one-stop shop services that include Access to long-term low-cost financing for improvements.



II. IMPLEMENTATION

Innovation Hotspots

The North Country has a history with and takes pride in self-sufficiency, which is just another term for innovation. Rural areas cannot afford redundancy, with limited resources and services. In order to best leverage existing infrastructure, pockets of greatness must be identified, scaled, and made available across the region to serve as the backbone onto which additional infrastructure will form.

The Hotspot model is a hub and spoke approach with Clarkson University at the hub and formal locations in Plattsburgh, Watertown, and Saranac Lake, Massena, and Ogdensburg. These locations will drive awareness and conduct idea capture. Once captured, feasibility analysis will be conducted at Clarkson to provide a Go/No Go decision. If accepted, the entrepreneur will be provided a “commercialization mentor” to guide them through the commercialization process, bringing resources and services to them, as needed. The entire model relies on a double-funnel where ideas are captured, vetted, and returned to their community of origin, driving economic development while planting seeds of entrepreneurship across the region.

By pursuing the proposed model, the NCREDC will be able to build a vibrant innovation community that is self-sufficient and uses internal resources to identify, vet, and create internal startups. The critical mass of startups will drive economic development in two ways:

- Through direct employment in startups.
- Through indirect employment in supporting infrastructure (manufacturing, retail, construction, support services).

The 21st century knowledge economy places ideas as the most precious resources. The self-sufficient nature of the North Country drives practical ideation through everyday need which will deliver applicable concepts and innovations that are marketable. Capturing these ideas will drive confidence in regional entrepreneurs and hope to regional residents which will drive momentum for the model.

Progress in 2013-14

- Identified offices for all five satellite locations (Massena, Ogdensburg, Watertown, Plattsburgh, and Saranac Lake).
- Signed MOU with The Innovation Centre at Community Futures of Cornwall for cross-border incubation program.
- Developed management process for \$135,000 in ignition grants to be given to startup companies and identified the first two businesses to receive grants: Agbotics and LC Drives.
- Developed website with idea submission and transparent vetting criteria.
- Worked with regional economic developers to identify and catalogue a list of regional resources available to startups including accountants, prototype developers, lawyers, experienced management professionals, etc.
- Developed marketing materials (both digital and print) for awareness campaign prior to launch of the program.
- Contracted Golden Technologies to hire full-time Hotspot Program Staffer.

Round IV Opportunities

- Officially launch Hotspots program in fall of 2014.
- Identify, vet, and launch 50 startups/projects under the program in first 12 months.
- Create international connections in Ontario and Quebec as part of the Region's Global North Country Strategy.



II. IMPLEMENTATION

Start-Up NY

The North Country's universities and economic development partners are fully engaged in the Start-Up NY program. With the acceptance of their campus plans, and the designation of associated properties, these universities have begun accepting applications for inclusion in program. Participating businesses will gain access to world class institutions of higher education, their facilities and intellectual capital, while the universities will gain real-world business experience for their students and faculty. Further, the integration of the Innovation Hotspot program will enable the NCREDC to develop – and keep – entrepreneurs and their transformational business ideas in the North Country.

Progress in 2013-14

- Six universities in area have had their Start-Up NY plans approved by SUNY and Empire State Development (ESD).
- 14 distinct properties have been designated as eligible sites for location of Start-Up NY businesses. These properties encompass more than 75,000 square feet of existing commercial/industrial building space and more than 100 acres of buildable land.
- Universities are reaching out to their alumni to recruit business owners and entrepreneurs, and are partnering with economic development entities at the municipal, county, and state levels to advance their programs. In all cases, development of university plans involved local/ community input.

Round IV Opportunities

- Universities continue and complete negotiations with prospective Start-Up NY businesses. Work with businesses and economic development agencies to locate those businesses on the host properties.
- Continue to outreach the Start-Up NY opportunity to prospective businesses, with a focus on international businesses.
- Expand the number of properties available for Start-Up NY.
- Continue to integrate the Innovation Hotspot program as a pathway for future Start-Up NY placement.



Collaboration with other Regional Councils

What do you do if you are a region with a sparse population over an immense geography, with large ambitions and a determination to do good things for your communities and your people? You look beyond yourselves and your own backyard to neighbors who you can join with in shared purpose. That's the essence of interregional collaboration and for the North Country - it is more than an occasional or ad hoc phenomenon. It is at the core of how we have long achieved many of our aims, and now even more so with the impetus of the regional approach to economic development which is making it even easier to see and establish connections given the will to do so.

And while interregional collaboration may, for most areas of the state, mean connections and alliances of various kinds with other nearby regions within New York, or perhaps in some instances a neighboring state, for us it is also a part of our very special and growing connectivity with Quebec and Ontario.

Our geography and transportation connections tend to largely define our most established interregional alignments. The Adirondack Park crosses into the Mohawk Valley and Capital District regions. There are strong north-south dynamics on the eastern side of the North Country from Quebec to New York City, and on the western side from Ottawa and Ontario south through Central New York. A number of well-established organizations and alliances cover all or parts of the North Country as well as parts of neighboring regions to the south, with examples including the Adirondack North Country Association, the Tech Valley Coalition, the Tug Hill Commission, the Adirondack Association of Towns & Villages, and the Quebec-New York Corridor Coalition, among others.

Adirondacks

From the start of the REDC process, the North Country has taken the lead in hosting a cross regional Adirondack Park Working Group, reflecting the fact that areas of the Adirondack Park also lie in the Capital District and Mohawk Valley regions. This tri-regional work group guides and advises the NCREDC on all Adirondack projects and strategies, along with an active collaboration with the Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages and the Adirondack North Country Association. It has proven to be a major boost to cross regional support for economic development and community sustainability in the Adirondacks, with current examples including:

- **Adirondack Park Economic Development Strategy:**
Our region's Adirondack Park Work Group took the lead, with state funding assistance, in carrying out an extensive analysis of the Adirondack Park economy, including outreach and forums in areas of the Adirondack Park in all three regions (North Country, Mohawk Valley, Capital), leading to the creation of the "Adirondack Park Economic Development Strategy."
- **Adirondack Park Web Portal:**
A joint Priority Project of the North Country and Capital regions through two-phases now, with leadership from the Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages, the Center for Economic Growth (Capital Region) and CAP-21(Mohawk Valley). The resulting tools are creating broader awareness and utilization of all of the extensive recreational and natural assets of the Adirondacks.
- **Broadband:**
Implementation is underway of a broadband development project sponsored by the Newport Telephone Company, bringing added broadband access to portions of both Hamilton County (North Country) and Herkimer County (Mohawk Valley). In addition, this year saw the award of state funding for a broadband project serving both the Town of Newcomb in Essex County and the Town of Chester in Warren County.
- **Adirondack Challenges:**
The NCREDC and the leaders of its Tourism and Adirondack Park Work Groups have been proud to help organize and host three separate Adirondack Challenge events with Governor Cuomo — summer events in 2013 and 2014 in Indian Lake and a winter challenge this year in Lake Placid. These unique and friendly competitions have drawn participation from across the state, greatly promoting tourism in the multi-region Adirondacks while also helping to build statewide camaraderie and partnership.
- **Pending Projects:**
In the current CFA funding round, there are two Adirondack related projects pending which would serve the Adirondacks in all three regions (North Country, Mohawk Valley, Capital): A "Hut-to-Hut" tourism development project aimed at linking lodging to recreational resources park wide in an approach popular in Europe and elsewhere; and a proposed pilot project in the Park, aimed at creating/sustaining a Park wide fuel delivery system, while privatizing municipal fueling and saving taxpayer money. This initiative would also foster greater year round access to gas for residents and visitors and make gas installations in the Park welcoming and promotional for the whole Adirondack region.

II. IMPLEMENTATION

NUAIR Alliance

The North Country REDC and key North Country partner organizations were among the founders of the Northeast UAS Airspace Integration Research Alliance (NUAIR) a remarkable strategic coalition of interests in the Mohawk Valley, North Country and Central NY regions as well as a part of Massachusetts. Through collaboration and joint advocacy, NUAIR achieved designation this year by the FAA as one of six broad regions in the country to serve as “Unmanned Aircraft Test Sites.” NUAIR links various aviation and defense assets in the three regions including the former Griffiss AFB (Mohawk Valley) Fort Drum, and Plattsburgh (North Country). It remains an active cross regional initiative with positive implications for all three participating economic regions, and demonstrates the power of such multi-regional partnership in such challenging national competitions.

Global NY and the Canadian Connection

The North Country continues to work in meaningful ways to broaden and deepen links with Quebec and eastern Ontario not only for itself but, whenever possible, for all regions of the state. In the past year, we have facilitated and arranged meetings between the Quebec Government and Quebec Chamber Federation and business and economic development organizations in Albany, Syracuse, Rochester and Buffalo, and have provided advice and technical assistance to economic development organizations such as the Niagara County IDA, among others. Our REDC Co-Chairs also joined with the Lt. Governor in a series of strategic meetings in Montreal in December, opening conversations about potential collaborations in advanced materials (including forest product materials), nanotechnology, clean energy and transportation equipment. Follow-ups have included a “Quebec Day in Albany” this year, co-hosted by the Center for Economic Growth, and a visit to Montreal by Heather Briccetti, President of the Business Council of New York State.

In 2014-15, the North Country and Capital regions will build on the strong collaboration already in place with regard to international business and FDI, including:

- Cooperation between the EB-5 Regional Centers in the North Country and Capital Region, seeking to enhance opportunities for the use of this special program to attract FDI and generate jobs.
- Joint development of an event to help foster connections between the nanotechnology and semiconductor sectors in New York and Quebec, to be co-led by the Center for Economic Growth and North Country Chamber of Commerce.
- Exploration of the potential for a joint North Country/Capital Region business mission to Ontario to help identify and build connections with the technology oriented sectors there and here.

Aerospace

In July 2014, the North Country Chamber of Commerce once again coordinated and led the New York State pavilion and delegation at the Farnborough International Air Show, on behalf of Empire State Development. The chamber fulfills this statewide aerospace marketing function at both the Farnborough and Paris Air Shows which alternate each year. While marketing the North Country and Plattsburgh International Airport, the chamber also recruits and assists interested aerospace companies from Long Island to Western New York while also generally generating contacts and leads for the state and other interests in New York.

Cyber NY Alliance

A consortium of businesses, academia, public agencies and others collaborating on Command, Control, Communications, Cyber and Intelligence (C4I) challenges and partnering in innovative R&D fostered by the AFRL Information Directorate in Rome, NY.

Trusted Cyber Nano Consortium

A group of New York universities and businesses interested in ultimately developing a Cyber-Nano Manufacturing Institute (CNMI) to increase U.S. competitive manufacturing capabilities, enhance workforce skills, generate jobs in the areas of nanochip fabrication technology and 3D chip stacking, and assure cyber methods to meet trusted application needs of DOD.

New York State Pollution Prevention Institute

Housed at the Rochester Institute of Technology, this partnership provides statewide, comprehensive and integrated programming in technology research, development and diffusion, as well as training and education aimed at making NYS more sustainable for workers, the public, the environment and the economy. In addition to RIT and Clarkson University, partners include RPI, SUNY Buffalo and New York’s ten RTDCs.

Beacon Institute

Since the Beacon Institute in the Hudson Valley merged into Clarkson in 2011, its mission has broadened, transforming an environmental research organization focused on real-time water quality monitoring with IBM and NYSDEC into a broader institution now including academic educational offerings at the Beacon facility. The institute has strongly evolved, under Clarkson’s wings, into a global center for scientific and technological innovation.

II. IMPLEMENTATION

SUNY IT

Clarkson is a partner with SUNY IT (Utica) in their successful SUNY 2020 proposal. This partnership is coupled to the Center for Global Advanced Manufacturing.

NYS Smart Grid Consortium

A public service partnership founded to promote statewide implementation of a safe, secure and reliable smart electric power grid, including an advanced energy conference this year in NYC. Clarkson is an active university partner along with others including NYU-Poly, Stony Brook, Syracuse University and CUNY.

Blade Test Facility

Established at Clarkson University, as part of the Center for Evaluation of Clean Energy Technologies (CECET), an Intertek Company, with funding from NYSERDA to support and grow New York based wind market activities through performance testing, research and certification of wind turbine systems. Partner institutions across the state include Alfred University, RPI and SUNY Binghamton as well as corporate partners across New York.



Healthcare

Access to sustainable health care is a growing challenge everywhere in the face of historic changes, but especially so in the North Country as a function of its geography, long distances, location against an international border, and the unique factors related to the Adirondack Park. The NCREDC was therefore pleased when the State Health Department created the “North Country Healthcare Redesign Commission” in late 2013, the first such state sanctioned commission charged with the creation of a comprehensive plan for assisting a region’s health care system in successfully transitioning and achieving new forms of sustainability, largely through various pathways toward partnership and sharing.

Great Lakes Fish Monitoring & Surveillance Program

Teams from Clarkson University, SUNY Oswego (Central NY) and SUNY Fredonia (Western NY) have partnered to operate the Great Lakes Fish Monitoring & Surveillance Program, collecting air and water samples for traces of contamination of the lakes’ food chain.

Transportation

The NCREDC continues to actively collaborate with neighboring regions on matters related to shared transportation infrastructure. This is particularly true with regard to rail where we have joined with Central NY in support of continuing upgrades to the CSX rail line from Montreal and Massena to Syracuse; are united with the Mohawk Valley REDC in support of the future of the Adirondack Railway; and with Capital Region interests in continued support of public and private investments aimed at higher speeds and enhanced reliability on the Canadian Pacific corridor from Montreal and Rouses Point to Albany and New York City. Additionally, the NCREDC joined with the Capital Region in successful support of the reopening of the North Creek-Tahawus rail connection, allowing freight access to a former mine. We continue to work with Amtrak, NYSDOT and others toward a U.S.-Canadian agreement that will allow the pre-clearance of New York bound Amtrak passengers in Montreal, eliminating or significantly reducing stoppages at the border.

Clean Energy Conference

The NCREDC and the Adirondack North Country Association have organized and conducted two successful annual North Country Clean Energy Conferences in Lake Placid, designed to advance our aims in the realm of clean and renewable energy production. While this gathering has included participation in the past from areas of the Adirondacks in neighboring regions, we are pleased that the Mohawk Valley REDC has agreed to officially co-sponsor the 2015 Conference, making it officially an interregional event in support of the clean energy agendas of two regions.

Digital Conversion

The NCREDC last year led the state in recognizing the looming crisis confronting small cinemas being required by the film industry to convert to digital at high cost. These cinemas are an important part of the fabric of many small and rural communities. Through the Adirondack North Country Association, state funds were secured for loans to these small businesses for this purpose, and an innovative fund raising campaign was devised (“Go Digital or Go Dark”) in collaboration with a number of the cinemas, tapping the demonstrated willingness of their communities to contribute toward the preservation of these special operations. Virtually all of the participating cinemas have now been assisted and, in the context of inter-regionalism, this North Country sponsored initiative included several theaters in neighboring regions such as Herkimer and Warren counties.



III

PROPOSED 2014 PRIORITY PROJECTS



S-60

United Rentals

Genie

www.unitedrentals.com

United Rentals
1069247

1-800-UR-RENTS

JLG LIFT

10MNR

JLG LIFT

United Rentals
S-60X

NCREDC is submitting its priority projects for all CFA Funding and tax credits totaling \$31,751,000.

The following 24 projects have been evaluated and ranked using the following criteria:

- Advancement of regional priorities identified in the NCREDC Plan
- Support for Global Marketing and Export
- Support for NY Rising
- Advancement of Workforce Development
- Support for Opportunity Agenda
- Advancement of interregional collaboration
- Projects endorsed for Excelsior Tax Credits
- Regional Priority as an Innovation Hotspot



III. PROPOSED 2014 PRIORITY PROJECTS

PROJECT:

Carthage–West Carthage Joint Wastewater Treatment Facility Improvement Project

Applicant:
Village of Carthage/West Carthage

Project/Program Location:
Carthage, West Carthage, NY

Project/Program Cost:
\$8,800,000

Description

The Villages of Carthage and West Carthage completed an analysis of needs for their wastewater facility. The rehabilitation work is critical to long term continued operations. This project serves residents of these communities and also importantly serves five industrial users. One business, Carthage Specialty Paper employs 80 staff and provides 50% of the revenue for the wastewater facility. The rehabilitation project must be completed and pushing this cost onto its major user, Carthage Specialty Paper, would be very detrimental to this business.

Regional Benefit

This project is critical to continued operations at Carthage Specialty Paper and retaining its 80 employees. This is a significant employer in the area. The company is considering an expansion as long as it is able to maintain its current cost structure. The expansion could create 15 new jobs.

Vision Addressed

- Invest in community development infrastructure that expands opportunity and capacity.
- Energize our communities by building on growth in the aerospace, transit equipment, defense, biotech, energy and manufacturing industries.

Strategy Addressed

- Create a Business retention and expansion plan for existing large manufacturers.

Initiative Addressed

- Cleaner Greener
- Workforce Development

Funding

- \$8,800,000 Public Investment (\$3,800,000 from direct grants and \$5,000,000 from Environmental Facilities Corp funding)

Outcome

- Retention of 80 employees at a private manufacturing company.

PROJECT: Workforce Connections

Applicant:
Community Action Planning Council
of Jefferson County, Inc.

Project/Program Location:
Jefferson County

Project/Program Cost:
\$292,000

Description

The project will connect low income individuals with employment opportunities. Candidates will be identified through the WIB One-Stop Employment Center, and referred to CAPC for enrollment in the program. Candidates will receive a skills gap analysis, career counseling, on-the-job (OJT) training placement with local employers, and case management assistance as they work to gain financial independence.

Regional Benefit

The counties that comprise the North Country region have some of the highest unemployment, and other poverty indicators, in NYS. Helping people and communities break the bonds of poverty is one of the keys to lasting economic development. The North Country cannot grow our economy exclusive of our low-income population.

Vision Addressed

- Invest in community development infrastructure that expands opportunities and capacity.

Strategy Addressed

- Create community partnerships to promote cradle through career learning

Initiative Addressed

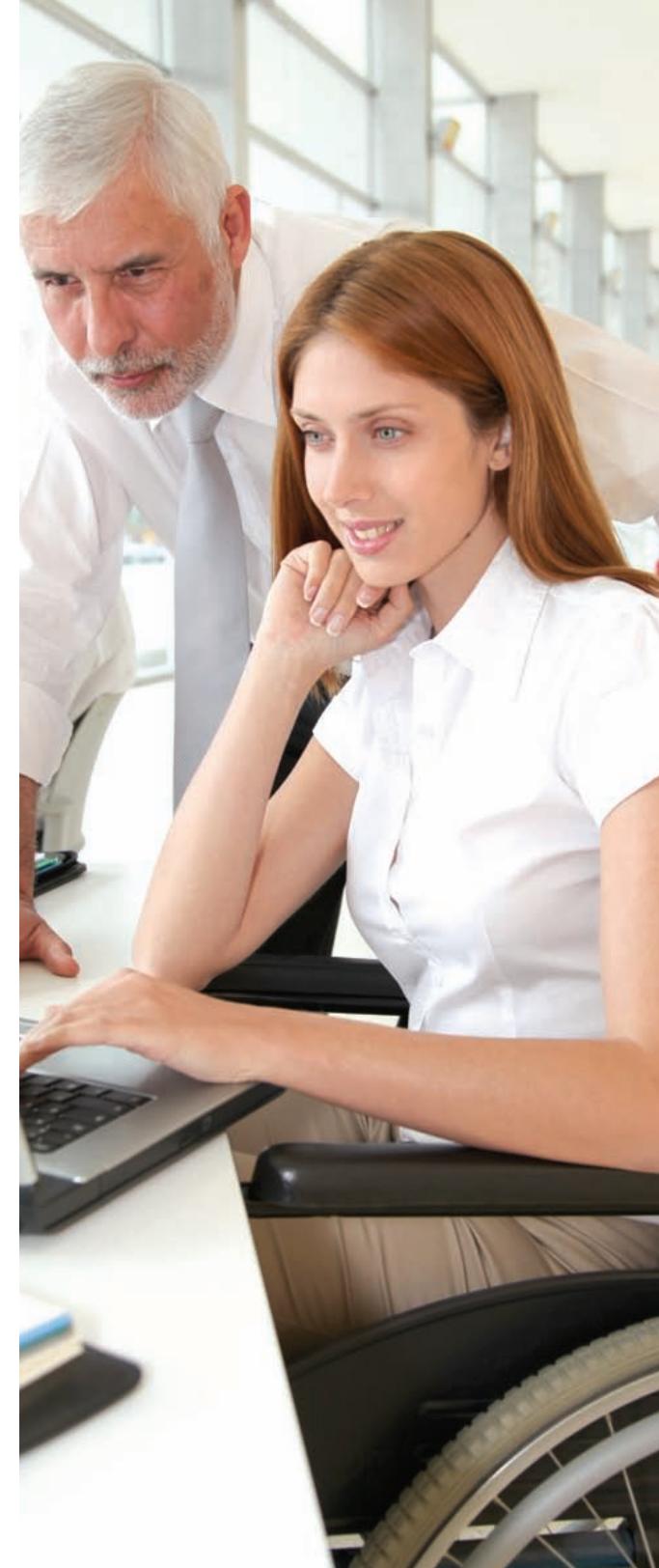
- Veterans
- Workforce Development
- Opportunity Agenda

Funding

- \$100,000 Public Investment
- \$192,000 Private Investment

Outcome

- Create 32 new jobs at the completion of the OJT period.





III. PROPOSED 2014 PRIORITY PROJECTS

PROJECT: SpencerARL

Applicant:
Clinton County/Spencer ARL

Project/Program Location:
Plattsburgh, Clinton County

Project/Program Cost:
\$1,355,000

Description

Clinton County is sponsoring this CDBG application to provide training for 42 new employees to be hired by SpencerARL. This company provides service and contract work for major transportation equipment manufacturers. Due to new contracts, SpencerARL will be installing new software and increasing employment. The project is to purchase the software and train the new staff in its use.

Regional Benefit

The Plattsburgh area's strong presence in transportation manufacturers can continue to benefit and grow with the strength of SpencerARL. This project specifically will assist in employment in the low-to-moderate income demographic and focuses on workforce training which is recognized as a key strategy by the NCREDC.

Vision Addressed

- Energize our communities by building on growth in the aerospace, transit equipment, defense, biotech, energy and manufacturing industries.
- Leverage our gateway to Canada, the nation's largest trading partner, to lead the state in global investment.

Strategy Addressed

- 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.

Initiative Addressed

- Global NY
- Opportunity Agenda

Funding

- \$435,000 Public Investment
- \$920,000 Private Investment

Outcome

- Create 42 new jobs and training in new skills for these employees.

PROJECT: AgriMark Expansion

Applicant:
Agri-Mark

Project/Program Location:
Chateaugay, Franklin County

Project/Program Cost:
\$29,800,000/\$10,000,000

Description

Project will demolish and replace the current facility and equipment, which is old and in poor condition. The new plant will increase efficiency and increase capacity for cheese production

Regional Benefit

The project will save 106 jobs at the facility and those of 650 people who work for the Cooperative's farmer members, trucking companies, farm equipment suppliers and farm stores. The new buildings will be LEED certified, reducing the plant's impact on the environment. AgriMark was named Exporter of the Year by the US Dairy Export Council. This project will increase the company's ability to export whey to markets in Asia and South America.

Vision Addressed

- Leverage our gateway to Canada, the nation's largest trading partner, to the state in global investment.
- Invest in agriculture as we help feed the region and the world.

Strategy Addressed

- 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.

Initiative Addressed

- Global NY
- Opportunity Agenda
- Cleaner Greener

Funding

- \$10,000,000 Public Investment
- \$19,800,000 Private investment

Outcome

- Retain 106 direct and 650 indirect jobs, increase exporting and provide opportunities for LMI individuals and Veterans. The carbon foot print of the plant will be reduced. A local market for dairy farmers reduces emissions by reducing the number of miles the milk must travel to be processed.





III. PROPOSED 2014 PRIORITY PROJECTS

PROJECT: Adirondack Teleworks Gateway

Applicant:
Indian Lake Chamber of Commerce

Project/Program Location:
Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton
and St. Lawrence Counties

Project/Program Cost:
\$100,000

Description

Adirondack Teleworks will expand a workforce training program to five counties in the North Country. This training program will partner with regional Workforce Investment Boards and provide an alternative workforce training model that overcomes the North Country's geographic and transportation barriers to meaningful employment by way of the Internet. The program will provide 30 unemployed or under-skilled participants with essential typing, computer software, time management and internet training skills. Upon completion, each participant will interview with prospective telework companies who participate in the program's business network.

Regional Benefit

This project takes advantage of the region's emerging broadband infrastructure and implements the region's Opportunity Agenda by providing essential jobs skills to unemployed and underemployed residents who face employment challenges due to limited education or training, transportation, or physical mobility issues.

Vision Addressed

- Innovate effective rural healthcare and education delivery networks.

Strategy Addressed

- 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.

Initiative Addressed

- Opportunity Agenda
- Workforce Development

Funding

- \$100,000 Public Investment

Outcome

- Provide job training to 30 unemployed or under-skilled residents

PROJECT: Twinstate Technologies Expansion

Applicant:
Twinstate/Voice.Data.Video.Inc

Project/Program Location:
Town of Plattsburgh, Clinton County

Project/Program Cost:
\$750,000

Description

Attacks on computer systems have become more and more common over the past several years. Personal data has been compromised in companies of all size. As a result, the field of Cyber-Security is growing rapidly. This project will equip a new Security Operations Center, accelerating Twinstate's entry into this booming market sector.

Regional Benefit

The creation of a Security Operations Center will increase the capacity for export of IT Infrastructure Management and Cyber Security services to other states, Canada and the world. On-the-Job Training will provide access to high-tech jobs for Low to Moderate Income individuals and returning Veterans. Partnerships with Plattsburgh SUNY and Clinton Community College provide advancement opportunities in high-demand occupations and support NYS educational institutions.

Vision Addressed

- Energize our communities by building on growth in the aerospace, transit equipment, defense, biotech, energy and manufacturing industries.

Strategy Addressed

- Foster development of small businesses and entrepreneurial activities.
- 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 including flexible OJT, certificate programs and recruitment assistance.

Initiative Addressed

- Global NY
- Opportunity Agend
- Veterans

Funding

- \$150,000 Public Investment
- \$600,000 Private investment

Outcome

- Create 8 High-Tech jobs, Increase exporting, provide opportunities for LMI individuals and veterans.





III. PROPOSED 2014 PRIORITY PROJECTS

PROJECT:
Production Expansion Project

Applicant: North American Tapes	Project/Program Location: Watertown, Jefferson County	Project/Program Cost: \$294,500
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Description

The project will add a second extruder mill to North American Tapes' Watertown facility, along with associated heating and cooling systems. The extruder mill produces adhesive that is applied to tape fabric, and this second mill will double NAT's tape production capacity.

Regional Benefit

North American Tapes' sales have been growing at approximately 15% per year. This project will give the company the potential to reach \$20 million in sales. It also positions the company to capture additional market share as one of their competitors prepares to leave the hockey and athletic tape market. NAT currently exports 60% of their production - 40% to Canada and 20% to Europe. The project is located in a census tract with a reported 27% unemployment rate.

Vision Addressed

- Energize our communities by building on growth in the aerospace, transit equipment, defense, biotech, energy, and manufacturing industries.

NYS Initiative Addressed

- Economic Development Priority
- Global NY
- Workforce
- Opportunity Agendat

Funding

- \$328,423 Public Investment
(\$58,900 grant and \$269,523 in Excelsior Tax Credits)
- \$235,600 Private Investment (cash equity)

Outcome

- Create 15 new jobs in three years.

PROJECT: AIME High II

Applicant: Champlain Valley Educational Services - BOCES	Project/Program Location: Clinton, Essex, Warren, Washington counties	Project/Program Cost: \$1,000,000
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Description

This project will provide job training programs for low to moderate income individuals. A training program for the Assembly industry and a Welding AWSD certification program will be created. Multiple businesses have committed to interview program graduates. The applicant has worked cooperatively with Clinton Community College and the Clinton and Essex County One Stop Workforce Centers to develop these programs.

Regional Benefit

This program is oriented specifically to unemployed individuals thus providing a benefit to the local communities. Manufacturing companies struggle to attract good, trained staff and these programs will benefit our employers with this on-going challenge.

Vision Addressed

- Invest in community development infrastructure that expands opportunity and capacity.
- Energize our communities by building on growth in the aerospace, transit equipment, defense, biotech, energy and manufacturing industries.

Strategy Addressed

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

Initiative Addressed

- Opportunity Agenda
- Workforce Development

Funding

- \$100,000 Public Investment
- \$900,000 Private Investment

Outcome

- Implement important new training programs in manufacturing disciplines.





III. PROPOSED 2014 PRIORITY PROJECTS

PROJECT:
Regional Arts and Interactive Learning
(RAIL) Revitalization Project

Applicant: Omni Development Corporation and Sequence Development LLC	Project/Program Location: Potsdam, St. Lawrence County	Project/Program Cost: \$25,000,000/\$3,000,000
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Description

Redevelopment of two landmark buildings in Potsdam’s historic town square. The mixed use elements of the project include graduate student housing, market rate living, business center areas and an innovative collaboration between the St. Lawrence County Arts Council and North Country Children’s Museum.

Regional Benefit

Learning opportunities will include business technical training, artists Business Incubators, a Changing Exhibition Gallery featuring local/regional artists, professionally equipped art studios with arts instruction, multi-use spaces for performing arts classes, Creative Café with local farm-to-table options, Welcome Center, green space for outdoor learning, community festivals and regional events.

Vision Addressed

- Attract and nurture entrepreneurs through innovation to catalyze the highest per capita rate of small business start-ups and expansions in the state.
- Invest in community development infrastructure that expands opportunities and capacity.

Strategy Addressed

- The North Country’s institutions of higher education and research/development will review and implement incentives for collaborative projects, research and entrepreneurial activity among and between colleges and universities.
- Foster development of small business and entrepreneurial activities.

NYS Initiative Addressed

- Economic Development Priority
- Workforce

Funding

- \$3,000,000 Public Investment
- \$25,000,000 Private investment

Outcome

- A revitalized downtown square creating a thriving business district.

PROJECT:
**TriTown Packing Slaughter Facility
Upgrade and Expansion**

Applicant: Tri-Town Packing, Inc.	Project/Program Location: Town of Brasher, St. Lawrence County	Project/Program Cost: \$852,000
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Description

Tri-Town Packing is a regional agri-business company that has operated in Brasher for nearly 40 years and supports more than 100 small businesses in the North Country. The company is a USDA certified facility that provides valued livestock slaughtering and meat processing services to many direct market farm operations, restaurants and customers throughout Northern New York, Vermont, Ontario and Quebec. Tri-Town is seeking \$426,000 to expand its smokehouse and modernize its processing equipment in order to improve operation efficiencies and expand its line of ready-to-eat products.

Regional Benefit

This investment will sustain and expand one of three USDA certified meat processing facilities located in the North Country. The award will support Tri-Town's widely popular service of processing, producing and selling a variety of smoked meats and specialty cheeses.

Vision Addressed

- Invest in agriculture as we help feed the region and the world.
- Catalyze the highest per capita rate of small business start-ups and expansions in the state.

Strategy Addressed

- 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

- \$426,000 Public Investment
- \$85,200 Private Investment (Owner Equity)
- \$340,800 Private Investment (Bank Financing)

Outcome

- Retains 14 jobs and sustains the region's critical agribusiness industry.





III. PROPOSED 2014 PRIORITY PROJECTS

PROJECT: Empire State Winter Games Go Global

Applicant:
Lake Placid Essex County Quality Destination, Inc.
(501c subsidiary of Lake Placid Chamber of Commerce)

Project/Program Location:
Essex, Franklin and Hamilton counties

Project/Program Cost:
\$550,000

Description

A partnership consisting of three counties, five towns, two villages, the Olympic Regional Development Authority, and the Lake Placid Chamber of Commerce is seeking funds to expand the Empire State Winter Games (ESWG) from four to seven days and broaden the scope of the competition to attract international athletes. In 2014, more than 1,200 athletes competed in the most successful ESWG in the competition's 34 year history. The proposed expansion is anticipated to draw 2,000 athletes and 5,000 spectators to the North Country in the first year.

Regional Benefit

Broadening the scope and length of the ESWG would elevate the region's exposure as a desirable venue for international winter competitions.

Vision Addressed

- 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 by creating demand to accelerate private investment.

Strategy Addressed

- Solicit recreational and competitive sporting events/competitions on the national and international level to leverage regional identity, sports tourism, and economic activities.

Initiative Addressed

- Global NY

Funding

- \$275,000 Public Investment
- \$40,000 Local Municipal Support
- \$80,000 Private Investment
- \$155,000 Athlete Registration

Outcome

- Increase the number of athletes (2,000) and spectators (5,000) who will extend their stays from four to seven days to train, compete, and visit the North Country.

PROJECT: Replacement Health Center for Champlain

Applicant:
Hudson Headwaters Health Network

Project/Program Location:
Champlain, Clinton County

Project/Program Cost:
\$4.5 million

Description

Hudson Headwaters is the sole local provider of Primary Care services in the Northern Tier of New York. This project will replace the existing 4,500 sq ft North Country Family Health facility with a new, more accessible 17,575 sq. ft. health center in Champlain, NY. Internships and clinical rotations will introduce medical students to this designated Healthcare Professional Shortage Area. The current facility does not have adequate space for these types of programs.

Regional Benefit

This opportunity agenda project will improve access to healthcare services to residents in a six community, 500 square mile area in the rural Northern Tier area. Services are provided regardless of income or insurance. The project will enable the provision of new more specialized services including behavioral health services.

Vision Addressed

- Innovate effective rural healthcare and education delivery networks.

Strategy Addressed

- Support continued access to vital health care services in small communities and rural areas of the North Country, including the Adirondacks.
- Support and promote the attraction and generation of new and expanded health care services in the North Country which can result in new economic activity and job creation, particularly opportunities connected with the existing array of institutions and services and the region's historic role in healthy lifestyles and recuperation. This should include specialized services aimed at niche populations, including but not limited to our armed services and veterans.

Initiative Addressed

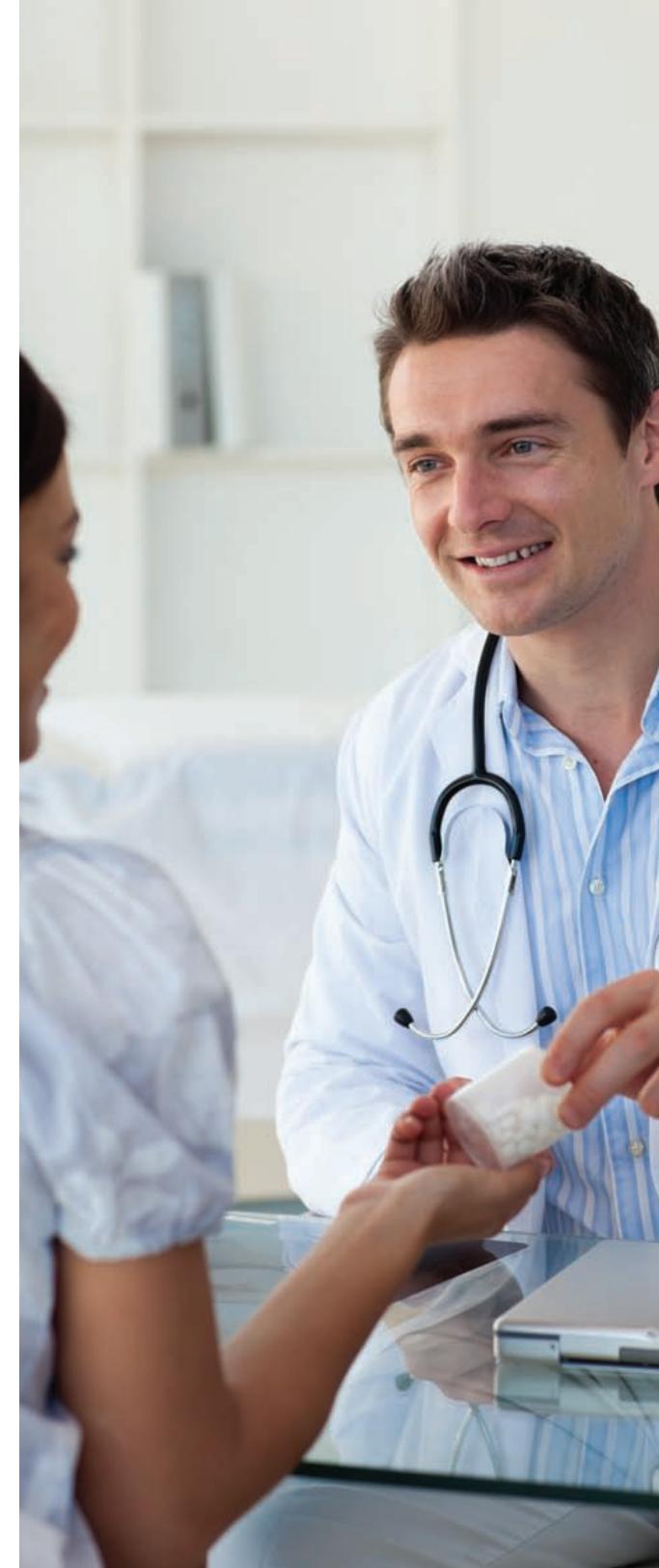
- Opportunity Agenda

Funding

- \$750,000 Public Investment
- \$750,000 Private Investment (Equity)
- \$3,000,000 Private Investment (Loan)

Outcome

- 15 new jobs in distressed community





PROJECT: Robotic Farming for Local Food Production

Applicant:
Agbotic, Inc.

Project/Program Location:
Potsdam, St. Lawrence County

Project/Program Cost:
\$750,000

Description

The intent of this project is to build a small-scale model of an organic vegetable production system. The greenhouse facility will be used to test a robotic automation system used to care for, maintain, and harvest organically grown vegetables. The project will involve rehabilitation of an existing structure and development of the robotic equipment.

Regional Benefit

The successful demonstration of Agbotic's innovative farming model can be replicated across the North Country. The company intends to locate on underutilized farms in small communities. The model will translate to year round, extended season and seasonal engineered environments to meet each different location. Agbotics will grow quality organic foods in an efficient manner and employ technically trained individuals in local markets.

Vision Addressed

- Attract and nurture entrepreneurs through innovation to catalyze the highest per capital rate of small business start-ups and expansions in the state.
- Invest in agriculture as we help feed the nation and the world.

Strategy Addressed

- 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.
- Increase the quantity and quality of agricultural products grown, produced and processed in the region.

Initiative Addressed

- Global NY

Funding

- \$250,000 Public Investment
- \$500,000 Private Investment

Outcome

- Initial creation of 10 new jobs.

PROJECT: Closing the Skills Gap

Applicant:
CITEC, Inc.

Project/Program Location:
BOCES Campuses/North Country Region

Project/Program Cost:
\$112,820

Description

CITEC serves as ESD's designated Regional Technology Development Center for the North Country and it proposes to work with the regional BOCES education network to expand its Certified Production Technician (CPT) training program (which it piloted with 11 students this year with a grant from ALCOA) across the seven county region, utilizing an existing network of facilities and resources to broaden the reach and training benefits of the program.

Regional Benefit

Workforce development is the number one concern of North Country manufacturers and this program dovetails high school curriculum with Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC) credentialing. It also invests in a workforce development program; one of the states's targeted initiatives from the past two rounds of funding.

Vision Addressed

- Energize our communities by building on the growth in the aerospace, transit equipment, defense, biotech, energy and manufacturing industries.
- Innovate effective rural healthcare and education delivery networks.

Strategy Addressed

- The Regional Council recognizes the importance of progressive workforce development initiatives in order to stimulate economic growth. This action supports the workforce development strategy, addresses issues at the core of the opportunity agenda and builds on the potential of the innovation hot spot designation last year.

Initiative Addressed

- Workforce Development

Funding

- \$ 426,000 Public Investment
- \$ 85,200 Other Grant Funding

Outcome

- Graduate 43 CPT trained individuals available for employment throughout the North Country Region.





III. PROPOSED 2014 PRIORITY PROJECTS

PROJECT:
ACAP Workforce Development

Applicant: Adirondack Community Action Programs, Inc	Project/Program Location: Essex County	Project/Program Cost: \$130,530
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Description

This project will provide job training programs for low-to-moderate income individuals. The applicant will focus on training for industries with in demand employment including retail and healthcare and there also will be specific training for new childcare providers. The initial program will train up to 40 low and moderate income individuals.

Regional Benefit

Essex County is a sparsely populated area with high poverty and unemployment rates. Direct workforce training programs will provide important skills for individuals that could potentially be employed given the proper abilities.

Vision Addressed

- Invest in community development infrastructure that expands opportunity and capacity.
- Innovate effective rural health and education delivery networks.
- Energize our communities by building on growth in the aerospace, transit equipment, defense, biotech, energy and manufacturing industries.

Strategy Addressed

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

Initiative Addressed

- Opportunity Agenda
- Workforce Development

Funding

- \$130,530 Public Investment

Outcome

- Implement important new training programs for 40 LMI individuals.

PROJECT: Grand Slam Safety Equipment Acquisition

Applicant:
MDBB Enterprises, LLC

Project/Program Location:
Croghan, Lewis County

Project/Program Cost:
\$395,000

Description

This project will allow MDBB Enterprises, LLC to complete important improvements to the facility it has purchased and is revitalizing. Also, it will purchase equipment to be used by Grand Slam Safety a new business manufacturing unique fences for baseball and softball fields.

Regional Benefit

MDBB Enterprises is revitalizing a vacant building in Croghan. Its subsidiary business, Grand Slam Safety is a start up operation that expects to employ a minimum of two new employees due to this project. Grand Slam Safety has a patented product that has the potential for worldwide sales and significant future growth.

Vision Addressed

- Attract and nurture entrepreneurs through innovation to catalyze the highest per capital rate of small business start-ups and expansions in the state.
- Energize our communities by building on growth in the aerospace, transit equipment, defense, biotech, energy and manufacturing industries.

Strategy Addressed

- Promote Smart Growth principles by encouraging adaptive reuse of existing structures in or near villages and hamlets.
- Foster development of small businesses and entrepreneurial activities that add value to local resources.

Initiative Addressed

- Global NY

Funding

- \$129,000 Public Investment
(\$79,000 ESD + \$50,000 Excelsior Tax Credits)
- \$266,000 Private Investment

Outcome

- 2 new jobs created. Support start up entrepreneurial business.





PROJECT: NCCC Flanagan Hotel Colocation Project

Applicant:
Hotel Flanagan, Inc.

Project/Program Location:
Malone, Franklin County

Project/Program Cost:
\$15,723,028

Description

Hotel Flanagan, Inc. proposes a LEED-certified restoration of the historic Hotel Flanagan in the heart of the Village of Malone. The restoration will include: 55 guest rooms, a ballroom/conference room, a 140 seat auditorium and theatre to allow for both digital and live presentations. In a unique collaboration, Hotel Flanagan proposes to utilize a portion of the building and space in an adjoining office building as classroom to serve both the general offerings of North Country Community College and a special set of fine art offerings in collaboration with SUNY Potsdam.

Regional Benefit

The 93,000 sq. ft. hotel was damaged in a fire in 1997 and a group of investors bought the property in 2004 and have stabilized the structure. It is both historically important and visually prominent within the confines of the Village of Malone. Interestingly, the Village would clearly benefit by restoration to its tourism use but the collaboration proposed extends higher education opportunities as well.

Vision Addressed

- Activate tourism as a driver to diversify our economies by creating demand to accelerate private investment.
- Innovate effective rural healthcare and education delivery networks.
- Create the greenest energy economy in the state.

Strategy Addressed

- The Region's tourism strategy recognizes and focuses attention on the need to attract and foster development in attractions, facilities and infrastructure conducive to 21st century tourism.

Initiative Addressed

- Opportunity Agenda
- Cleaner Greener

Funding

- \$ 2,000,000 Public Investment
- \$ 2,164,742 Other Grant Funding
- \$ 7,000,000 Private Investment (Owner Equity)
- \$ 4,576,346 Private Investment (Bank Financing)

Outcome

- Creation of 36 direct employment opportunities related to the Hotel operation. (There will be other jobs in leased first floor retail operations not directly controlled by the corporation)
- Create new higher education and continuing-education opportunities in the region.
- Generate an estimate \$ 91 M in overall economic activity related to the project over 10 years.

PROJECT: Cleaner Greener Communities One Stop Shop

Applicant:
Adirondack North Country Association

Project/Program Location:
Region- wide

Project/Program Cost:
\$1,419,058

Description

ANCA's One Stop Shop for Community Sustainability represents the continued successful implementation of the North Country's Greener Cleaner Sustainability Plan. This project is intended to accelerate the incorporation of energy efficiency technologies and renewable energy systems throughout the North Country. The project includes the development and delivery of technical assistance services that are intended to help municipalities, organizations and businesses overcome three barriers — access to sufficient human, technical and financial capital — that is needed to promote the widespread deployment of renewable and energy efficient systems in the region. The project relies on an innovative financing mechanism that will allow the program to be self-sustaining by year four.

Regional Benefit

Increasing energy efficiencies and raising the amount renewable energy that is generated locally decreases the region's dependence on the rising cost of carbon-based fuels, which helps lower the operating expenses of local governments and contributes to a more business-friendly environment.

Vision Addressed

- Create the greenest energy economy in the state.

Strategy Addressed

- 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.

Initiative Addressed

- Cleaner Greener

Funding

- \$1,044,390 Public Investment
- \$359,668 Private Investment (Owner Equity)
- \$15,000 Local Contribution

Outcome

- A reduction in total energy consumption and an increase in locally-generated renewable energy





III. PROPOSED 2014 PRIORITY PROJECTS

PROJECT: Ag Plastic

Applicant:
TAP Industries

Project/Program Location:
Malone, Franklin County

Project/Program Cost:
\$1,460,000

Description

TAP Industries is proposing the acquisition of an existing manufacturing building and the installation of machinery that will be used to shred, wash, dry and pelletize used agricultural plastics that are used for storing hay bales, bunker covers, silage bags, biomass pellets, greenhouses and boats. The business will provide On-the-Job training to 10 new positions, a majority of which will be filled by low to moderate income residents. The pelletized material will be sold for adaptive reuse to domestic and foreign manufacturing industries.

Regional Benefit

Establishes a small business creates an adaptive reuse for a used agricultural product that is becoming a growing waste management issue for landfills.

Vision Addressed

- Attract and nurture entrepreneurs through innovation to catalyze the highest per capita rate of small business start-ups and expansions in the state.
- Invest in agriculture as we help feed the region and the world.

Strategy Addressed

- Foster development of small businesses and entrepreneurial activities that add value to local resources.
- 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.

Initiative Addressed

- Opportunity Agenda
- Global NY
- Workforce Development

Funding

- \$200,000 Public Investment
- \$100,000 Private Investment (Owner Equity)
- \$1,160,000 Private Investment (Bank Financing)

Outcome

- Establishes a niche small business with 10 new positions, a majority of which will be filled by low and moderate income residents. Recycles agricultural plastics for adaptive reuse in the domestic and global manufacturing markets.

PROJECT:
Hamilton County Tourism Infrastructure
Assistance Program

Applicant: Hamilton County IDA	Project/Program Location: Hamilton County	Project/Program Cost: \$440,000
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Description

The IDA will make grants and loans available to auto fueling businesses to modernize and improve their customer service capabilities. This will enhance opportunities for tourists thus improving the ability to attract visitors to drive the economy. The businesses can install automated payment systems, security systems and other amenities to increase their hours of operation or provide additional services.

Regional Benefit

Hamilton County has a limited number of auto fueling businesses thus limiting the ability to serve customers. As the economy is very dependent on travel and tourists, this additional infrastructure is very important to maintain the existing businesses and potentially create new opportunities.

Vision Addressed

- Invest in community development infrastructure that expands opportunity and capacity.
- Activate tourism as a driver to diversify our economies by creating demand to accelerate private investment.

Strategy Addressed

- 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.

Initiative Addressed

- Opportunity Agenda

Funding

- \$400,000 Public Investment
- \$40,000 Private Investment (local development agency)

Outcome

- Retain existing businesses and provide opportunity to improve service to attract tourists.





III. PROPOSED 2014 PRIORITY PROJECTS

PROJECT: North Country Regional Revitalization Fund

Applicant:
Development Authority of the North Country

Project/Program Location:
Region-wide

Project/Program Cost:
\$10,000,000

Description

The North Country Revitalization Fund will assist transformational projects across the region with first instance financing that is critical for project success. The funds will be used for rehabilitation of blighted properties, infrastructure, and redevelopment projects that may require demolition and cleanup.

Regional Benefit

This fund will assist regionally significant projects through various stages of development. Upon completion, these large scale redevelopment projects will have leveraged significant private capital, create and retain a substantial number of jobs, and re-purpose blighted properties for planned development projects. The impact of this fund will be significant in the North Country, a region that continues to suffer from higher than state average unemployment.

Vision Addressed

- Invest in community development infrastructure that expands opportunities and capacity.

NYS Initiative Addressed

- Economic Development Priority

Funding

- \$10,000,000 Public Investment

Outcome

- Removes blighted properties from communities by investment in cleanup and installation of appropriate infrastructure, in order to purposefully reinvest in and redevelop the sites for economic renewal.

PROJECT: Planting Hope Project

Applicant:
Joint Council of Economic Opportunity

Project/Program Location:
Clinton & Franklin Counties

Project/Program Cost:
\$1,072,100

Description

JCEO will construct a greenhouse and hydroponic equipment to grow vegetables. Landfill gas from the Franklin County landfill will provide energy for the facility. The organization will utilize its Transition to Independence Program to provide low to moderate income individuals with opportunities for employment in the greenhouse facility. The JCEO has two letters of intent to purchase their vegetables.

Regional Benefit

Franklin County has experienced significant recent job losses. This project will provide opportunities for new employment, utilize clean energy sources, and provide healthy food for local use. A successful project can be a model to be used in similar situations.

Vision Addressed

- Invest in community development infrastructure that expands opportunity and capacity.
- Invest in agriculture as we help feed the nation and the world.
- Create the greenest energy economy in the state.

Strategy Addressed

- Increase and expand direct marketing sales with consumers, institutions, restaurants and grocery stores to capitalize on the region's growing local food movement.
- Increase the quantity and quality of agricultural products grown, produced and processed in the region.

Initiative Addressed

- Cleaner Greener
- Workforce Development
- Opportunity Agenda

Funding

- \$852,100 Public Investment (\$3,800,000 from direct grants and \$220,000 from Environmental Facilities Corp funding)
- \$220,000 Private Investment

Outcome

- Create 8 new jobs; provide employment opportunities for low to moderate income individuals. Use green energy to produce healthy food.





PROJECT:
Adirondack Community-Based Trails and Lodging System (ACTLS)

Applicant: Essex County	Project/Program Location: Adirondack Park	Project/Program Cost: \$440,000
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Description

Hamilton County and the Adirondack Partnership will work with NYS DOS LWRP, other agencies, local governments, communities and private businesses to map an Adirondack Park-wide Community-Based Trails and Lodging system. The project will identify opportunities to form a long trail of day self-powered paths through the park.

Regional Benefit

The Adirondack Park spans across multiple Economic Development regions. Bringing more visitors to the Adirondacks businesses in a large geographic area. In addition, a comprehensive trail system improves recreational opportunities for residents of the region and can help attraction and retention of a skilled workforce.

Vision Addressed

- 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 by creating demand to accelerate private investment.
- Create the greenest energy economy in the state.

Strategy Addressed

- 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.

Initiative Addressed

- Cleaner Greener

Funding

- \$220,000 Public Investment
- \$220,000 Private Investment

Outcome

- Develop an Adirondack Park-wide tool that can be used to encourage increase visitation and enjoyment of the resources available in the region. Identify projects that will further enhance the visitor's experience of the area's natural beauty. Foster entrepreneurship and growth in the tourism and service sector.

PROJECT: Adirondack Product Branding Phase II

Applicant: Adirondack North Country Association	Project/Program Location: Region-wide	Project/Program Cost: \$140,000
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Description

This project is step two of branding process initiated by ANCA in 2013. The product brand launch will finalize a brand identity, related collateral materials and the formal launch plan.

Regional Benefit

Developing and implementing an accepted product branding identity for North Country businesses to utilize in their marketing will put our businesses on a level playing field with places like Vermont, the Napa Valley, etc. Currently, there is no coordinated platform to promote and market our assets.

Vision Addressed

- Elevate global recognition of the region as one of the special places on the planet to visit, live, work, plan and study.
- Attract and nurture entrepreneurs through innovation to catalyze the highest per capital rate of small business start-ups and expansions in the State.

Strategy Addressed

- 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.
- 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.

Initiative Addressed

- Global NY

Funding

- \$100,000 Public Investment
- \$40,000 Private Investment

Outcome

- Product Brand identity created and commercialized.

“

This project is vitally important to sustaining and growing the small businesses and communities that are the backbone of our North Country economy. This will help expand the marketplace for their products and service. According to National Geographic, the “Geotraveler” represents over half the traveling public in America. They patronize locally owned businesses and guides. They buy from local craftspeople and eat at restaurants serving regional cuisine. As a result, the money they spend helps local people earn a living and preserves a community’s identity. The North Country is poised for economic transformation and as such, must capitalize on this trend by creating a coherent product brand—much like Vermont & Napa Valley.

- Patti Hammond, FACHE
Chief Operating Officer
Adirondack Health



III. PROPOSED 2014 PRIORITY PROJECTS

PROJECT:
NY Rising Initiative Ausable Forks Fire Department

Applicant: Essex County	Project/Program Location: Ausable Forks, Essex County	Project/Program Cost: \$745,140
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Description
Rehabilitate and expand the Ausable Forks firehouse.

Regional Benefit
Addresses NY Rising Priority for the region.

Vision Addressed

- Invest in community infrastructure that expands opportunities and capacity.

Initiative Addressed

- NY Rising

Funding

- \$400,000 Public Investment
- \$345,140 Other Investment

Outcome

- Rehabilitate Ausable Forks firehouse and improved emergency response capability.

IV

OTHER REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT PRIORITIES AND INITIATIVES



IV. OTHER REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT PRIORITIES AND INITIATIVES

Fort Drum Sustainability and Retention Activities

Fort Drum is the largest single site employer in New York State, with an annual economic impact the region and state of \$1.6 billion. Ensuring Fort Drum's continued prominence as a power projection platform will require a coordinated and high profile leadership effort by New York State.

Cleaner Greener Communities Sustainability Plan

Energy sustainability and efficiency which increase self-sufficiency within the region and create opportunities for energy export are priorities for the NCREDC. Developing small hydro and expanding natural gas service territory within the region are significant to increasing energy self-sufficiency and improving the region's competitive advantage for business and industry location. Over 75% of renewable energy produced in the North Country from wind, solar and larger scale hydropower is exported out of the region. The region, however, is constrained by aging transmission infrastructure which results in penalties to existing renewable generation facilities and inhibits future growth of generation.

Agriculture Program Funding

Resources through the Department of Agriculture and Markets continue to remain outside the Regional Council's CFA process, and the Department's service boundaries do not coincide with the boundaries of the State's ten Regional Councils. Both factors inhibit the North Country's ability to maximize opportunities for strategic investments in agriculture as determined by the Council.

Training

Job training funds, essential for the success of the Opportunity Agenda and for creating a pathway out of poverty, are limited at both the state and federal level.

Alcoa

New York State should continue to encourage and support Alcoa's efforts to install the most modern aluminum reduction technologies at its Massena operations.

Adirondack Club and Resort

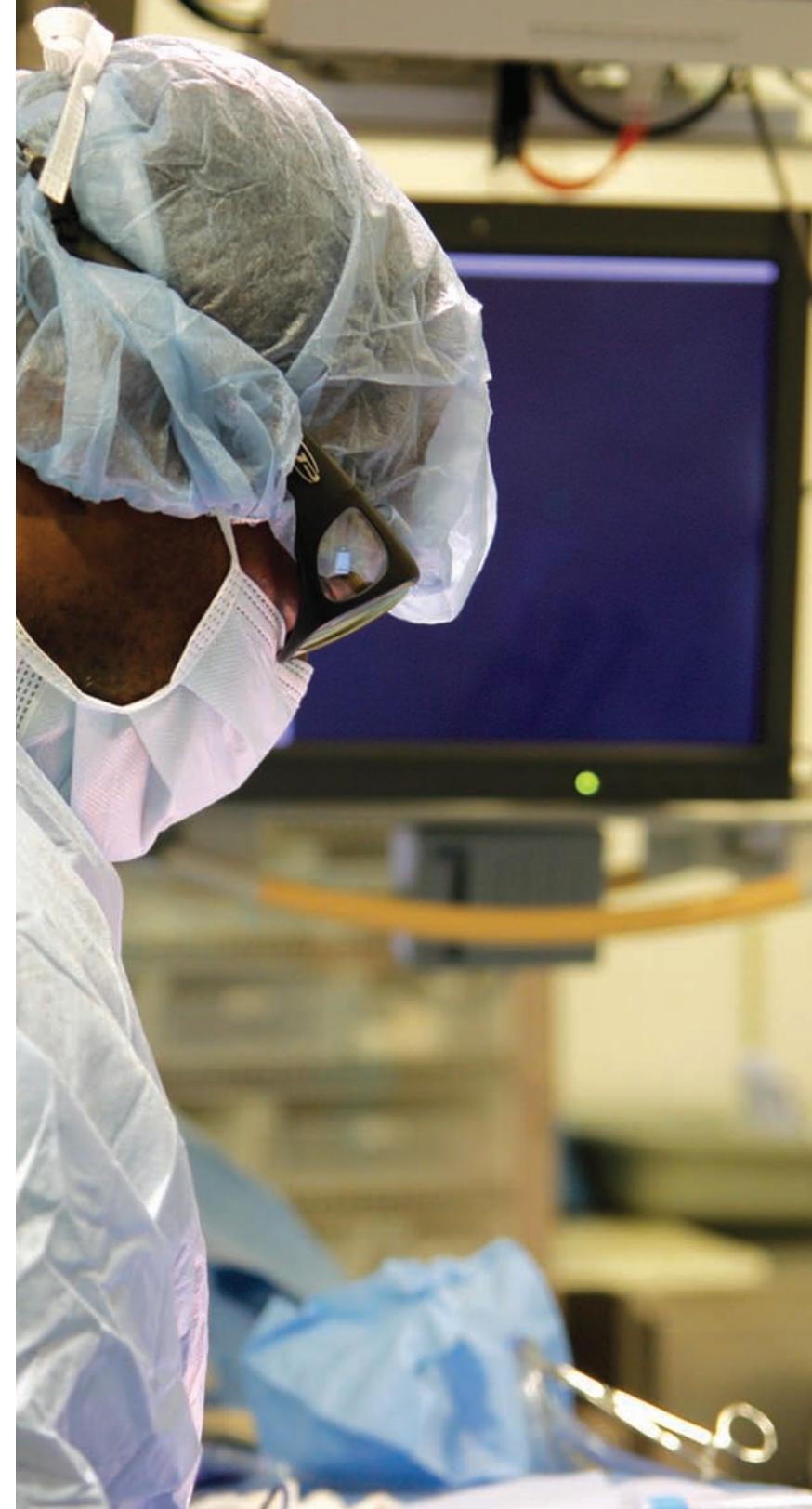
The June 2014 decision by the State Supreme Court Appellate Division in support of the Adirondack Club and Resort's APA permit has reenergized the ACR project, an ongoing regional priority. As Governor Cuomo expressed when the decision was announced, "The Adirondack Club and Resort Project will bring significant economic activity, jobs, and new opportunities to Tupper Lake and the Adirondack Park...I look forward to working with the community of Tupper Lake to successfully build this project." NCREDC applauds the Governor's support and looks forward to a continuing partnership with the state to advance this critically important project.

Early learning and affordable day care across the region

Today's working families rely on child care to seek and/or maintain employment. It is critical that we promote public/private/community partnerships to create and maintain high quality and affordable early learning and child care options. Having these options across the region will enable families to maintain self-reliance, support healthy development of children, create jobs, and build a stronger economy.

Medical Provider Recruitment

Primary and specialty care at the region's 16 hospitals is limited by difficulty in recruiting physicians to the region. State support for a targeted physician recruitment campaign is an important element in the regional effort to reinvent our health care delivery system.





IV. OTHER REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT PRIORITIES AND INITIATIVES

Industrial Site Redevelopment

State support for redevelopment of unutilized large-scale industrial and institutional sites – Pfizer (Rouses Point), the former Pfizer facility in Chazy, OWD (Tupper Lake), J&L (Newton Falls), General Motors (Massena), Lyons Falls Pulp & Paper, Plattsburgh International Airport at the former Air Force Base, Camp Gabriels, St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center and the Chateaugay prison – is essential for the North Country region.

ReEnergy

The Renewable Portfolio Standard (“RPS”) program plays an important role in nurturing a clean energy economy in the North Country. The ReEnergy Black River biomass-to-electricity project at Fort Drum, a funded priority project in 2011, is using market-rate renewable energy credits (“RECs”) under the RPS program. The ReEnergy Lyonsdale plant needs to continue participating in the RPS beyond 2014, and the currently shuttered ReEnergy Chateaugay plant should become authorized to participate in the next Main Tier solicitation.

Cell Service

The Adirondack Park and the Tug Hill region of the North Country have large geographic areas in which there is no mobile phone service. As today’s travelers take for granted that they will have consistent use of their mobile devices, this lack of coverage puts the region at a significant competitive disadvantage in the tourism marketplace.

Industrial Parks

Many North Country communities have filled their older industrial parks, and the regional council supports the location and construction of new parks.

ORDA managed facilities improvements

The 1980 Olympic venues are dated and in need of over \$20 million in capital improvements. It is important that these venues are brought up to internationally accepted standards in order for New York State to maintain its status in the world competitive winter sports market.

Housing and community infrastructure renewal

State funded assistance to communities seeking to renovate deteriorated housing stock and restore vibrancy in downtowns is essential to maintaining the quality of life and quality of place that the North Country will need to continue its economic resurgence. Ongoing state funding of microenterprise, small business, and Main Street Programs, as well as housing rehabilitation is a NCREDC priority.

Connectivity with Quebec and Ontario

Border-related infrastructure and operations, and state engagement in enhancing the cross border economic relationship.

V

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT: GLOBAL NY PLAN



Global North Country “Sans Frontières..Without Boundaries”

A Vision and Strategic Plan for New York’s “Other” International Region

In 1609, explorers Samuel de Champlain and Henry Hudson established the beginnings of a European corridor of trade, commerce and eventual revolution in North America – Champlain from the north, sailing down the St. Lawrence in Quebec and exploring Lake Champlain in the North Country of New York; Hudson from the south, navigating the Hudson River to a point north of Albany.

What would follow is the evolution of the North Country region of New York as an international gateway and linchpin between Canada and the U.S., between New York and Quebec and Ontario, and between North America and the rest of the world. An indispensable focal point for North American trade and industry for four centuries with the best still to come.

Napoleon once stated: “Geography is destiny.” And so the geography of the North Country is key to its unique position in New York’s global connectivity. But so is the self awareness, commitment and special perspective of the region, recognizing and maximizing the opportunities of its geography in ways which have evolved over many years but which have always been specific and innovative.

This then is the story of New York’s “other” international region. Not the universally known dynamics of New York City, but the unique and growing dynamics of the North Country as an international region connecting the entire state in special ways to Canada and the world. And it is a roadmap for further maximization of the North Country’s international connections, skills and assets for the benefit of itself and all of New York.

Strategic Positioning: Two Fundamental Precepts

While many areas may appropriately approach global business as a set of services and activities, for the North Country our approach begins with a day-in, day-out commitment to “strategic positioning” – focusing on endeavors which strategically position the North Country to maximize the opportunities inherent in its special international location.

We approach our commitment to “strategic positioning” with two fundamental precepts always in mind:

- Throughout history, where things move is where prosperity occurs.
- To achieve great things, small areas must determine what it is that is bigger than themselves that they can make themselves a “contributing part” of.

The first precept recognizes that throughout human economic history, zones of prosperity have generally arisen and declined in concert with shifts in dominant routes of movement – beginning with the movement of goods and people but then almost inevitably becoming the new zones where activities of all kinds wish to be. Shifts occur for many reasons. Patterns of empire. The transition from the age of sail to steam. The development of canals, witness the Erie and Suez. The coming of rail and then highways. And the forces of globalization and economic alliances, dramatically shifting both internal and external paths of “movement” whether in Europe, the Pacific or certainly within North America.

For 200 years, the U.S. and Canada generally grew and developed on an east-west axis. Each looked to connect its coasts, tap the resources of its interior, settle its territory and facilitate the internal movement of both raw materials and manufactured goods. New York built the Erie Canal and made itself the early gateway to the west – understanding early on that **WHERE THINGS MOVE IS WHERE PROSPERITY OCCURS**. And later came the creation of trans-continental railways and road systems.

But now, in an historic phenomenon that the U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement (the precursor to NAFTA) recognized and sought to encourage, the U.S. and Canada are becoming an increasingly integrated economy, supported and served by the emergence of perhaps a dozen newly dominant zones of movement – shifting increasingly to a north-south axis.

As always, this movement began with increases in goods along established “corridors” of transportation best suited to the purpose. And as always, these “corridors” have become emerging zones of prosperity where other investment and activity seeks to be.

New York possesses three of these international corridors with Canada, and the North Country is the state and nation’s front door to two of them – Quebec-New York and Eastern Ontario-New York.

Global and continental economic geography shifted around the North Country in recent decades, creating many benefits and investments as a natural result. If left on its own, this new north-south economic dynamic would still have brought activity, even in spite of impediments. But the North Country has been and remains committed to maximizing the opportunities inherent in this shift through constant commitment to the following:

- Identifying and addressing current or future impediments, from transportation infrastructure to border operations.
- Facilitating relationships and collaborations which would not necessarily occur without leadership.

The vision is to recognize and develop the North Country in its evolving association with Quebec and eastern Ontario as part of an increasingly integrated **BI-NATIONAL ECONOMIC REGION** within which there remains a border which is an inconvenience that must be managed but which no longer defines economic regionality. A place where it becomes almost as natural and easy to do business and interact across the border as it is between New York and Vermont or even the North Country and Central New York.

An area within which it has become natural, for example, to think of and refer to Plattsburgh as **“MONTREAL’S U.S. SUBURB”** – reflecting a conscious paradigm shift that defines the North Country not in terms of how distant it may be from places to the south but how close it is to exciting metropolitan cities to the north like Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto – and from there to the world.

To Achieve Great Things...

Our second fundamental precept forms the basis of much of our continuous effort to “position” our region within this context and to maximize the economic potential. For us, that big dynamic that we want to be a part of is Canada – more specifically Quebec and eastern Ontario. And while it was daunting to contemplate how, for example, Plattsburgh could earn importance to Montreal and Quebec and how Massena, Ogdensburg and Watertown could do so with Ottawa and Ontario, we have achieved precisely that status.

Not by traditional international trade approaches but by getting up every day and asking what we will do today to broaden and deepen our connectivity and relationship with our northern partners.



For example: _____

- Giving our neighbors the most efficient gateways to the U.S. market by obtaining hundreds of millions in federal dollars for new and improved border crossings. They are, after all, in the U.S. business but their very access to the U.S. market depends on policies and actions here that they cannot affect on their own.
- Focusing on training and assisting Quebec and Ontario companies in achieving success in exporting to the U.S. and doing business here. This includes the development and coordination of teams of experts that can help avoid the mistakes and solve their problems.
- Becoming their effective advocates in Washington and Albany.
- Developing integrated transportation infrastructure.
- Facilitating meaningful connections and collaborations with New York business and technology interests.
- Participating and sharing in joint regional events to celebrate a relationship that is more than just neighbors.

And What About the Rest of the World?

As we lead the state and nation in long-term strategies for connectivity with Canada that transcend and move beyond outmoded notions of “trade” toward economic union and partnership, we do not ignore opportunities for trade beyond our neighbors.

Our premise and belief, however, is that the state must (as we do) see “Global NY” as two very distinct categories:

1. CANADA, where it is about relationships, integration, infrastructure and doing things together, requiring very different strategies and approaches.

2. THE REST OF THE WORLD

For the North Country, Canada is and always will be the dominant focus of international activity and investment. However, we are increasingly strategizing as well on how to use our international mindset and expertise, and our neighbor’s rich status as a major gateway by which the world invests in and does business with North America, to encourage and support other global business opportunities.

With this background and framework in mind, we embrace and commit to continued and expanded partnership behind a range of elements and opportunities which, together, will grow the North Country as a unique zone of international commerce and investment and, in turn, magnify our already substantial contributions to the entire state.



Comprehensive Strategies

I. Bi-National Partnerships:

The North Country has taken the lead in crafting cross-border alliances in support of our economic vision and aims, and in support of the entire State of New York:

- **QUEBEC-NEW YORK CORRIDOR:**

The North Country Chamber of Commerce joined with the Federation of Quebec Chambers of Commerce (FCCQ) to sign the landmark “Quebec-New York Corridor Agreement” in 2001, setting out a shared vision for the bi-national economic region and committing to collaboration on a number of fronts including border facilities and operations, transportation, tourism, technology sectors and more. It also created the structure for periodic Quebec-New York Economic Summits. A total of four have been held since then, which we coordinated and operated, plus four other transportation and technology themed events. An MOU signed by the New York Governor and Quebec Premier at the first Quebec-New York Summit in 2002 established a private/public partnership co-led by the North Country Chamber on behalf of state business, the FCCQ on behalf of Quebec business, and the State and Provincial governments. Many investments, partnerships, agreements and connections have flowed from these summits and continuing teamwork, not only in the North Country but across the state.

- **ONTARIO-NEW YORK:**

The Capital Corridor Coalition has been a similar facilitator of cross border connectivity, led by the Thousand Islands Bridge Authority and holding a series of conferences from 2008-2012. Focused on the Ottawa-Syracuse corridor area but feeding actively into the broader I-81 Coalition stretching to Virginia and Tennessee, the coalition developed many valuable connections and relationships, and furthered advances in north-south fluidity between New York and eastern Ontario. There also have been and continue to be more specific initiatives which will be highlighted elsewhere involving, for example, St. Lawrence and Jefferson Counties.

- **CAN/AM CORRIDORS:**

Our region worked with the Can/Am Border Trade Alliance — the leading bi-national advocacy coalition related to the U.S.-Canadian border — to create the Can/Am Corridors Council a decade ago. Co-Chaired by our region from its inception, it provides for collaboration amongst various cross border alliances and initiatives across the continent and has been a key part of successful advocacy efforts in Ottawa and Washington. In June 2014, agreement was reached at the NAFTA NEXT Conference in Chicago to create the North American Trade Corridors Council, broadening the alliance to include U.S.-Mexico members as well. A meeting in Washington this fall will finalize the revised structure and mission.

- **OTHER FORMAL COLLABORATIONS:**

The North Country and its lead organizations in cross border matters also have well established and often formal partnerships with, among others: Government of Quebec, Canadian Consulate General NYC, U.S. Embassy in Ottawa, U.S. Consulate General in Montreal, Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal, Federation of Chambers of Commerce of Quebec, Quebec International, American Chamber of Commerce in Canada (Ottawa and Montreal), Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Council on Environmental Quality (a NAFTA organization), Greater Kingston (ON) Chamber of Commerce, and a number of sectoral trade organizations.

It must be emphasized that in all of our region's partnership endeavors related to Canada, we endeavor to represent and bring connections to all areas of the state. This is particularly true with regard to Quebec, with the Quebec-New York Corridor Agreement identifying the North Country Chamber as the lead private organization for the entire state and with the Quebec Government and others having come to regard the Chamber as their reliable, lead contact in New York and the U.S. On at least two occasions, former Quebec Premier Jean Charest publicly identified the North Country Chamber as “Quebec's best friend in the United States.”

V. SUPPORTING DOCUMENT: GLOBAL NY PLAN

On an ongoing basis, we assist and advise business organizations and economic developers around New York on doing business with Quebec. In just the last year, for example, our region directly facilitated and arranged connections for the Quebec Government and the Quebec Chamber with business and economic development leaders in Albany, Syracuse, Rochester and Buffalo.

Maximizing economic partnership with Quebec and Ontario requires a long term, continuous strategy of relationship building and collaboration on shared interests and aims. The network of formal and informal partnerships the North Country has secured across the border is a key component of our past and future success, and our efforts in this regard are also crucial to New York State in its Global New York ambitions.

STRATEGIES:

- **SUMMITS:**

We seek continuation of the Quebec-New York Economic Summit process in 2015 in partnership with New York State, Quebec, and our Quebec business allies, to include progress toward an eventual full Summit while identifying and pursuing other collaborative opportunities in the interim. We also join with Western New York in encouraging planning for an Ontario-New York Summit, while stressing that New York has two regions of connection with Ontario and the North Country of course must be party to all related meetings and discussions going forward.

- **TORONTO AND MONTREAL:**

We support state plans for the resumption of a presence in both Toronto and Montreal, creating a further resource in support of shared aims with Canada. It is essential that this new operation be defined appropriately to Canada as opposed to operations elsewhere in the world. It will also be important that these two offices have an active and collaborative working partnership with the North Country.



II. Foreign Direct Investment:

The North Country has a tremendously strong track record in attracting and facilitating job creating investment from Canada in particular and, often via Canada, from Europe as well. In Clinton County, for example, it is estimated that some 15% of the workforce is employed by a Canadian or border related employer in the North Country.

Elements of our proven approach include the following:

- **RELATIONSHIPS:**

The constant development and renewal of contacts and relationships in the private, public and academic communities in Quebec and Ontario. Because of our geography and the different nature of the New York-Canada economic connection, this can be and is a regular process of networking and shared endeavor that brings regular leads and information. This is all heightened by our strong development, over more than twenty years, of trust – being seen not as “predators” but as partners.

- **THE REVERSE DYNAMIC:**

Lead organizations such as the North Country Chamber of Commerce and the St. Lawrence and Jefferson County IDA’s have devised an effective approach to Canadian based FDI that includes active outreach in support of Quebec and Ontario businesses interested in doing business in the U.S. Teams of experts have been developed who specialize in incorporations, customs clearance, visas/immigration, insurance, banking, employment, accounting/taxes and other aspects of successfully doing business in the U.S. Through relationships with partners such as the World Trade Center Montreal and Quebec International, groups come to the North Country several times each year for orientations at the border and innovative workshops. In addition, “road shows” are conducted in Ontario and Quebec, and individually tailored sessions are routinely done with specific companies. Thousands have taken part and benefitted, with outcomes for the North Country and New York State that include:

- Massive FDI in the form of Canadian utilization of professional services in the North Country, with many firms enjoying a majority customer base that is Canadian and possessing a level of expertise for Quebec and Ontario businesses they will not find elsewhere. This includes Accountants, Attorneys, Customs Brokers, Immigration Consultants, Insurance Agencies, Bankers, Warehouses and others.

- An understanding that if these businesses succeed in the U.S., growth can bring consideration of physical expansion in the U.S. And unless there are reasons to be elsewhere (i.e. proximity to customers for example), our proximity to home and proven support and expertise make the North Country and New York good candidates for investment. The North Country is dotted with Canadian based employers who first engaged with us through this support process.

- Attention to transportation connections, border fluidity and supply chains as a strong component in support of North Country locations for Quebec and Ontario companies. The proximity and our attention to optimal cross border movement allows Canadian-based parent companies to potentially delegate less authority and retain functions at home, actively visit and interact with their U.S. site via short drives, and maintain established vendor and supply chain relationships.

- Assistance with operations and relationships at the border as needed, including problem solving. Showing our ability to address common concerns related to the border as part of a full-service commitment to FDI is powerful. This includes giving new Canadian based businesses in the North Country an instant “Government Affairs” operation that can assist them in Washington and Albany with everything from regulatory matters to public procurement opportunities.

This unique team-oriented, full-service approach which emphasizes success and relationships vs. sites and real estate continues to work well and is now enjoying enhanced sharing, cooperation and referrals across the North Country within the North Country REDC process and now the new Global North Country initiative. If one area of the region cannot meet a prospect’s needs, a referral is made to another area of the region. If the North Country cannot really meet the needs, we make referrals elsewhere in the state. Partly, this stems from an understanding that all advances in New York’s economic connectivity with Quebec and Ontario help to build the larger picture which we benefit from – including servicing cross border activity, providing support services and more.



V. SUPPORTING DOCUMENT: GLOBAL NY PLAN

Always entrepreneurial, we have also developed other innovative tools in potential support of FDI. Examples include:

- **NORTH COUNTRY EB-5 REGIONAL CENTER:**

With the active support of Senators Schumer and Gillibrand and Congressman Bill Owens, the North Country Chamber of Commerce invested more than \$100,000 in its own resources to obtain approval of an EB-5 Regional Center in the North Country. This entity, owned by the Chamber, is now available to help secure foreign investments of \$500,000 each toward whatever may be required to help secure and carry out substantial job creating ventures. Under this special federal program, the investors can secure Green Cards for themselves and their immediate family, and required job creation counts can be met via both Direct and Indirect employment calculations.

- **SPECIALIZED TRAINING:**

We regularly work with Canadian partners to conduct specialized training seminars for Canadian businesses on such topics as U.S. Customs clearance, FDA regulations, labeling requirements, etc. Again, this establishes contacts and reinforces our region's image in terms of expertise and helpfulness.

- **DOING BUSINESS IN THE U.S.:**

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR CANADIAN BUSINESSES: A North Country publication available on line as well as in hard copy with updated articles by regional experts on all major aspects of successfully doing business in the U.S. for Canadians. A new and fully updated version is currently under production for this fall, and is a tool for use by all North Country economic developers and Canadian businesses.

- **INVESTMENT FORUM:**

The region conducted its first ever “North Country Venture Forum” in May 2014 in partnership with State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli and representatives of several different venture capital operations interested in our region. In addition to North Country economic developers, business leaders, bankers and others, Canadian partners were also included and the Forum provided an opportunity to familiarize the venture capital guests with our special opportunities related to Canada, as well as the North Country Innovation Hot Spot.

- **SITE READINESS:**

Our regional economic development agencies have actively developed industrial parks and facilities of a nature and in specific locations suitable to the needs of Canadian prospects. This pro-active commitment is essential as site availability and readiness are necessary ingredients in competition with other options, often in other states. More than 200 U.S. subsidiary operations of Canadian based companies now call these parks and sites home.

Quebec Delegate General Dominique Poirier meets with North Country leaders about cross border development.

STRATEGIES:

This overall approach has brought not only clear success but international recognition. In 2013, fDi Magazine (Foreign Direct Investment), a publication of the Financial Times, ranked Plattsburgh #4 among all micropolitan cities in North and South America for “Economic Potential.” Two years earlier, fDi had ranked Plattsburgh one of the top three “Cities of the Future” in North America in its size category (micropolitan cities being those with under 100,000 population). This is regarded as only a snapshot of a regional phenomenon and trend that happens to be most pronounced in Plattsburgh.

Interesting is the degree to which this Canadian based investment is becoming increasingly global in character. Under NAFTA, a company producing in Canada has free market access to the U.S. This fact has led to many European companies selecting Canada in general and Quebec in particular as a location of choice for their first footprint in North America, providing a more “European/Continental” business style than the image of cowboy capitalism directly in the states. Once successful, however, and having major business in the U.S., they come to a point of considering a direct U.S. operation. We now have a number of U.S. subsidiaries of Canadian subsidiaries of European companies – with common roots in France, Italy, Germany, Spain and Scandinavia.

In short, our connectivity with Quebec and Ontario is a special route to European business and investment as well.

- **COORDINATION:**

Our Global North Country coalition will increasingly coordinate outreach and marketing activities, as well as cross referrals of leads and prospects. This will include sharing and coordination related to our teams of experts. This is already occurring.

- **EB-5 REGIONAL CENTER:**

We will explore opportunities for sharing and cooperation with the new EB-5 Regional Center in the Capital Region via our partners at the Center for Economic Growth. We will also seek and encourage a statewide conversation, including Empire State Development, about how best to collaboratively utilize this economic development tool in New York State.

- **WORKSHOPS/SEMINARS/MISSIONS:**

We will continue to work with our Canadian partners to maximize utilization of our expertise through both organized workshops/missions and in one-on-one sessions with interested companies. We will seek to establish a relationship with one or more new partner organizations in Ontario and/or Quebec in 2015.

- **STRATEGIC SECTORS:**

We will further focus our outreach and marketing in pursuit of FDI opportunities in targeted regional strategic sectors, including Aerospace, Transportation Equipment, Renewable Energy, Biotech, Forest Products and General Manufacturing. A coordinated regional plan will be developed by the end of the year for 2015-16, including trade shows in various sectors and other initiatives, open to cross regional sharing and cooperation.

- **START-UP NY:**

The Quebec and Ontario markets have become very aware of the new Start-Up NY program, which is especially attractive in comparison to the high tax environments at home and in comparison to potential locational competitors such as Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. This tool will become an active part of our marketing and conversations in all appropriate settings and situations, and has already been used to generate added leads for the region and to steer attention here vs. other states. Also of new note is the exemption of most New York manufacturers from state corporate taxes – a move that raises real eyebrows with Canadians.

- **SITE PREPARATION:**

Investment in additional industrial and business park capacity to have the readiness to effectively recruit FDI and to meet the anticipated increase in demand from Canada over the next few years.

III. Exporting:

The North Country, though generally rural and dispersed, remains a manufacturing area, although the character of its manufacturing base has been changing.

As some major elements of its manufacturing base have closed or downsized, other elements have grown.

A good part of this growth has involved U.S. operations of Canadian-based companies, with limited interest in exporting as they are here to serve the U.S. market. This leaves a community of exporters (or businesses with export potential) that is relatively small in number among larger manufacturing operations, and very dispersed in general and therefore challenging to reach and serve.

Global North Country believes, however, that the region possesses an excellent pool of existing service providers and organizations that with enhanced coordination and partnership can help to facilitate and encourage greater export activity across the seven counties. Key existing providers of export related assistance include CITEC, the North Country Chamber of Commerce, Development Authority of the North Country, the Small Business Development Center, and universities including Clarkson, county IDAs and several Foreign Trade Zones, each with a network of services and partners both within and outside the region who are providing export assistance.

We also have a long-standing and strong relationship with the U.S. Commercial Service, Empire State Development's International Division, and aforementioned partners and networks in Canada, all of which are currently used in support of exporting but with more opportunities to be pursued.

STRATEGIES:

- **U.S. EXPORT-IMPORT BANK:**

This major federal tool in support of exporting is currently underutilized in the North Country. With this in mind, we hosted a forum in Ogdensburg this year with Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, Congressman Bill Owens and the President/Chairman of the Ex-Im Bank, Fred P. Hochberg. It was a first step toward enhancing awareness and utilization of the bank's services that will also include establishment of a "City State Partnership" in the North Country for the first time – basically an informational and communication link with the Ex-Im Bank. Development Authority of the North Country will be the lead in securing and hosting this initiative, and CITEC and the North Country Chamber of Commerce will become lead partners with Development Authority of the North Country, assisting with outreach and education.

- **COORDINATION:**

Enhanced coordination and marketing of the export related services and programs of all of the North Country partner organizations and agencies. We will also develop an inventory of resources, including funding resources, to be posted on-line on the NCREDC website as well as elsewhere, in collaboration with Empire State Development. Global North Country and its partners will also consult with its banking community and other sources of finance to identify ways to assist small businesses in the region to begin or expand export activity.

- **INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ALLIANCE:**

Discussions have begun with CenterState CEO in Syracuse and their International Business Alliance regarding utilization of some of their export support services in the North Country. CITEC will take the lead in defining and carrying out opportunities for sharing starting in 2015, expected to include access to their educational seminars via webinars and other means, access to Market Research Assistance for North Country companies (via funding from the U.S. Commercial Service through the IBA), access for interested North Country companies to occasional Overseas Trade Missions to be actively publicized in our region, access to their Speakers Bureau, and an exploration of opportunities for one on one counseling as practical. These services will also be more actively marketed through the region's business and economic development organizations. In addition, on the eastern side of the North Country, a conversation is underway with the Center for Economic Growth in Albany, aimed at identifying ways to collaborate in support of exporting, particularly along the I-87 corridor from the border to Albany.

- **TRADE MISSIONS:**

We will explore opportunities for Trade Missions in key sectors, including Wood Products, Agriculture & Food, Transportation Equipment, and Services, potentially in alliance with other state regions.

IV. Aerospace: A Regional and State Mission:

Aerospace remains a substantial player in the state economy, and it is a global sector that holds real possibilities for growth – both through FDI and exporting – in several regions, including Long Island, the Mohawk Valley, the Southern Tier and Western New York.

- **UNIVERSITIES:**

We will look to more fully utilize resources available through our colleges and universities and coordinate activities with them. Potential partners include our HEARD consortium and our Innovation Hot Spot.

- **DATA:**

As a non-metro area, export related data is limited in the North Country from general federal sources. Our Global North Country coalition is committed to the development by 2015 of a comprehensive inventory of companies in our region currently engaged in exporting, with appropriate contacts and basic information. Partners in the creation of this inventory will include ESDC, Development Authority of the North Country, North Country Chamber of Commerce, CITEC, County IDA's and the Ogdensburg Bridge and Port Authority, with expected assistance from other partners.

- **FOREIGN TRADE ZONES:**

The North Country has a number of approved and active Foreign Trade Zones across the region. Information regarding these zones will be coordinated and placed on line, and consideration will be given to opportunities to further highlight them for potential expanded utilization.

And in the North Country where it is one of the NCREDC's targeted strategic sectors. With our manufacturing base, technology players such as Clarkson, the pre-development of a workforce training infrastructure including Plattsburgh Aeronautical Institute, proximity to the vast aerospace cluster in Montreal and also in Toronto, and the massive facilities of the former Plattsburgh Air Force Base (now Plattsburgh International Airport and Aerospace Park), the North Country is ready to emerge as a receptive and strategic new option for aerospace and aviation industrial related investment

The global aerospace and aviation community is both large but also limited and defined. As a newer option with a strong story to tell, we must be where the sectoral leaders are and must be there consistently over time to be seen as serious and to build awareness and connections.

It is for this reason that the North Country, through the North Country Chamber, volunteered to assume the lead role for Empire State Development in organizing and coordinating the state's pavilion and delegation at the Farnborough and Paris Air Shows. These two events alternate each year and are the largest aerospace/aviation trade events and gatherings in the world. Our region oversees contracting and design work for each show, recruits New York State companies to participate, operates the state booth and simultaneously markets Plattsburgh International Airport and the North Country as a location. We have now successfully led the state presence at Farnborough three times and at Paris twice, and are already developing plans and contacts for the Paris Air Show in 2015.

Participating exhibitors come from around New York, and at Farnborough in July included aerospace related companies from Long Island to Western New York. We also developed and passed along contacts and leads to appropriate economic developers statewide, including for example three leads for the Nuair initiative based in Central New York.

STRATEGIES:

- Continue to take the lead role for Empire State Development at the Farnborough and Paris International Air Shows, while looking to further build statewide participation in this strategic marketing effort.



V. Bordering on Progress:

If prosperity occurs where things move, and if we are to be an attractive site for international business and investment, there is nothing more crucial than the optimization of fluidity at our U.S.-Canadian border crossings.

The North Country therefore monitors and advocates actively and aggressively on behalf of its ports of entry and their operations, through several key organizations including the Thousand Islands Bridge Authority, the Ogdensburg Bridge and Port Authority and the North Country Chamber of Commerce. Over the last twenty years, we have led the state and nation in effective efforts to obtain infrastructure funds and technology investments from both the U.S. and Canadian governments, sustain and enhance border crossing staffing, secure early deployment of accelerated crossing programs here, obtain Congressional actions conducive to our strategies and needs, and become internationally respected for our role in supporting U.S.-Canadian border fluidity. Among our successes, the benefits of which flow to the entire State of New York:

- Obtaining more than \$170 million in U.S., New York State, Quebec and Canadian funding to create the “Port of Excellence” at Champlain, the main U.S.-Quebec gateway. This involved a near complete replacement of the former commercial and car facilities with a massive new, multi-faceted complex that is now the most efficient gateway on the entire U.S.-Canadian border, with zero reportable delays in commercial traffic.
- Obtaining \$49 million in the current Canadian federal budget for major facility enhancements at Lacolle (Canadian side of the Champlain crossing), and influencing the recent design process in ways that will enhance flow in both directions.
- Obtaining \$60 million in last year’s Canadian budget for long sought improvements to the Canadian border infrastructure on the Ontario side of the Thousand Islands Bridge.
- Obtaining over \$70 million in Canadian investment for a new bridge and Canadian Customs plaza at the Massena-Cornwall crossing, completed this year.
- Recently obtaining House approval through Congressman Owens of \$105 million for major, long needed infrastructure improvements on the New York side of the Thousand Islands Bridge.
- Recently obtaining 40 additional U.S. Customs & Border Protection personnel at major North Country crossings to further facilitate operations and movement.
- We also continue to work actively in Washington and Ottawa in support of the current implementation of the “Beyond the Border Action Plan” put forward two years ago by President Obama and Prime Minister Harper. We happily anticipate finalization of a Pre Clearance Agreement between Canada and the U.S. that will in turn allow progress on several North Country goals, including:
 - Allowing U.S. and Canadian border personnel to engage in border inspection and clearance activities in the other country. While this will facilitate U.S. truck clearance at the Peace Bridge, it will also allow Canadian Border Services Agency officers to function on the Massena side of the Massena-Cornwall Seaway Bridge.
- Creating agreements and protocols for shared operation of small land crossings. We have several of these across the North Country. Many have light use but still represent connections within our bi-national region which are important to the small communities and rural areas involved. To avoid the potential for future efforts to save money by trying to eliminate some of these (something Canada is already engaged in) while focusing staff and resources where needed, we require pending agreements that could allow, for example, a U.S. officer to clear cars in both directions at such a crossing and a Canadian officer to do likewise. In other words, no need for both to have a fully staffed presence.
- Pre-clearing New York bound Amtrak passengers in Montreal and thus eliminating or substantially reducing the current long stoppages at the border. Playing a leading role among stakeholder organizations in working with Congressman Owens and Senators Schumer and Gillibrand to enact language last year that will prohibit the study or active consideration of “border crossing fees” — an idea which came up again last year in Congress and has caused wide concern whenever it appears as even a possibility.

We also continue to support the implementation of inspection efficiencies called for under Beyond the Border, as well as a number of U.S.-Canadian regulatory reforms devised by the BYB Regulatory Cooperation Council.

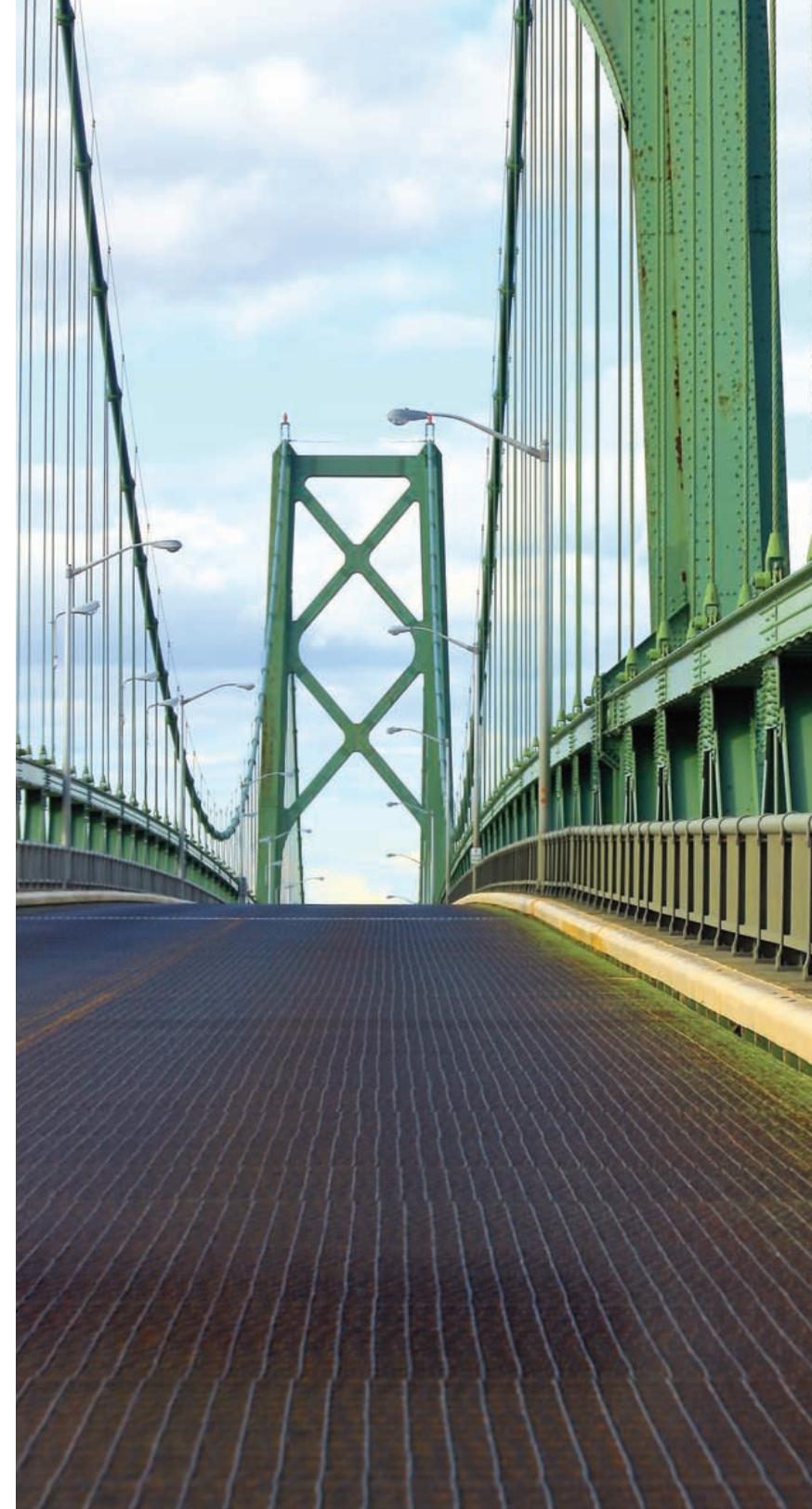
In addition to working with our Congressman and Senators and with Canadian officials, we have been leaders within key advocacy coalitions such as the Can/Am Border Trade Alliance, and the NCREDC co-hosted a “Beyond the Border Forum” last year at Clarkson University.

The President of the North Country Chamber also serves on a special Dwell Time Task Force of about a dozen stakeholder representatives, meeting periodically with top officials of U.S. Customs & Border Protection to confidentially review and discuss various performance measures at the North Country’s crossings, including Dwell Time (average time spent by a car at the booth) and Wait Time (average time spent including waiting in a line to reach the booth), as well as times for NEXUS, buses and commercial transactions. As a result of this process, Dwell Times at North Country crossings have substantially improved over the last five years, with the largest crossing’s time being reduced by more than 50%.

Our key organizations also maintain active working relationships with the U.S. and Canadian Port Directors and their staff, including periodic meetings to share information. This type of relationship also helps our region to address specific problems and situations and to enjoy cooperation and support in connection with, for example, visiting Canadian business leaders.

STRATEGIES:

- **BORDER FLUIDITY:**
Continuation of our strong commitment to the North Country’s border facilities and operations, on behalf of the entire state. This includes, but is not limited to, finalization of remaining elements of the Beyond the Border Action Plan, and the activation of those pending agreements toward the specific North Country objectives we have noted.
- **FACILITIES:**
Continued close monitoring of plans and designs for upcoming facility work at Lacolle, Landsdowne and Alexandria Bay in the interest of helping to advocate for and achieve optimum fluidity.
- **OTHER FACILITIES:**
Continued advocacy in Washington and Ottawa for future investment in our region’s border crossings and international bridge connections as an economic priority. This includes active support for \$100 million required for the rehabilitation of the Ogdensburg-Prescott International Bridge which enables more than \$4 billion annually in global trade activity in the North Country.
- **AMBASSADOR VISIT:**
We are currently working with Congressman Owens to achieve a visit to the North Country before year’s end by the new U.S. Ambassador to Canada, Bruce Heyman.



VI. Transportation:

Just as transportation and movement have defined our special international status as a region, the development and enhancement of our transportation infrastructure and services remains foundational to our Global North Country strategies and ambitions. Beyond our border crossings which are pivotal, we have developed powerful assets with further potential related to **RAIL, AIR, PORTS** and **HIGHWAYS**.

RAIL:

The North Country's economic development leaders have regarded the modernization and enhancement of the region's rail infrastructure as a very key part of building our north-south dynamic with Canada and creating transportation possibilities for the region in general. The North Country hosts two of New York State's major international rail corridors – the Canadian Pacific (Delaware & Hudson) Railroad from Montreal to New York City via Rouses Point and Plattsburgh, and the CSX (St. Lawrence & Adirondack) Railway from the Montreal region to Syracuse via Massena and Watertown.

As part of the first Quebec-New York Summit, we established the aim of enhancing height clearances on the CP line between the border and Saratoga in order to allow double stacking and thereby help to secure this vital transportation corridor's future relevance and effectiveness. We went on to help secure \$29 million from the state to enlarge a tunnel in Essex County and raise two bridges in Washington County, achieving this strategic aim. This is one of several examples of our successful support of investments in this railway.

The CSX corridor through the western portion of the North Country unfortunately suffered many years of disinvestment and decline, with traffic that could have flowed there instead going long distances around instead. With the completion two years ago of an extension of

AutoRoute 30 in Quebec that greatly enhanced east-west flow across southern Quebec through Salaberry de Valleyfield, CSX began a major investment of more than \$107 million designed to substantially revive and reinvigorate its service through our region. This investment, nearing completion, involves the rehabilitation of the line itself to modern standards – thus creating attractive rail transport options through St. Lawrence and Jefferson Counties – and the creation of a major new inter modal hub at Valleyfield, QC, expected to handle up to 100,000 containers annually, utilizing state-of-the-art cranes to quickly transfer containers between trucks and trains. Activity on the CSX line through the North Country has already reportedly increased 70%.

This international rail investment also supports other current and planned rail enhancements in the North Country, from spurs to industrial sites to the planned rehabilitation of the Newton Falls rail link. In addition, the NCREDC has joined St. Lawrence County and Massena in supporting a pending proposal with CSX for designation of the former GM industrial site (now owned by the RACER Trust) as one of their new "CSX Select Sites" which will bring intermodal capabilities there.

We have also worked with our railways and with Amtrak on border clearance issues and facilities, as well as pending agreements which would allow pre-clearance of Amtrak passengers in Montreal.



AIR:

The North Country has gained international recognition for the development of airport facilities and air service through strategic utilization of its near border location. The North Country, like any region, requires air service to support its economy and to attract and sustain employment, besides offering general connectivity in support of a well rounded quality of life. However, our region has in the past been unable to develop or sustain other than very low level air activity through public subsidies.

But then, in thinking as a bi-national economic region, we recognized the extreme high cost (and therefore high fares) of airports in neighboring Quebec and Ontario (Toronto being the world's most expensive airport and Montreal being #2) and the general absence of "secondary airports" to offer competition and choice as has occurred around almost all major U.S. cities. This approach is now an active strategy at all of our border airports: Plattsburgh, Watertown, Ogdensburg and Massena.

Six years ago, Clinton County saw the opportunity to create an entirely new airport from the massive facilities of the former Plattsburgh Air Force Base – PLATTSBURGH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT – and to draw unprecedented air service to the North Country by positioning, marketing and developing it specifically as a long needed secondary airport for Montreal – "MONTREAL'S U.S. AIRPORT." While some other near border U.S. airports such as Bellingham, Washington were enjoying growth from Canadian flyers, this was the first (and so far only) creation of a new airport with a wholly bi-national mission.

It has become one of the fastest growing airports in North America, quickly going from zero to 160,000 enplanements with non-stop large jet service to places such as Fort Lauderdale, Orlando, St. Petersburg, Punta Gorda, Myrtle Beach, Las Vegas and Atlantic City, and thrice a day service to Boston. FAA approved projections show the potential to grow to over 300,000; 85% of passengers are enthusiastically being drawn from Quebec

and eastern Ontario; the original terminal has become overwhelmed with the demand; and work has begun on a major terminal expansion that, by late 2016, will more than quadruple the airport's capacity and will include the region's first and only FIS/U.S. Customs facility for direct international arrivals. The latter was made possible with \$4.5 million in state funding last year as one of the region's 2013 Priority Projects.

The strategic aim has always been to tap the power of the Quebec market to bring service to the North Country that would otherwise never occur here, initially via low cost services to vacation destinations but then being able to attract additional hub connections as well as international flights – building our Canadian connection, creating stronger air service to attract investment and jobs, and creating major (including international) air connectivity for the Adirondacks.

Eventual Customs operations at Plattsburgh International will also support desired aerospace and air industrial activity there, as well as open possibilities for such things as international cargo clearance in the region.

This attraction of growing numbers of Canadian travelers is also being seen at Watertown, where it has been a factor in attracting and supporting new American Airlines regional jet service to Philadelphia, as well as at Ogdensburg and Massena which have seen increasing numbers on their current Cape Air service and see potential for the development of additional air activity. Improvements at Watertown over the last three years have included a 1,000' runway extension, terminal expansion, a new hangar and construction of a new business center building. It's future plans include adding another 1,000' to the runway and further expanding the terminal and parking.

In the case of Ogdensburg Airport, operated by the Ogdensburg Bridge and Port Authority, plans have been developed for a 1,200' runway extension, the relocation of a state road, and terminal expansion as part of

a \$12 - \$15 million project designed to accommodate large jet service by a carrier already serving cross border passengers elsewhere. Service could begin by late 2016.

The North Country's bold and imaginative positioning as a new gateway for Ontario and Quebec travelers is an example of the region's strategic thinking and of our underlying precept: Where things move is where prosperity occurs.

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Plattsburgh is Quebec's fastest growing airport.

- Calin Rovinescu, CEO, Air Canada



_____**PORTS:**_____

The North Country is pleased to have a significant regional port facility at Ogdensburg, operated by the Ogdensburg Bridge & Port Authority. This port is connected to the Port of Montreal and the Atlantic via the Sea Lawrence Seaway to the north and to the Great Lakes to its south. This international activity and its status as the sole major port facility in the North Country made its development a priority for the NCREDC from the beginning

One of our first year Priority Projects brought \$1.8 million in state support for the creation of a new and enhanced road access, allowing it to handle larger cargo than in the past. This in turn allowed the port to handle the shipping of some 70 wind turbines into the North Country for construction of the region's \$340 million Marble River Wind Farm Project, a foreign investment venture itself based in Spain. This improved access will now allow future project cargo to flow in and out of the North Country, including potential support activities related to nearby Fort Drum.

The operations of the St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corp. are crucial to the North Country and Ogdensburg. We are therefore very pleased that NCREDC Co-Chair Tony Collins has been named to the board by President Obama.

“ *The North Country continues to bring strategic vision and support to highway enhancements as well in support of our international connectivity.*

_____**HIGHWAY:**_____

The North Country continues to bring strategic vision and support to highway enhancements as well in support of our international connectivity. Our support, and that of Governor Cuomo, for a fresh assessment of how to develop highway connectivity across the northern tier between I-81 and I-87 is a part of this long term vision as it would directly serve to help spread the region's cross border benefits through areas such as northern Franklin County. The Governor's commitment of \$2.5 million to study a bypass at Canton and Potsdam is an important step.

In the case of I-87, we successfully obtained Congressional designation as a "High Priority Corridor" to help support and facilitate future federal transportation funding and, at the last Quebec-New York Economic Summit, helped to establish an on-going dialogue between the New York State Transportation Dept. and Transport Quebec aimed at "greening" the corridor, including new provisions in support of electric and hybrid vehicles.

_____**TRANSPORTATION EQUIPMENT:**_____

As part of its success with FDI, the North Country has become a growing center for the production of 21st century transportation equipment in the U.S. This growing cluster, whose development remains a strategic priority for the NCREDC, features such major operations as Bombardier Transportation (railcars and locomotives), Volvo/Nova Bus (public transit buses), Spencer ARL (contract work and soon ambulance production) and Prevost Car (motor coaches) in Plattsburgh, and New York Air Brake in Watertown, all supported by a large community of co-located producers of components which were also mostly attracted from Canada.

This strategic cluster places the North Country at the center of transportation equipment production in North America, thanks almost entirely to FDI and effective exploitation of our connectivity with Canada.

STRATEGIES:

• **CSX AND CP:**

Support in all ways continued and further improvements to the region's two major north-south railways as well as spurs and feeder lines connected to each.

• **MASSENA:**

Continue to support development of intermodal facilities at Massena under the CSX Select initiative or by other means if necessary.

• **ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY:**

Support the needed rehabilitation of two key rail bridges in Norwood and Madrid. These are part of a 30-mile rail line owned by the Ogdensburg Bridge & Port Authority and their condition presently restricts global trade activity by 10% due to bridge weight restrictions.

• **PLATTSBURGH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT:**

Continued support for development of the airport, including its international passenger and aerospace/air industrial development opportunities. This must include rehabilitation of former Air Force industrial buildings to support occupancy and tenancy by new job creating enterprises likely to be international/FDI in nature.

• **AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT:**

Support for the development of cross border and global air and industrial development at Watertown, Ogdensburg and Massena Airports.

• **PORT OF OGDENSBURG:**

Continued enhancement of facilities and equipment at the North Country's key international port.

• **AMTRAK:**

Support for continued investment in the achievement of higher speed and more reliable passenger rail service on the Montreal-Albany-New York City corridor. Also, continued progress toward U.S.-Canadian pre-clearance of New York bound Amtrak passengers from Montreal.

• **HIGHWAY:**

Support for active joint planning by New York State-Quebec and New York State-Ontario regarding opportunities for enhancing the I-81 and I-87 international highway corridors, including the further identification and implementation of "Green Transportation" measures on a bi-national basis.

• **AUTHORIZATION:**

Strong support in 2015 for a new federal Transportation Authorization Bill that is as robust as possible in its allocation of resources for transportation infrastructure and mass transit equipment and which is also multi-year in duration.



VII. International Tourism:

As New York City is a gateway for international visitation and tourism, so is the North Country in a different but very significant respect.

There are three key aspects to our international tourism base:

- The presence of two internationally recognized destination areas: the Adirondacks and the Thousand Islands.
- The presence of truly global resorts, led by Lake Placid, known to the world as a two time site of the Winter Olympics.
- Immediate proximity to millions of foreign visitors in neighboring Ontario and Quebec, as well as proximity to visitors from around the world coming to Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto and including a “next door” U.S. visit.

For Canadians in particular, the North Country is a ready and constant place of easy visitation, from day trips to weekends to longer vacations. Peculiar to border areas like ours, international visitation includes not only expenditures on accommodations and attractions but cross border shopping and retail (everything from clothing to car repairs), second home investments, moorings of boats on Lake Champlain and the St. Lawrence, cross border visits to restaurants and gas stations, and all of the sorts of things one might do on a routine basis in the area around and proximate to where they live.

Based on 2012 data compiled through an Oxford Economic Study, in-market surveys and border agency surveys, it is estimated that the North Country benefitted from 1.222 million overnight Canadian visitor stays resulting in \$256,800,000 in direct expenditures. Significantly, this is an understatement of the direct spending of our Canadian visitors as it does not capture day trips or the general shopping and retail activity which occurs on a daily basis, especially in areas adjacent to the border.

An analysis of numbers from all of the North Country’s U.S.-Canadian border crossings shows that a total of 5.7 million Canadians crossed into the North Country and back to Canada in 2013, up 10% compared to 2012. Visitor surveys conducted by the North Country Chamber of Commerce have shown a conservative estimate of \$284.98 in spending in the North Country by each Canadian visitor, including day trippers and those here for retail purposes, equating to as much as \$1.6 billion injected into the North Country economy annually.

With Canadian visitation at near record levels and growing, it might seem to some that all aims have been achieved. But the North Country and its exceptional tourism professionals understand two things:

- As big as the Canadian visitation numbers are, there is immense potential for further growth in such a large, proximate and prosperous market.
- Tourism is dynamic and changing with greater competition than ever, requiring the constant refinement and updating of strategies and approaches toward any such target market.

The Thousand Islands International Tourism Council is somewhat unique as a tourism marketing and development region, directly partnered with the Ontario side of the region as well as St. Lawrence, Jefferson and Lewis Counties. The Adirondack Regional Tourism Council and participating members such as the Adirondack Coast Visitors Bureau and the Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism, are very attuned both to effective marketing approaches in neighboring Canada and the development of destinations and amenities conducive to Canadian and international visitation. All together, they form the Tourism Development Working Group of the NCREDC and now actively collaborate across the seven county region – a factor in the growth of Canadian visitation and spending.

STRATEGIES:

- Continual refinement of targeted approaches in the Ontario and Quebec markets including PR programs, paid media, social media, and cross border cooperative marketing programs.
- Continued commitment to enhancing hospitality in ways supportive of the visitor experience for Canadians – language, culture, understanding of various differences.
- Cultivation of other international market opportunities. In collaboration with ESDC and Brand USA, the region’s tourism promotion and development agencies are undertaking new programs aimed at increasing travel to the North Country from the U.K. and Germany, and also from China.

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VIII. International Sports:

The North Country has a very unique and special place in Global New York, having twice hosted the Winter Olympics at Lake Placid (1932 and 1980), with Lake Placid and the surrounding area standing amongst a very exclusive club of Olympic class resort communities who have also maintained their sports facilities and remain key locales for a wide range of international sports competitions.

Of further significance to New York, Lake Placid is the site of one of two U.S. Olympic Training Centers (the other being in Colorado), bringing athletes to the Adirondacks to train not only for winter sports but sports of all kinds.

The winter sports venues created for the 1980 Olympics at Lake Placid have been maintained and operated by the New York State Olympic Regional Development Authority (ORDA), in collaboration with the Town of North Elba and other partners. Significant state investment last occurred in the run up to the 2000 Winter Goodwill Games.

Maintaining New York's place in the global winter sports arena is important to the future economy of both the North Country and the state, and to the global place of New York State as a world class destination and the place where the entire world comes together to compete.

To maintain this status, however, it is crucial that the state commit to a program of major, sustained capital investment in its sports venues, bringing them from standards that were appropriate in 1980 to the standards required today to compete with newer Olympic facilities in Europe, Canada and even Salt

Lake City. ORDA has estimated a need for \$20.2 million in investment to repair and update New York's Olympic sports venues:

- Biathlon/Cross Country: \$1.4 million
- Bobsled/Skeleton/Luge: \$3.1 million
- Ice Hockey/Figure Skating/Speed/Curling: \$1.3 million
- Olympic Arena Roof Replacement: \$4 million
- Freestyle/Freeskiing: \$2.1 million
- Ski Jump/Nordic Combined: \$5.2 million
- Alpine Ski Racing: \$2.8 million
- Olympic Training Center: \$350,000

In addition to the signature Olympic status of the North Country, the region is growing as a site for other international sports competitions of all kinds, including international fishing tournaments on the St. Lawrence and Lake Champlain, boating regattas, triathlons, Iron Man and others, with active marketing to help attract further sports and recreation competitions to our region.

STRATEGIES:

- Identify the capital needs related to ORDA's sports venues as a Regional Priority and encourage a state commitment to a multi-year capital plan to carry out all of the needed repairs and modernizations.
- Support Lake Placid's potential bid for the World Youth Olympics, as well as continued exploration of the potential for one day seeking to host a third Winter Olympics.
- Facilitate a fresh exploration of the potential for sports related collaboration between Lake Placid/ New York State and Montreal/Quebec, the two former Olympic communities closest to one another in the world.
- Actively support the retention of existing international events and competitions to the maximum extent possible, while regionally supporting bids and proposals to attract additional events and competitions to the North Country.
- Support plans to "globalize" the Empire State Winter Games.





IX. Agriculture:

Sustaining and growing the large role of agriculture and food in the North Country economy has been a key strategic aim of the NCREDC, including a number of investments intended to bring added value to our producers, to facilitate and encourage regional consumption of regionally produced food products, and to foster the emergence and growth of both new sectors such as wine production and established sectors with far more potential such as maple syrup production.

Understanding and further tapping international markets for our output – from cheese and yogurt to maple products, apples, specialty food items and other crops – is very much a part of our Global North Country plans and intentions. Indeed, one of the key aims of our regional economic development vision statement is to “Propagate an agricultural revolution as we help to feed the region and the world”.

The NCREDC and our Global North Country coalition are working with Cornell Cooperative Extension, the William H. Miner Agricultural Research Institute and others to ensure that our new export strategies and services will bring new support to opportunities for building export activity by various elements of our agricultural sector.

The Miner Institute in Chazy is not only a world renowned center for agriculture research, but a major pathway for international cooperation based in the North Country. Miner conducts collaborative research with industry and academic partners on a global scale, with a special focus on dairy cattle nutrition and management. Current active research collaborations include:

- Lallemand Animal Nutrition, based in France with a large presence in Montreal.
- ZenNoh National Federation of Agricultural Cooperative Associations, a now 15 year partnership with Japan's largest agricultural cooperative.
- University of Bologna, Italy.
- University of British Columbia, Canada.
- Afgritech LLC, a joint venture of companies in the U.K. and South Africa.
- Glenn Seed, Ltd., based in Ontario.
- VetAgro, Inc., based in Italy.

In addition, Miner routinely hosts international interns, students and visiting faculty for various research and educational programs. Links include partners and institutions in China, Japan, Canada, Mexico, Netherlands, Sweden, Ireland, France, Italy, Spain, Germany and the Philippines. They also conduct respected training programs open to North Country producers.

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Miner conducts collaborative research with industry and academic partners on a global scale, with a special focus on dairy cattle nutrition and management.

STRATEGIES:

- **PORT:**

Continue to support improvements in facilities and equipment at the Port of Ogdensburg that can increase its capacity to handle various agricultural products.

- **INVENTORY:**

Support and work with Cornell Cooperative Extension and the NCREDC's Agriculture Work Group on plans for surveys of our region's farmers, aggregators, delivery services, food producers and others, using this opportunity to help define current agricultural exports as well as identify opportunities for new or expanded exports. This information will then help to guide the development of specific strategies and services for this sector.

- **MAPLE:**

Working with Cornell Cooperative Extension and our region's maple producers, we will support a growing market for North Country maple products in China. It is the intention of CCE to utilize knowledge gained on this maple product initiative to develop a successful plan for the export of North Country pork and dried whey to China.

- **FOOD EXPORTING TRAINING:**

As a special component of our planned export support efforts, we will organize and conduct a seminar in the North Country on food exporting, including linkages with service providers and sources of information and guidance.

- **MINER INSTITUTE:**

Support in all possible ways the research collaborations and work of the Miner Institute, and engage Miner in planned assessments of export opportunities for North Country agriculture.

- **DAIRY:**

The North Country already enjoys exports of its outstanding cheese products. We will fully support plans for the modernization and expansion of the AgriMark/McCadams Cheese plant in Chateaugay which in turn will allow this site to produce more cheese products for export, utilizing North Country dairy farm output.

- **APPLES:**

Already a significant export, we will seek in our export outreach endeavors and planned surveys by Cornell Cooperative Extension any opportunities to enhance and support further apple and fruit exports from the North Country. We took an important step last year by working through Congressman Bill Owens and Senator Charles Schumer to obtain a provision in the new Agriculture Bill that simplifies and facilitates apple shipments to and through Canada from the U.S.

- **WINE:**

With NCREDC support, we now have two state designated Wine Trails, in the St. Lawrence and Champlain Valleys. We will work to maximize the visibility and marketing of these trails as attractions, particularly for Canadian and other international visitors. We also will continue to work to lower Canadian impediments on U.S. wine purchases.

- **AGRI-TOURISM:**

A key component of the NCREDC's Tourism Development agenda, agri-tourism development and marketing holds a special opportunity for leveraging foreign and particularly Canadian visitor dollars. This will continue to be reflected in our region's tourism plans and strategies.



X. Energy:

Because of our geographic location and multi-faceted connectivity with Canada, our regional Energy strategies are linked in a substantial way to Global North Country.

Natural gas is also a highly important part of our international dynamic. With most of the North Country too distant from natural gas lines to the south to economically access this energy resource from there, we have been expanding natural gas access through pipeline connections with Quebec and Ontario to the north. Currently, it is estimated that some 73 billion cubic feet of natural gas is benefitting North Country customers via cross border pipeline connections with Quebec and Ontario.

The Plattsburgh area was first served with Canadian gas more than fifteen years ago via a major line constructed from near Montreal. It has become an invaluable resource for sustaining existing industry such as Georgia Pacific, Pactiv and Saranac Power Partners among others, and has supported the attraction and development of dozens of new employers utilizing natural gas instead of oil or electric. As distribution continues to surrounding communities, it is assisting more and more businesses, homeowners and public facilities by offering access to a cleaner, lower cost fuel choice.

Currently, two additional pipeline projects linked to Canada are under development, each identified as strategic priorities by the NCREDC. The Enbridge/St. Lawrence Gas pipeline through St. Lawrence County to Malone and Chateaugay in northern Franklin County is nearing completion and is already proving a boon to our agricultural/food production ambitions and our dairy producers (supporting North Country Dairy's yogurt production in St. Lawrence County and facilitating the planned modernization and expansion of the AgriMark/McCadam cheese plant in Chateaugay).

In addition, we are actively supporting final approval by Vermont and federal agencies of the planned construction of a natural gas pipeline that will reach International Paper in Ticonderoga from Vermont beneath Lake Champlain. This is a further extension of Vermont's existing connection with natural gas via Quebec, representing another roundabout use of our Canadian connection to meet critical North Country energy needs – in this case addressing IP's unsustainably high oil costs while also substituting a cleaner burning fuel for their industrial processes which employ 600 directly and another 600 engaged in providing forest product.

We also continue to support the potential for further accessing the enormous hydroelectric capacity of Quebec as a ready source of additional renewable energy.

STRATEGIES:

- **CLEAN ENERGY DEVELOPMENT:**
We will continue to actively target Canada for desired investment in the development of clean and renewable energy related activities in the North Country, including biomass and hydro.
- **NATURAL GAS:**
We will continue to actively promote and support efforts to further extend North Country access to natural gas via our natural connectivity with Canada

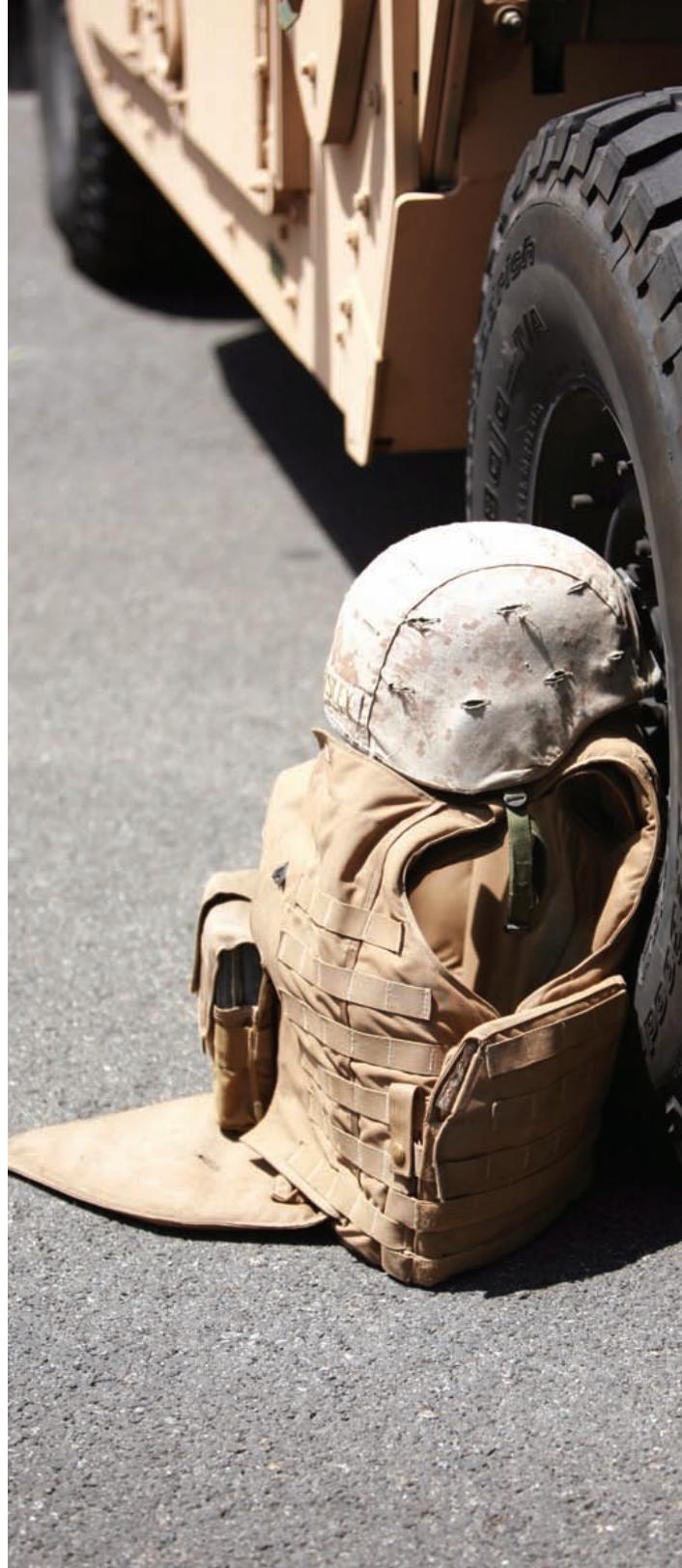
XI. Veterans:

We welcome Governor Cuomo's fresh spotlight this year on the need to enhance support for our veterans.

As noted, our interactions with Canada are unusually extensive but also unusually diverse, resulting from the strong sense of natural, social connectivity we have developed with Quebec and Ontario.

Homeward Bound Adirondacks, a multi-dimensional set of rehabilitation services for veterans and wounded warriors based in Saranac Lake and led by St. Joseph's Addiction Treatment & Recovery Centers there, has recently joined with Snowslip Farm in Lake Placid in a unique, bi-national initiative. Together, they are now hosting a cross border program for both U.S. and Canadian veterans, first responders and others dealing with similar high stress environments, focusing on coping strategies related to stress and trauma using Equine Assisted Personal Development methods, along with peer support, the arts, and the natural surroundings of the Adirondacks.

A successful initial program was held in July of this year, featuring the partnership of several notable Canadian experts. Plans are now underway to continue and expand this bi-national program in 2015.



XII. Innovation Hot Spot and Start-Up New York:

The concept for the North Country's Innovation Hot Spot funded in the first round of the new program is based upon a hub and spoke approach (Clarkson as the hub with partners and connection points in Plattsburgh, Saranac Lake, Watertown and Ogdensburg).

Among its targets, it specifically seeks to identify and support opportunities to nurture new enterprise coming from Canada. Partner organizations such as the North Country Chamber of Commerce, CITEC, Ogdensburg Bridge & Port Authority, St. Lawrence County IDA and Development Authority of the North Country are committed to being natural sources of such contacts and referrals.

The first such cross border referrals are under development and more will come as the Hot Spot fully spreads its wings and develops. Already, for example, Clarkson University and the St. Lawrence County IDA are actively developing a linkage between the North Country Innovation Hot Spot and the Cornwall (Ontario) Community Futures Development Corporation (www.mycommunityfutures.ca), which is engaged in a similar incubator initiative in eastern Ontario. Among potential sectors of shared interest being discussed are agri-business and food processing, aerospace and unmanned vehicles, creative and digital media, and logistics and distribution.

Similarly with Start-Up NY, most of the North Country's participating colleges having specifically identified Canada as a target for their marketing and outreach, and all of the region's economic developers are now featuring Start-Up NY in their Canadian and FDI-related efforts.



XIII. Higher Education:

It is important to acknowledge as a part of our Global North Country plan the various ways in which our institutions of higher education are a contributing part of our region's international dynamic.

In addition to hosting increasing numbers of international students, there are several academic programs that very directly contribute to our international and FDI strategies, including:

- Clarkson University: Global MBA; Supply Chain Management; international collaborations in Advanced Materials and Manufacturing.
- St. Lawrence University: Center for International and Intercultural Studies
- SUNY Plattsburgh: Center for the Study of Canada; Global Supply Chain Management with a specialty on cross border movement; Institute on Quebec Studies.
- SUNY Canton: Partnership with the International Institute for Health Sciences in Sri Lanka for their Physical Therapy program.

These are just examples, supplemented by other programs across the region as well as the international research collaborations found at the Trudeau Institute in Saranac Lake and the Miner Institute in Chazy.

The North Country Regional Economic Development Council fostered the creation of the HEARD (Higher Education and Research and Development) consortium which, for the first time, regularly facilitates sharing and coordination among all twelve of the relevant schools and institutions in the seven county region in support of the objectives of our Regional Plan and strategies.

STRATEGIES:

- **GLOBAL NORTH COUNTRY:**

Our Global North Country strategies will become the subject of a meeting of the HEARD Consortium, creating awareness and engaging all of its members in the identification of opportunities for support and assistance.

Global North Country Structure and Implementation

Early in 2014, the NCREDC’s existing Canadian Connection Work Group was revised, expanded and transformed into “**GLOBAL NORTH COUNTRY**” – a working collaboration of key organizations and interests across the region, committed to the creation of this plan and set of strategies and now being the coordinating body for implementation.

Current membership is as follows:

- Garry Douglas, *North Country Chamber of Commerce, Co-Chair*
- Patrick Kelly, *St. Lawrence County IDA, Co-Chair*
- Congressman Bill Owens
- Jon Cardinal, *Senator Kirsten Gillibrand’s Office*
- Michele Capone, *Development Authority of the North Country*
- Wade David, *Ogdensburg Bridge and Port Authority*
- David Zembiec, *Jefferson County IDA*
- Paul Grasso, *Development Corp. of Clinton County*
- John Ettling, *SUNY Plattsburgh*
- Matthew Draper, *Clarkson University*
- William Murray, *CITEC*
- Michael Carpenter, *NEPCO*
- Matthew Boire, *Crossborder Development Corp.*
- James McKenna, *Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism*
- Gary DeYoung, *Thousand Islands International Tourism Council*
- Todd Fredette, *A.N. Deringer*
- Mike Burgess, *Kinney Drugs*

Global North Country Infrastructure Priorities

The following infrastructure investments are identified as priorities in support of global business development in the North Country:

EXPORTING:

- Ogdensburg-Prescott International Bridge — rehabilitation: \$100 million
- Facility and equipment enhancements at the Port of Ogdensburg
- Rehabilitation of two bridges on Port of Ogdensburg railway line

INTERNATIONAL SPORTS AND TOURISM:

- \$20.2 million in state infrastructure investment in the modernization of ORDA's Olympic sports venues in and around Lake Placid.

ENERGY:

- Continued support for natural gas extensions in the North Country, linked to Quebec and Ontario.

INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORTATION:

- Full completion of planned expansion of terminal at Plattsburgh International Airport, including FIS/U.S. Customs facility and operation.
- Rehabilitation of former Air Force industrial buildings at Plattsburgh International Airport for aerospace and aviation industrial occupancy: \$5 million
- Continued improvements to facilities at Watertown, Ogdensburg and Massena Airports to accommodate cross border development opportunities.
- Support as needed for continued modernization of the North Country's rail infrastructure, including CSX and CP as well as connecting spurs.

Conclusion

The North Country is an historically and very naturally international region of New York.

Thinking and acting internationally is not new or unusual or even challenging for us. It is what we do and who we are.

From embracing a sense of bi-national regionalism to successfully hosting the world in global competition, the North Country has a unique character and perspective when it comes to all things global.

*Sans Frontières
...No Boundaries*

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- We are the state's acknowledged leaders and experts in all things Canadian, and particularly Quebec and eastern Ontario.
- We have done amazing things to build a 21st century economy around foreign direct investment and the new North America.
- We have brought strategic vision and creativity to our international endeavors which has earned international recognition and respect.
- We have served not only ourselves but the state and nation in our successful advocacy for efficient border connections and for operations supportive of fluidity.
- We have developed a tourism economy that sees the international visitor as not merely an added value but as central to our success, and have brought billions in annual spending to the state.

Above all else, we connect the dots. For the North Country, global business development is far from a series of “silos” of mostly disconnected services and activities. It is the aim of an overarching vision and continuous approach that foresees and maximizes the connections among transportation infrastructure, cross border relationships, home based expertise, international tourism and events, energy access, bi-national border policies and operations and the other elements of how we live and develop as an international region.

The North Country is confident of its special place in New York's global standing, and in our proven ability to do extraordinary things. With the full partnership of the state behind our capabilities and identified opportunities, there are indeed “no boundaries” to how much more we can achieve as a global model of internationalism in a rural region.

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