

**JEFFERSON COUNTY**

**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy**

**2014 - 2015 Update**

## INTRODUCTION

*The 2014 – 2015 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Update reflects a modified process for re-examining economic development goals and actions identified in the 2012 CEDS Five Year Update. As usual, during years between major Five Year CEDS Updates, a less intensive analysis to review changes in baseline conditions and economic development strategies is undertaken by the Committee.*

*In 2014 the Committee completed a more informal, interactive approach involving small subgroups of CEDS members that held discussions on each of the 11 goals contained in the 2012 Five Year Update. **At each meeting, the focus was on “what’s new” and “what’s coming up in 2015” for each goal, instead of individually assessing and making formal edits to each action under each goal.** The objective was to multiple provide forums for more participation by members through less structured large group meetings.*

*There were 11 weekly meetings, each week focusing on a particular goal. In 2013, the committee assigned relevant goal reviewers to each goal to form a group responsible for submitting an update that goal. In 2014, after adjusting for some membership changes, the groups for each goal remained roughly the same, however, all members had an opportunity to participate in any and all sessions.*

*The result is a 2014 Update that reflects action “highlights” noted by CEDS members and agency partners that are moving the County toward accomplishing the established CEDS goals.*

### Current CEDS Members:

Jeff Wood, Samaritan Medical Center (current CEDS Chair)  
Don Alexander, Jefferson County Economic Development  
George Anderson, Current Applications  
Bruce Armstrong, retired – Jefferson County  
Michelle Capone, Development Authority of the North Country  
Lorraine Clement, Jefferson Physicians’ Organization  
Eric Constance, Small Business Development Center  
Gary DeYoung, Thousand Islands Council  
Terrence Harris, Jefferson Community College  
Jay Matteson, Jefferson County Economic Development  
Cheryl Mayforth, Workplace Investment Board  
Carl McLaughlin, Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization  
Ken Mix, City of Watertown  
John Peck, Board of Legislators  
Lynn Pietroski, Greater Watertown Chamber of Commerce  
John O’Driscoll, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers  
John VanDeLoo, Empire State Development  
Peter Whitmore, Entrepreneur  
Dave Zembiec, Jefferson County Economic Development

Assistance is provided by the Jefferson County Department of Planning and Jefferson County Jefferson County Economic Development staff.

## Goal A: Develop the local workforce to meet 21st century challenges

*A.1: Coordinate efforts between all educational providers to align workforce development with targeted industries*

*A.2: Create a task force to regularly bring together educators and employers to jointly address emerging workforce needs*

*A.3: Encourage internship and apprenticeship partner programs*

*A.4: Support Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) training programs*

*A.5: Continue the Jefferson Express Workshops*

*A.6: Create new and promote existing programs to assist in the transition from military to civilian life for retired military personnel*

*A.7: Develop employee training programs for small employers and new start-ups*

*A.8: Develop and promote adequate community support services required for a strong workforce*

*A.9: Establish a connection with Canadian universities to advertise jobs*

*A.10: Increase awareness of available higher education offerings and continue to increase program offerings*

### Highlights of what's new/what's coming up in 2015:

#### For Students/New Entrepreneurs:

- Career Jam –September 2014 **(A.1, A.2, A.4)**  
A career exploration fair by over 1,500 9<sup>th</sup> graders representing 16 school districts in Jefferson and Lewis counties, with the goal being to steer education toward more specific goals, particularly in one of these five fields:
  - Healthcare
  - Manufacturing
  - Hospitality and Tourism
  - Construction Trades
  - Agriculture
- Collaborative effort with a variety of organizations setting up a hands-on, show and tell style career show to get kids excited
- BOCES Manufacturing program launched in March 2014 as an adult continuing education program **(A.1, A.2, A.4, A.8, F.3)**
  - The program resulted from a partnership between BOCES, local manufacturers, the JCED Manufacturing Council, and workforce development agencies
  - Graduated first class in June 2014, second class to graduate December 2014
  - New course will meet new computer standards in manufacturing technology
- Closed nursing gap with Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) **(A.1, A.8)**

- As a result, Workforce Investment Board (WIB) no longer funding training courses for nursing
- North Country REDC completed skills mapping project in April 2014 **(A.2, A.3)**
  - Shows need for internships and apprenticeships across all fields
  - Can be a challenge to find people with 3-5 years' experience in Jefferson County (for some trades and skill sets) -- "we have to raise our own"
- 3<sup>rd</sup> year for Manufacturing Day **(A.1, A.2, A.4, A.8)**
  - Region wide locations in North Country Plattsburgh/Canton/Watertown in October 2014
  - Roundtable discussion which includes a panel of manufacturing industry leaders
  - The discussion highlighted:
    - career opportunities for young people in the industry
    - workforce needs and challenges facing manufacturers
    - how issues may be addressed locally
- Community Enhancement Employment Program (CEEP) **(A.4, A.10, A.3)**
  - Rural Schools grant run by Cornell Cooperative Extension
  - Training for approximately 100 students at four schools:
    - Copenhagen Central School
    - LaFargeville Central School
    - Belleville Henderson Central School
    - Lyme Central School
  - STEM-based learning will provide students with college and career readiness skills, such as:
    - development and implementation of college credit online courses in collaboration with Jefferson Community College and SUNY Canton
    - an online sustainable energy high school course to be piloted at Copenhagen Central School District
    - staff development workshops for middle and high school teachers, Cooperative Extension educators, and volunteers
    - job shadowing, mentoring, and internship opportunities for students
    - a one-day Community Energy Symposium
- *Ft. Drum RISE* – STEM education, DOD grant **(A.3, A.4, A.10)**
  - Fort Drum RISE (Alexandria, Belleville Henderson, Copenhagen, Lyme, LaFargeville, and Sackets Harbor schools, Clarkson University and the Jefferson-Lewis BOCES), will enhance the STEM achievement of all students in grades 7-12 by enriching learning opportunities for students in STEM related areas. Fort Drum RISE will also establish a system to support students' transitions to college and careers

- aligned with Next Generation Science Standards, the Consortium will provide directed, enhanced educational opportunities to students in STEM areas for the small, rural schools serving Fort Drum
  - apply professional development to ensure that all students are prepared for advanced STEM coursework
  - coordinate the provision of advanced coursework, professional development and materials sharing
  - train teachers and staff to promote the transition to college and careers
  - provide STEM enrichments for students and outreach to families
  - establish Aspire programs in each of the targeted schools to support college/career planning
- Community Action Planning Council – work readiness program (**A.8**)
  - program partnership with Workforce Investment Board for those within 125% of poverty level
  - CFA to do an on-site training program
- Fort Drum worker transition opportunities (**A.6, A.8**)
  - Army Career Alumni Program (ACAP) – federal program – provides transition assistance to Soldiers, Family members, Veterans, Retirees, and DA Civilians
- Community Action Planning Council, Jefferson County Cornell Cooperative Extension, and Urban Mission all have backpack programs (**A.8**)
  - supplying area families with backpacks full of school supplies -- items like pencils, crayons, notebooks, binders, erasers and more are collected throughout the year and then stuffed into new or gently used backpacks
- New evening daycare center in the City of Watertown recently opened – hoping this helps “third shift” workers (**A.8**)

#### **Canadian Connection (A.9, D.7)**

- Employment and training professionals working with Canadian employment and training professionals working together to cooperate and foster communication – new in the fall of 2014
- “How to do business in Canada program” completed, considering hosting another

#### **Continuing to increase higher education program offerings (A.5, A.7, A.10)**

- SUNY Canton to offer ten degrees fully online starting in 2015
- Jefferson Higher Education Center
  - 27 Bachelor and advanced degrees opportunities offered through Jefferson Community College’s partner institutions
- Jefferson Express Workshops

- Jefferson offers a variety of workshops tailored to all age groups and schedules. Workshops and trainings are offered online, on campus in Watertown, New York, or on the road at various partner locations in Jefferson County
- Fall 2014: reviving the training van to allow for greater mobility and a larger Fort Drum presence
- Jefferson Community College (JCC) Hospitality and Tourism A.A.S. degree program
  - Positions students to take a leadership role in career areas involving culinary, hotel/restaurant management, tourism, and winery management.
  - Students in the Hospitality and Tourism A.A.S degree program choose one of the following three concentration areas:
    - Culinary Arts
    - Hotel/Restaurant Management
    - Winery Management and Marketing
  - In future, hoping to offer joint programs AA/BA programs to make the program more attractive to students from the area
- Jefferson Community College (JCC) and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Entrepreneurship & Small Business Workshop Series (8 week program) – adding online program **(A.6, A.7, B.1)**
  - have collaborated to offer workshops each semester
    - practical business topics that prepare them for small business and entrepreneurial success
    - Individuals are able to customize selections and enroll in workshops that specifically fit their needs
    - Participants who take as few as five courses may apply for the Entrepreneurship & Small Business Certificate from JCC & the SBDC which qualifies an individual for funding and exposure opportunities for their business
- Watertown Chamber initiatives **(B.2)**
  - Workforce 2020
    - High school seniors from 18 different school districts meet one-on-one with local business representatives for a mock interview
    - Businesses from over 20 different economic sectors participate, including:
      - architecture, engineering, finance, communications and IT, construction, agriculture, education, environmental and animal sciences, the food industry, healthcare, human services, media, energy, manufacturing, mortuary science, retail, tourism, vehicle and aircraft maintenance, transportation, law enforcement and security.
  - Educational Workshops and Speaker Series events **(B.1)**
    - brings in guest speakers on current issues -- topics include political information, health insurance reform and related issues, strategic planning, and an economic forecast

- Dorms opening at JCC **(A.10)**
  - 78% percent filled as of September 2014

**Additional challenges moving forward**

- Residual of the healthcare law: employers only hiring 28/hour maximum (under the “full time” qualifications) to avoid providing healthcare
- Lower employment rate – smaller pool of applicants
  - Need for companies to broaden search
  - preach retention – companies must be able to retain their people

## Goal B: Cultivate a culture of entrepreneurship

*B.1: Expand on existing support networks for entrepreneurs and new businesses, designed to help them grow and compete successfully*

*B.2: Continue to build on existing youth entrepreneurship programs*

*B.3: Study the feasibility of establishing an entrepreneur incubator space*

*B.4: Promote existing sources of capital and work to find new sources for entrepreneurs*

*B.5: Establish a more intensive mentoring program and improve regional partnerships*

*B.6: Support existing small business assistance programs and transitional classes aimed at Fort Drum retirees and soldiers separating from service*

*B.7: Continue training opportunities through the Small Business Development Center*

*B.8: Connect with seasonal homeowners looking to start their own business*

### Highlights of what's new / what's coming up in 2015:

#### Start-Up Support

- Clarkson University approved for New York State Hot Spot in July 2014 **(B.1, B.3, B.5)**
  - The North Country is one of only five New York State Regional Economic Development Councils that was awarded a Hot Spot through New York State's Regional Economic Development Council initiative
  - Six offices around the North Country supporting entrepreneurship for this particular Hot Spot – Watertown is one of them
    - Each office will be open one day per week and staffed by a start-up professional who will meet with entrepreneurs who have ideas for new businesses and need assistance. They will be able to help with anything from providing resources in the area to forming a corporation to developing a business plan to commercialize their products and business growth
    - The program hopes to nurture new start-ups and direct successful entrepreneurs into New York State's new START-UP NY program, which gives start-ups the opportunity to operate tax-free for 10 years on eligible campuses and spaces in New York State
    - Incubator Update: No formal feasibility study on establishing an entrepreneur incubator space -- Clarkson to figure out Hot Spot program first
- Boots 2 Business – Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP) Training Session – November 2014 **(B.1, B.5, B.6, B.7)**
  - course specifically for soldiers transitioning out of the service and interested in starting their own business
  - participants learn about researching the potential market, how to find licensing, funding opportunities and then turning that idea into a plan utilizing it for funding and an operating tool

- Seed money available through Small Business Development Center (SBDC) via Northern New York Community Foundation **(B.1, B.7)**
  - 250K in coffers to start a grant program in 2015 – still in development phase, but for broadly defined economic development
  
- Next Steps, possibly: **(B.1, B.2)**
  - Networking for young entrepreneurs “mixer” type event
    - Need for structure to support a hot industry i.e. brewing, winery, etc.
  
  - Hops: education through USDA Rural Development networking event or conference **(B.1, B.7)**
    - Entice farms to start growing hops
    - Educate interested parties
  
  - Mentoring group – who is brain trust? - Business survival strategies **(B.5)**
    - Focus groups for growth industries
    - Chamber natural for lead
  
- Challenges
  - Coordination between SBDC, JCC, GWCC still a challenge
  - Funding

## Goal C: Develop first-class amenities to support growth (infrastructure, facilities, and alternative energy)

~~C.1: Complete the Watertown International Airport development plan, addressing both future aviation and corporate park needs~~ Address all corporate park needs

~~C.2: Analyze-Facilitate adaptive re-use and rehabilitation of the Mercy Care Center health complex, Woolworth Building, and Lincoln Building in downtown Watertown. Move to Goal E~~

C.3: Consider expansion of broadband access and "last mile" infrastructure

C.4: Leverage appropriate alternative energy production facilities that support business development and support biomass utilization and development.

C.5: Participate in planning for long term upgrades to County's electrical distribution and transmission infrastructure

~~C.6: Feasibility study on anaerobic digester (see C.4)~~

C.7: Participate in the North Country Regional Economic Development Council's Cleaner, Greener, Communities Sustainability Plan

~~C.8: Support the development of appropriate alternative energy development production facilities utilizing hydro, wind, or solar power (see C.4)~~

C.9: Continue with implementation of Watertown International Airport Capital Improvement Plan for aviation infrastructure improvements, as well as continuing to promote the use of Watertown International Airport for passenger service

~~C.10: Capital Project: Build out and market Watertown International Airport corporate park (see C.1)~~

### Highlights of what's new/what's coming up in 2015:

#### **Watertown International Airport (C.7, C.9)**

- July 2014 saw a 14% growth in passengers over previous year
- New hangar completed – currently being used for smaller planes
  - Need larger vehicle to service larger planes
- Runway upgrade on Taxiway B to be completed in 2015
- Passenger terminal to be expanded to support larger TSA presence

#### **Airport corporate park (C.1, C.8)**

- 110 acres acquired
- Water and sewer hookups already in place
  - Next steps: starting development plan

#### **"Last mile" Infrastructure (C.3)**

- Jefferson County experienced significant improvements in wireless broadband availability

- Many of the major cellular providers upgraded their networks to 4G and increased their network bandwidth to provide increased speeds on wireless networks
- Development Authority of the North Country (DANC) awarded \$500,000 from Empire State Development to create the North Country Telecommunications Loan Fund
  - Will enable DANC to create and manage a loan fund that will be used to support last mile build-out of high-speed broadband for residents and businesses in Jefferson County

### **Fort Drum Re-Energy 60-megawatt Biomass Cogeneration Facility (C.4, H.3)**

- Now generating electricity 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- Employs 33 full-time employees and supports 140 jobs in harvest and transportation of woody biomass
  - Purchasing 80 to 100 tractor trailers filled with local wood chips every day
  - The company is collaborating with SUNY ESF to research and provide market for shrub willow in the County

### **Other renewable energy systems: (C.4, C.5)**

- Jefferson and Lewis BOCES awarded \$150,000 through Regional Council awards to develop a plan to create a solar power collective across educational facilities in the tri-county region
  - plan will involve the development and creation of the cooperative, site studies, as well as the fiscal, technical, legal, and administrative aspects of the project

### **Infrastructure Improvements -- Regional Council Awards**

- Development Authority of the North Country awarded \$5,000,000 for a North Country Regional Revitalization Fund
  - Fund will assist with redevelopment, rehabilitation, revitalization, blight clean up, and infrastructure projects in the North Country Region
- Town of Hounsfield
  - \$30,000 to complete an engineering report to evaluate the feasibility and infrastructure needed for a new sanitary sewer system
- Town of Lyme
  - \$30,000 to complete an engineering study to analyze the benefits of a public sewer collection system for the hamlet of Three Mile Bay
- Village of Adams
  - \$30,000 for an engineering report to evaluate improvements to the Village's wastewater treatment plant and collection system
- Village of Sackets Harbor
  - \$25,000 for Markets Square Park Rehabilitation, in accordance with the Village's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program
  - \$25,000 for the development of the Pickering-Beach Museum Park
- Village of Carthage
  - Joint Wastewater Treatment Facility Improvement Project

- \$1,650,000 for comprehensive updates to the wastewater treatment facility
  - \$900,000 for upgrades to the water pollution control facility
- Village of Deferiet
  - \$30,000 for a wastewater upgrades planning study
- Village of Cape Vincent
  - \$25,000 for a public dock expansion design to serve the demand from seasonal residents, local boaters, and transient boaters in keeping with the recommendations from its Local Waterfront Revitalization Program

### **Challenges moving forward**

- Housing concerns:
  - Development of new housing makes market softer for non-corporate landlords
  - Market forces make it difficult to maintain and sustain existing housing market in the City of Watertown
  - “slumification” and struggles with landlord registration

## **Goal D: Improve business development, communications, marketing, and networking to enhance the economic climate**

*D.1: Enhance existing business retention and expansion efforts*

*D.2: Continue participation in the "Drum Country Business" regional marketing effort*

*D.3: Public official economic development training*

~~*D.4: Finalize Canadian Version of JCIDA Website*~~

*D.5: Develop updated marketing materials (including brochure) promoting Jefferson County as a desirable business location*

*D.6: Analyze feasibility of a web-based Jefferson County Project Development Portal*

*D.7: Increase efforts to attract Canadian firms to the County, including Canadian Version of JCIDA Website*

*D.8: Facilitate cross-border business-to-business opportunities*

~~*D.9: Continue implementation of growth management principles to maintain military and community land use compatibility – move to Goal E*~~

~~*D.10: Continue to promote the use of Watertown International Airport for passenger service- move to Goal C*~~

### **Highlights of what's new / what's coming up in 2015:**

#### **Tourism (D.1, D.5, G.5)**

- North Country Transformational Community Tourism Revolving Loan Program (see G.1)
  - Program to proactively promote tourism related business opportunities across the North Country to potential investors
  - Loan program available for businesses looking to make upgrades to tourism infrastructure

#### **Local Business expansion (D.1, F.)**

- Jain Irrigation
  - expanded from 9 to 11 lines
  - Now employs approximately 120
- FedEx Ground
  - new 60,000 square foot facility in Jefferson County Corporate Park
- North American Tapes
  - Added 19,000 square feet in 2013 and began an additional 8,900 SF in 2014
  - Projecting to add 15 new jobs over 3 years
  - In December 2014, received a combined \$195,000 from Empire State Development through the Regional Council awards for machinery purchase and production expansion
- New York Air Brake
  - expanded and grew total employment at Watertown facility to over 500 jobs

- Knowlton Technologies
  - Purchased by Eastman Chemical expected to make investments in Watertown facility

### **Drum Country Business (D.2)**

- In 2014, the three county region participated in a statewide business attraction campaign in partnership with Empire State Development and National Grid
  - The consultant was 310 LTD
- There were several inquiries for locations within the region but no current projects proposed
  - We plan to continue with this effort in the coming year
  - In addition, the group is looking to identify a consultant that might provide similar services to our region specifically attracting businesses to our three-county region in 2015-2016

### **Economic Development Education •(D.3)**

- Economic Development 101 course to continue at JCC
- Attended by over 40 people in 2014 and considered an ongoing program
  - Next event anticipated in early 2015

### **Jefferson County Project Development Portal (D.7)**

- Preliminary version on Jefferson County Planning Department website
  - All municipal clerk contact information available

### **Canadian Marketing Efforts (D.7)**

- Advertisements in Canadian manufacturing magazine *20/20* paid for by a grant from National Grid
- Updated [www.bridge2usbiz.ca](http://www.bridge2usbiz.ca) website – early 2015
- Banner advertisements on Time Warner Cable’s Extended Audience Network
- Cross Border Networking event, “How to do Business in Canada” ongoing program
  - The second part in a series—first was “How to do Business in the US”
- New JCIDA website – early 2015

## Goal E: Enhance quality of life advantages of the County to support local residents, the workforce, and to facilitate business investment

*E. 1: Continue to support 'Buy Local' campaigns and farmers markets*

*E.2: Continually evolve County housing strategy to facilitate response ~~to new unit demand~~ to the changing housing market and rehabilitation needs*

*E.3: Continue reinvesting in downtowns, community centers and areas with infrastructure.*

~~Analyze-Facilitate adaptive re-use and rehabilitation of the Mercy Care Center health complex, Woolworth Building, and Lincoln Building in-downtown Watertown.~~

*E.4: Increase year round arts and cultural offerings*

*E.5: Maintain regular communication between Fort Drum and the community*

*E.6: Implement recommendations from Fort Drum Regional Transit Needs Assessment*

*E.7: Improve government service delivery in key areas that affect business sustainability and growth prospects*

~~Capital Project E.8: Upgrade Emergency Public Safety Radio System~~

### Highlights of what's new / what's coming up in 2015:

#### Buy Local Movement (E.1)

- Local food guide for Jefferson County published annually by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County (CCE)
  - 50 producers use the local food guide to direct market their products
  - In 2013, 114 producers used the food guide and 52,900 were distributed to consumers
- The Greater Watertown-North Country Chamber of Commerce (GWNCCC) was awarded a \$10,000 grant from the New York State FreshConnect program to fund its Farm & Craft Market **(E.1)**
  - Used the funding to:
    - Create a part-time position to assist the market manager during the busy market season (every Wednesday from May 28 through Oct. 1)
    - Buy a second EBT machine to keep up with the increased redemption of food stamp benefits at the market
    - Increase marketing efforts
- [www.comefarmwithus.com](http://www.comefarmwithus.com) website updated and improved
- Madison Barracks Shared Kitchen update **(B.3, E.1)**
  - Jefferson County's first commercial NYS licensed 20C kitchen rental facility, fully-equipped for small food artisans, commercial processors, specialty bakers and set schedule caterers

- The certification enables food processors to package, market and sell a range of products at bakeries, grocery stores and wholesale food manufacturers
- Farmers Market Promotion Project grant **(E.1, H.1)**
  - 23 farmers have participated in FMNP, SNAP and WIC Vegetable and Fruit Check certification training
    - 100% passed the certification exam and completed certification paperwork
  - 130 producers have participated in training
- CCE working on two food initiatives: **(E.1, H.1)**
  - Farm to Institution
    - This initiative is working to connect farmers and food service managers from schools, colleges, hospitals, prisons, restaurants and other organizations in order to break down barriers and create connections to increase the use of local foods in area institutions
    - In 2013, there were 4 institutions purchasing from local producers
  - Farm to Restaurant
    - This initiative is working to connect area producers with restaurant owners and chefs in order to create connections to increase the use of local foods in area restaurants

### **Downtown Watertown updates (E.3)**

- Woolworth Building: \$17 million renovation to create 50 units and a ground floor commercial space (to be built out as needed) slated for completion later 2014
  - Dedicated parking across the street completed
- Mercy Healthcare Complex: demolition completed December 2014 and construction will soon begin on a \$65 million multiuse building containing 168 rental units and 42,000 square feet of commercial space
- Empsalls/Brighton Building project: Neighbors of Watertown, Inc completed an application for housing tax credit in December 2014
  - Space would be used for new commercial and residential space
- Lincoln Building: Watertown Trust approved grant money for façade only restorations -- \$200,000
  - Easement renovations in accordance to historical guidelines

### **Housing (E.3)**

County-wide:

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
  - 2012 CDBG Housing Rehab grant- \$516,428 was spent in support of 21 housing rehabilitation projects
  - April 2014, the 2013 CDBG Housing Rehab grant was awarded in the amount of \$750,000
    - This was the 7th consecutive year of CDBG housing rehab grants for the County

- HOME
  - The North Country HOME Consortium (made up of over 100 municipalities in Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties) has been an entitlement community for Federal HOME funds since 1994
  - During 2014, the Consortium was approved for another 3 year reauthorization period (2015-2017)
  - March 2014: the HOME Administrative Board approved seven awards totaling \$774,236 in owner occupied rehabilitation and rental rehabilitation
  - Since January 1, 2014, \$678,337 in HOME funds has been spent in support of 29 housing projects across the Consortium area.

#### City of Watertown **(E.2, E.3)**

- The City of Watertown became an entitlement community for Community Development Block Grant funding for the first time in 2014
  - City of Watertown completed Consolidated Plan for Housing in July 2014
    - As part of the CDBG Program, the City must adopt a multi-year Consolidated Plan which describes community needs, resources, priorities, and proposed activities to be undertaken
    - Initially, The City of Watertown has decided to concentrate its Community Development Block Grant program on three high priority needs:
      - Decent affordable housing
      - Public infrastructure improvements
      - Blight elimination
    - And one need with a lower priority:
      - Homelessness prevention
    - These needs are addressed by three goals:
      - Affordable housing rehabilitation
      - Neighborhood stabilization
      - Revitalization
      - Homeless assistance

#### Housing for military needs **(E.2, E.3)**

- Even with deployments becoming less frequent and smaller, the community is experiencing an impact of net increase in soldiers and families residing in the area. This results in a continued demand for a wide range of housing choices, including new construction. Local army and community leaders have completed proactive steps to facilitate increased rental housing production by private sectors developers
  - two notable projects still under phased construction are the COR Beaver Meadows complex (294 units if fully built out) and the Morgan Management's Preserve at Autumn Ridge (394 units if fully built out) both in the Town of Watertown
- The most recent survey of rental units within 20 miles of Fort Drum shows an occupancy rate of 3.1 percent

- 5 to 6 percent is considered a healthy market
- Landlord registration considered by Watertown City Council **(E.2)**
  - City must continue to maintain and improve existing housing stock

#### **Increase year round arts and cultural offerings (E.4)**

- Thousand Islands Art Center received \$49,000 from Regional Council Awards for a part-time curator
  - New position will manage the collection and maintain accurate records, manager volunteer and docent program, publish relevant events, and assist the Executive Director
- Adirondack North Country Association received \$60,000 from Regional Council Awards to build, grow, and market the Adirondack Regional Art Trail
  - Trail is a new collaboration of nonprofit organizations to produce a comprehensive strategy to highlight the many arts resources across the Adirondack North Country region, as well as provide artists and artistic venues a stronger presence and a dedicated online home to engage with residents and visitors

#### **Fort Drum (E.5)**

- Supplemental Preliminary Environmental Assessment (SPEA)
  - The Army is in the process of analyzing force reductions across the country, to meet a goal of 420,000 soldiers from a wartime high of 570,000 soldiers, which could mean a loss of 16,000 in the population of Fort Drum (civilians and soldiers combined)
  - FDRLO organized the community response to the Army, completing a Community Response in August 2014
    - Listening session slated for March 2015

#### **Challenges moving forward:**

- Coordination among arts and culture organization **(E.4)**
  - Still no “community calendar” covering all events in the area

## ***Goal F: Work to Retain, Attract, and Grow the Following Industry within the County: Manufacturing***

*F.1: Expand manufacturing collaboration initiatives*

*F.2: Develop appropriate youth workforce development programs*

*F.3: Develop appropriate adult workforce development programs*

*F.4: Focus on targeted manufacturing supply industries*

*F.5: Attract dairy product manufacturing firms*

*F.6: Support business location and expansion efforts through financial assistance and incentives*

*F.7: Improve and expand rail infrastructure and rail siding availability*

### **Highlights of what's new / what's coming up in 2015:**

#### **Expand Manufacturing Collaboration Initiatives (A.1, F.2)**

- Manufacturing Council's "Careers in Manufacturing" video successfully distributed across the area and into the hands of middle and high school students
  - Video highlights potential careers in manufacturing and an overview of 21<sup>st</sup> century manufacturing in the area
  - Sponsored by local businesses interested in sustaining future manufacturing workforce
- BOCES Manufacturing Technology program success **(A.1, F.1, F.3)**
  - *See also: A.1*
  - 10 students graduated in June 2014. Another 10 students slated to complete the fall course in December 2014
- Economic Development team investigating process of working with an international site selector for a targeted campaign to identify appropriate prospects for relocation/expansion to Jefferson County. **(D.5, F.4, F.6)**
- National Advertising **(D.5, F.5, F.6)**
  - [www.comefarmwithus.com](http://www.comefarmwithus.com) agriculture information website
  - Morning Ag clips – Distributed across 26 states
  - 20/20 Magazine – Canadian Manufacturing magazine
  - Business Facilities – Appear in their index guide
  - Northeast Dairy Association – Advertisement and guide listing

### **Attract dairy product manufacturing firms (F.5, H.6)**

- Jefferson County Economic Development actively marketing Jefferson County to attract new agriculture manufacturers
  - Focusing on manufacturers that specialize in robotic milking equipment, unmanned aircraft, and food processing, especially dairy

### **Support business location and expansion efforts (F.6)**

- As the County's lead economic development agency, the JCIDA continues to utilize its Industrial Expansion and Microenterprise Revolving Loan Funds, as well as other authorized financial incentives, to aid local business growth and expansion
  - December 2014: Current Applications submitted an application for a PILOT on a 10,000 square foot proposed expansion
    - Recently approved by the Jefferson County Industrial Development Agency's board of directors

### **Rail Infrastructure (F.7)**

- Jefferson County Economic Development hosted a 3-county regional rail conference in March 2014 attended by over 70 people
  - As a follow-up, JCED surveyed existing and potential new users about their rail siding needs
- In 2015, JCED will conduct an inventory and assessment of the condition and capacity of existing rail sidings in the county

## **Goal G: Work Retain, attract, and Grow the Following Industries within the County: Tourism, Accommodation, Food Services, and Retail Trade County's Tourism**

*G.1: Continue to develop, enhance, and market recreational opportunities*

*G.2: Continually enhance promotion of the Thousand Islands-Seaway Wine Trail and Thousand Islands Agricultural Tour*

*G.3: Continue to market the Greater Watertown area as an international retail destination*

*G.4: Consider a retail recruitment strategy*

*G.5: Facilitate and encourage investment in public and private tourism infrastructure to achieve standards comparable to competing destinations*

*G.6: Continue development of hospitably sector workforce needs*

~~*G.7: Commission Jefferson County Multi-Use Facility feasibility study*~~

*G.7: Pursue continuing implementation of recommendations of recently completed Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans and the Black River Blueway Trail Plan*

### **Highlights of what's new / what's coming up in 2015:**

#### **Developing, Enhancing and Marketing Efforts (D.1, G.1, G.5)**

- North Country Transformational Community Tourism Revolving Loan Program
  - Founded in 2013 with \$2 million from the North Country Regional Economic Development Council to assist in furthering tourism-related development projects that will have a transformational impact on North Country communities.
  - Eligible Projects:
    - Projects with a priority that enhance the quality and quantity of lodging in the region
    - tourism-related facilities which enhance the region's quality of life
    - projects that will attract more visitors or residents to the region
    - projects that allow this program to serve as leverage for attracting private investment into the region
  
- Thousand Islands-Seaway Wine Trail and Thousand Islands Agricultural Tour both continue to add new locations each year **(G.2)**
  - Eight wineries/distilleries on wine trail, with an additional three in process of joining
  - 44 stops on Tour
  
- Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) program **(G.5)**

- \$85,000 in Rural Development funds to support the purchase of bottling equipment that will be leased to Wood Boat Brewery, LLC to help the company launch distribution of their products throughout the region
- This project is expected to create 13 new jobs
- 1,000 Islands Harbor Hotel **(G.5)**
  - \$23 million hotel opened July 2014, creating 90 new jobs
  - Features 105 deluxe guest rooms and suites, many with river views and patios, and will serve the wide ranging lodging, dining and meeting needs of couples, business professionals, conferences, weddings, avid boaters and tour groups visiting the 1000 Islands region
  - Received AAA Four Diamond accreditation

### **Continue development of hospitably sector workforce needs**

- Jefferson Community College (JCC) and Paul Smith College collaborating to develop a Winery Management and Marketing Concentration **(G.6)**
  - This concentration will prepare students for immediate employment in the wine industry which is growing both in the North Country region and statewide
  - Program has an internship component, which allows students to gain real-world experience in their field and make job/career contacts
  - Upon graduation, students will:
    - Understand how to develop an effective business model for winery operation
    - Understand and apply the basic legal, financial, human resource, ethics, and other management issues critical for successful winery operation
    - Understand the Characteristics of successful grape varieties, site selection, and layout for a vineyard in Northern New York
    - Understand the aesthetic considerations and technical process of wine making
  - Almost one third of graduates continue their education at four year schools

### **Canadian opportunities (G.3)**

- 4.6 million Canadian visitors crossed the North Country borders in 2013
  - 2.1 million of these visitors stayed in USA at least one night
- Exchange rate is higher and adding challenges to attracting Canadians
  - Ideal exchange is \$.85, and it's currently \$.90

### **Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans**

- Summer 2014: the Towns of Clayton, Orleans and Lyme began the process of developing a comprehensive regional strategy for revitalization of the Chaumont River Corridor under the New York Department of Coastal Resources' LWRP process
  - Stretching from the Hamlet of LaFargeville through Chaumont Bay

- The creation of the regional strategy for revitalization within the area will become the foundation for future economic and community development, future public access and recreation, resource protection and economic development
- Challenges ahead:
  - Challenges with hiring skilled hospitality employees **(G.6)**

## **Goal H: Work to Retain, Attract, and Grow the Following Industry within the County: Agriculture**

*H.1: Develop and market local value-added products*

*H.2: Improve production capacity of commodity and specialty crops and assist farms with diversification and new business startups*

*H.3: Investigate the potential for biomass feedstock crop production*

*H.4: Address needs of the dairy industry*

*H.5: Maintain and expand agricultural economic development efforts*

*H.6: Update the County's Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan*

*H.7: Develop appropriate agriculture workforce development programs*

*H.8: Promote existing sources of capital and work to find new sources to assist with the capital project needs of agriculture*

*H.9: Capital Project: Expand rail siding infrastructure*

### **Highlights of what's new / what's coming up in 2015:**

#### **Value-Added Products (H.1, H.5, H.8)**

- Development Authority of the North Country North Country Value Added Agriculture Revolving Loan Program
  - Founded in 2014 with \$1 million from the North Country Regional Economic Development Council to improve productivity and crop yields to increase the availability of value added agriculture products to markets
  - Created with funding from the North Country Regional Economic Development Council through Empire State Development
  - Maximum loans are up to \$250,000 for eligible businesses in Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence, Clinton, Essex, Franklin and Hamilton Counties
  - Eligible projects are:
    - Projects for the purpose of establishing, maintaining, or expanding an agricultural operation
    - providing facilities and/or markets for the production, manufacturing, processing, warehousing, distribution or sale of crops, livestock and livestock products
- Development Authority of the North Country Value-Added Agriculture Program
  - Created in 2011, the Value-Added Agriculture Program was created to increase the availability of value-added products for retail consumption
  - Created with funding from the Authority and makes loans of up to \$40,000 available to eligible businesses in Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties
    - Primarily for maple syrup producers

### **Agricultural Economic Development Efforts (E.1, H. 1)**

- JCC in conjunction with JCED and CCE will hold a conference to help growers of crops for farm based beverages to explore increased acreage of grapes, hops, and barley
- CCE has held series of programs to connect farmers with new markets
- JCED redeveloped [www.comefarmwithus.com](http://www.comefarmwithus.com) website providing an interactive map of farms and products available
- JCED and National Grid is working with dairy farms to address 3-phase power issues

### **Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan (H.6)**

- Jefferson County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board is in the process of updating the 2010 Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan
  - The anticipated outcome for the project is an Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan that examines recent trends, evaluates the need for farmland protection and identifies areas in need of protection, recommends tools to assist in protecting farmland, and provides economic development strategies to increase agricultural profitability and the retention of farmland
  - Slated for a 2015 completion

### **Agriculture Workforce Development Programs (H.7)**

- Five Future Farmers of America Programs helping to spur workforce development **(A.1, H.7)**
  - South Jefferson
  - Bellville Henderson
  - Indian River
  - Carthage
  - Alexandria Bay
- Cornell Cooperative Extension provided a number of technical and educational workshops to help farms increase production and management **(B. 5, H.4)**
  - Throughout the year, CCE holds workshops on a variety of financial aid related topics, such as:
    - USDA Crop Insurance Programs
    - Succession Planning for Farm Transfers
    - Northern New York Dairy Institute
    - Estate and Retirement Planning
    - Cash Flow Budgeting
    - QuickBooks Training
    - Ag Workforce Education and Employee Management
- Expansion of farming acreage
  - High tunnel greenhouses have expanded growing season
  - Specialty crops thriving in high tunnel greenhouses

**Promote existing sources of capital and work to find new sources (H.7)**

- In addition to their traditional economic development loan programs available to agribusiness projects through JCED, DANC, and the North Country Alliance, DANC administers specific loan programs for farmland drainage
- Jefferson County Soil and Water continues to obtain grants and provide technical assistance to dairy farms with environmental issues
- JCED helped two farms obtain funding for Dairy Profit teams **(B. 5,H.4, H.7)**
- ReEnergy contract with Fort Drum supplying secure, green power through biomass feedstock **(see also C.4, H.3, H.7)**

## **Goal I: Work to Retain, Attract, and Grow the Following Industries within the County: Healthcare and Social Assistance**

*I.1: Develop a training cost sharing model to increase the pool of needed health care workers*

*Increase awareness of healthcare positions and promote anticipated availability trends*

*I.2: Offer tuition repayment or other incentives attract and retain top nursing educators*

*I.3: Hold an annual health care industry summit*

*I.4: Continue youth shadowing internships*

*I.5: Conduct a feasibility study for Coffeen Street Higher Education Multi Use Complex*

### **Highlights of what's new / what's coming up in 2015:**

#### **Closed nursing gap with Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) (I.1, A.1)**

- As a result, Workforce Investment Board (WIB) no longer funding training courses for nursing
  - Currently there is an oversupply of certified CNAs not working

#### **Tuition repayment and other training incentives (I.1, A.1)**

- Samaritan "Hot Jobs" Tuition Reimbursement
  - Full-time and part-time employees are eligible to participate after successfully completing ninety days of employment and eligible for up to \$2,000 per semester to cover the cost of tuition fees and books
  - Must commit to working for Samaritan after graduation one consecutive year (2080 paid hours) for every two semesters reimbursed
  - The Hot Jobs Tuition Reimbursement program is specific to individuals pursuing a degree in a "Hot Job" category; currently identified as
    - Registered Nurses
    - Medical Technologist
    - Lab Technicians
    - Physical or Occupational Therapist

#### **Health Information Technology (HIT) certificate training program (A.1, A.6, I.1, J.2)**

- Health Information Technology (HIT) makes it possible for health care providers to better manage patient care through secure use and sharing of health information. HIT includes the use of electronic health records (EHRs) instead of paper medical records to maintain people's health information
- As an increasing amount of physician practices and hospitals move toward the EHR system, a growing amount of qualified HIT professionals are needed to assist hospitals and physicians as they move to adopt EHR

- The HIT certificate training program at Jefferson Community College is a six month course that will enable the candidate to attain HIT certificates in two HIT roles and attain working knowledge of many facets of HIT
- JCC starting HIT program specifically for military, family, veterans in November 2014 – program capped at 16, currently 14 students enrolled

### **Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) Program**

- April 2014: Governor Cuomo announced that New York finalized terms and conditions with the federal government for a waiver that will allow the state to reinvest \$8 billion in federal savings generated by Medicaid Redesign Team (MRT) reforms.
- Will address critical issues throughout the state and allow for comprehensive reform through a Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) program
  - To promote community-level collaborations and focus on system reform, specifically a goal to achieve a 25 percent reduction in avoidable hospital use over five years
  - Safety net providers will be required to collaborate to implement innovative projects focusing on system transformation, clinical improvement and population health improvement. Single providers will be ineligible to apply
  - All DSRIP funds will be based on performance linked to achievement of project milestones
- The \$8 billion reinvestment will be allocated in the following ways:
  - Interim Access Assurance Fund – temporary, time limited funding to ensure current trusted and viable Medicaid safety net providers can fully participate in the DSRIP transformation without disruption
  - Delivery System Reform Incentive Payments (DSRIP) – including DSRIP Planning Grants, DSRIP Provider Incentive Payments, and DSRIP Administrative costs
  - Other Medicaid Redesign purposes – this funding will support Health Home development, and investments in long term care, workforce and enhanced behavioral health services
- FDRHPO received \$500,000 to oversee for the implementation of providers’ plans to transform the local health care delivery system in August 2014

### **Health Care Summits**

- FDRHPO hosted a medical networking event January 2014
  - “Big success” so it will be an annual event
- Evolving Health Care System Summit
  - October 2014: Samaritan Board Boot Camp Training
    - Twice a year, a “boot camp” training session is held for all members of Samaritan boards attend a session on the state of the healthcare industry – most recent session on population health and how it will change the future of healthcare and how FDRHPO has already begun to embrace this shift

### **JCC Multi-Use Facility (A.1, G.7)**

- When completed, nursing program will have expanded space within that facility

### **Youth Shadowing Internships (I.4)**

- MASH (Medical Academy of Science and Health) Camp
  - The Fort Drum Regional Health Planning Organization (FDRHPO), in partnership with local hospitals and community college, offers students entering grades 8-12 the opportunity to learn what health professionals do each day
  - Unique opportunity for students to experience the health care world in an interactive way
  - MASH Camp is offered in the summer at Lewis County General Hospital, Carthage Area Hospital, Samaritan Medical Center, River Hospital and Jefferson Community College, and MASH Camp is offered in February, (winter break) at Samaritan Medical Center, Carthage Area Hospital, and Lewis County General Hospital

Challenges moving forward:

### **Effects of the Affordable Health Care Act**

- Shift towards more home care model, rather than in-patient care
  - Samaritan Medical is purchasing Genesis Health Care (at home service provider)
  - Integrated medical care would require a care coordinator (“a warm handoff”) throughout medical process
    - Need training for this position
    - Funding an issue for training as WIB cannot support/fund this as these are not full-time positions
  - Public Health working on taking over role of care coordinator organizer

## **Goal J: Work to Retain, Attract, and Grow the Following Industry within the County: Information Technology**

*J.1: Develop a technology training and internship program to promote and support the use of new technologies in local businesses*

*J.2: Pursue funding for Health Care Information Management/Technology Certificate*

*J.3: Start an information technology peer group*

*J.4: Identify and develop IT skills needed in non-IT industries*

### **Highlights of what's new / what's coming up in 2015:**

#### **Manufacturing program at BOCES**

- *See A.1, G.2*

#### **HIT program**

- *See I.1*

## **Goal K: Work to Retain, Attract, and Grow the Following Industries within the County: Call centers, Back Office Support Industries (Finance, Insurance, Real Estate)**

*K.1: Market the community's advanced telecommunications infrastructure and available labor force to attract back office operations*

*K.2: Support expansion of existing call center operations.*

### **Highlights of what's new / what's coming up in 2015:**

#### **Market the community's advanced telecommunications infrastructure (K.1, K.2)**

- Convergys (formerly Stream) has completed a \$4.2M upgrade to its current facility expanding capacity from 700 to nearly 1,000 seats for employees
  - Convergys expansion project was supported by financing from JCIDA, JCLDC, WLDC, and DANC, along with a wage tax-credit incentive from NYS Empire State Development
- Additionally, JCIDA completed a \$250,000 parking lot and sidewalk renovation for that site