

Jefferson County, New York Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

A “Blueprint for Local Action”

Supplement: 2007 “Report Card” and 2008 Priority Goals and Strategies



Jefferson County
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee

Jefferson County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

2007 “Report Card” and 2008 Priority Goals and Strategies

In late 2006, the Jefferson County CEDS Committee completed a major update of the County's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The new plan called for the continuation of the Committee's process to periodically evaluate priority goals and strategies developed by the Committee to help meet a series of “End-State” economic development results formulated for the County (see Appendix #1). A full list of CEDS members is included as Appendix #2.

The 2006 plan retains its fundamental value as a “Blueprint for Local Action” across many facets of our local economy. This supplement provides the first evaluation of progress in implementing the priority goals and strategies. It also reports the results of an annual CEDS exercise to develop the Committee's latest list of priority goals and strategies that should now be pursued by local leaders and economic developers.

These changes are designed to adjust local approaches and better position the community to meet the outcomes desired in the full CEDS plan. It is the Committee's continuing desire to annually modify its priorities to ensure the CEDS planning process is dynamic and reflects new opportunities to support and leverage maximum economic development impacts in the community.

2007 “Report Card”

The progress descriptions below were compiled from contributions filed by CEDS Committee “Lead Agents”, who volunteered to assess progress for the strategies associated with each of the priority goals.

- 1. Establish a support network for entrepreneurs and new businesses, designed to help them grow and compete successfully.**

Lead Agent: Jefferson County Job Development Corporation
Facilitator: James Fayle

Focus efforts on identifying key entrepreneurial niches and opportunities in the region and recruiting skilled individual entrepreneurs to fill those niches. *The Economic Development Task of the of the Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization, along with economic development agencies in Jefferson, St. Lawrence and Lewis Counties, as well as representatives from the Tug Hill Commission and Development Authority of the North Country, are using the results of the North Country Business and Resources Gap Analysis (2007) to identify opportunities and collaborate on business expansion and recruitment efforts. The Jefferson County Agricultural Development Corporation (JCADC) and Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Jefferson County are offering several programs and initiatives to provide training and mentoring to agricultural entrepreneurs.*

Continue training opportunities through the Small Business Development Center. *The Jefferson County SBDC continues to provide a wide variety of training for local entrepreneurs and small businesses, including topics that increase business development opportunities related to Fort Drum and our large military presence in the County.*

Establish entrepreneurial programs in schools to include activities such as case study reviews, speakers/events, business visits, school-based businesses, business plan competitions, etc. *An Entrepreneurship booth, sponsored by JCJDC and SBDC, was established at the Workforce 2020 event at JCC held in early 2008. Over 50 students indicated an interest in starting their own business or taking over their family owned businesses after their education was completed. Both agencies have agreed to continue to sponsor a similar booth at the next Workforce 2020 event. A business plan competition has been established for JCC and high school students (see below). JCJDC and Great Lakes Cheese began an agriculture entrepreneurial award program for local high school students.*

Develop employee training programs that are available for small employers/new start ups. These should include training opportunities for technical skills, soft skills, and various managerial and business skills. *JCJDC has held or is planning various training sessions on topics such as the storage and disposition of flammable materials and the advantages of becoming a FTZ company. JCJDC has also partnered with CITEC in training opportunities such as wastewater treatment, supervisory essentials, lean office, and funding opportunities to name a few.*

Establish a curriculum on entrepreneurship at the various higher education institutions in the area. *Over the past three years, the SBDC, JCC, and the Jeff-Lewis WIB have participated in a Business Concept competition and conference for area high school and JCC students. In 2008, JCJDC joined with the previous partners to assist in expanding this event to be held in the late fall of 2008.*

Engage business owners to participate in a roundtable/peer network to assist fledgling entrepreneurs. Activities might include mentoring, formalized business plan review, business plan competitions, network events, etc. *Two new business award programs have been created by JCJDC: Business of Excellence Award (recognizes a county emerging business, no more than seven years old, that has experienced growth in employment and sales since incorporation) and the New Business Venture Award (recognizes a new business, no less than two years but not more than 4 years old, created and located in Jefferson County that has experienced growth in employment.) Each winner is awarded \$1000.*

Establish a regional venture capital fund or identify and facilitate other sources of equity investment available to local entrepreneurs. These may include public or private funds. *JCJDC is currently using various public sector loan funds to act as venture capital. JCJDC continues seeking new venture capital and the development of a local program. JCADC, CCE, and SCORE offered a roundtable session on mentoring for agriculture entrepreneurs.*

2. Develop a comprehensive Alternative Energy Strategic Plan for the County to exploit local energy production advantages and related business opportunities.

Lead Agent: Jefferson County Job Development Corporation

Facilitator: Don Alexander

Develop an inventory of the County's existing and potential renewable generation capabilities and our distribution assets. *A Scoping Analysis has been completed to help understand basic influences related to this effort. Funding is being sought to complete an inventory of alternative (renewable) energy assets.*

Prepare a regional energy plan that guides policies, programs, asset allocations, conservation efforts and in order to present a unified, collective and marketable approach to these matters. *There is a rapidly increasing understanding of the importance of developing a cluster of alternative energy activities. Many local colleges and universities are instrumental in raising awareness of the*

energy opportunities in this region and are assisting in pushing this agenda. Completion of a Regional Energy Plan is a daunting effort; initial efforts must include making new contacts with jurisdictions, organizations, and leaders in the area armed with a compelling and clearly articulated proposal. A

broad political consensus is essential. The completion of the full plan requires the allocation of additional resources for retaining outside professional services.

Identify and cultivate energy experts from the private sector, education and government to assist the region in developing a strategy for advancing the notion that we are the Mecca for alternative energy initiatives in Northern New York. *Outreach efforts to date have been met with a very positive response. Experts have indicated that the timing for advancing a regional alternative energy agenda has never been better. Energy programs are ripe with financial incentives and regulatory agencies have been charged with supporting an array of alternative technology development.*

We should position all existing educational outlets, high schools, BOCES and colleges to offer energy level exposure, practical application techniques, and degrees in alternative energy development. *Some individual efforts are underway, but no comprehensive, coordinated effort has been initiated.*

- 3. Facilitate and encourage investment in public and private tourism infrastructure to achieve standards comparable to competing destinations.**

Lead Agent: Thousand Islands International Council

Facilitator: Gary DeYoung

Local economic developers and tourism promoters should package technical assistance for existing tourism businesses to promote the availability of business plan and capital upgrade services, public and private financing programs, and market research resources to support increased investment. *Community leaders and economic developers in the region are becoming increasingly aware of tourism infrastructure needs in the region. There is an increase in willingness for local communities to work with tourism operators and increase focus on the needs of the industry within broader programs. For example, some waterfront communities in the County are actively involved in preparing or updating Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans. (Clayton is re-developing an important riverfront Brownfield parcel and adding a Riverwalk District; Watertown is working to transform the Black River Corridor and its vacant and abandoned industrial sites into a driver for economic revitalization; and Carthage, West Carthage, and Dexter are also pursuing important waterfront improvements.)*

Other infrastructure planning and/or development initiatives include the implementation of the Black River "Blueway" plan, continued recreational trail development initiatives by the County's Trail Coordinator, and the growth of hospitality development in the greater Watertown area (two new national franchise lodging establishments, and several new restaurants for dining). The JCADC provided technical assistance to wineries and promoted the availability of agritourism marketing resources.

- 4. Accommodate and enhance the quality of growth occurring with the third Brigade transformation.**

Lead Agent: FDRLO

Facilitator: Doug Schelleng

Develop a County Growth Database (GIS-based) to inventory development and infrastructure locations on a County and regional scale. *The County Planning Department has prepared several GIS maps including development infrastructure maps to aid in housing and development siting. The Fort Drum Growth Management Project, currently underway, will further produce several GIS map products that will aid local planning efforts.*

Develop and implement land use policy recommendations for long term growth and development preferences. Adopt a series of growth and development policies within the jurisdiction of the Jefferson County Planning Board, and share with local decision-makers. *The Jefferson County Planning Board has adopted a series of growth and development principles. Other strategies will be recommended as part of the Fort Drum Growth Management Project being overseen by the FDRLO Growth Management Task Force. The County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board is conducting a feasibility analysis for a Purchase of Development Rights program to help protect important agriculture land resources. An initial application for NYS PDR funds is expected to be filed in 2008.*

Continue Housing Needs Analyses, currently led by the FDRLO Housing Task Force, to predict short and long-term housing needs related to Fort Drum growth. *This is happening as contemplated by CEDS Plan. The GAR Analysis Update and the Niehaus, Inc. investigation focusing on the impacts of deployment and consumer preferences on housing choices have been completed.*

Continue efforts to develop an inventory and marketing package to promote shovel-ready off-base housing sites for prospective developers. *For publicly subsidized projects, such as through the Community Rental Housing Project, local staff has worked to profile prospective sites. Multi-family housing projects are planned or under construction at some of these pre-identified sites.*

Continue support of FDRLO as lead intermediary between military and community interests. Promote the post-BRAC mission for FDRLO. *FDRLO remains active as an important conduit between the military and the community in matters related to Fort Drum growth and development.*

Inform the general public and business community about the extent and nature of on- and off-base growth and spin-off impacts associated with the current transformation. Future military growth scenarios should be postulated to help anticipate community changes and necessary responses. *FDRLO tackles this via various communication vehicles such as its newsletter, Drumcountry.org, and periodic meetings. The Growth Management Project has completed and presented a Fort Drum Growth Profile and held meetings with adjacent communities on growth topics. Additional information products, planning exercises, and community meetings are planned.*

Maintain validity of Fort Drum Regional Economic Impact Model to demonstrate extent of indirect and induced economic impacts of the base's operation on the three County area. *The FDRLO has commissioned an update of the model with the project's original consultant, EDR Group, Inc., Boston, MA. This update was completed in the early summer of 2008.*

Analyze areas adjacent to the base where land use conflicts and encroachment issues may result from Fort Drum operations. Evaluate and implement tools and techniques available to reduce conflicts. Pursue a Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) in cooperation with the Department of Defense and implement recommendations. *The Growth Management Project noted above is an extensive planning effort, using DOD resources, to profile, analyze, and model growth impacts associated with Fort Drum, including potential encroachment conflicts. Several strategies will be identified to help reduce and manage any potential future growth conflicts.*

Continue to identify and access financial and administrative resources needed to support off-base housing needs (new construction and renovation). *As the community tracks changing housing needs and trends, local housing assistance agencies will prioritize additional resources to adequately address local housing needs.*

Determine extent of housing displacement that may occur as a result of Fort Drum growth. Determine resource needs to maintain a sufficient level of affordable housing for any displaced residents. *Through the oversight of Jefferson County and DANC, the North Country HOME Consortium completed an Analysis to Impediments for Fair Housing in early 2008. Several local municipal jurisdictions and non profit housing providers continue to access State and Federal funds for home ownership and housing rehabilitation assistance.*

5. Capitalize on the growth of Fort Drum by leveraging business expansion in military/defense related sectors and non-military sectors.

Lead Agent: FDRLO

Facilitator: Doug Schelleng

Facilitate the entry of military family members and retirees into the local job market by way of a variety of activities. *North Star, a local community website was launched in February 2007, is designed to enhance the community's economy by connecting students and job seekers with local education and employment opportunities. Career development and career exploration, as well as skill assessment are component elements of this unique community-based project. JCADC, CCE, and SBDC are providing training workshops on entrepreneurial and management topics.*

Increase the percentage of supply and service contracts awarded to Jefferson County businesses. *The new Procurement Technical Assistance Program (PTAP) recently established at the Chamber of Commerce assists businesses with selling goods and services to the military, federal, state and local governments. It offers confidential one-on-one counseling to identify available government contracting opportunities and a firm's readiness to pursue those opportunities. Electronic bid matching is available for businesses ready to sell their products and services to the government. The PTAP can also help with completing proper bid forms, locating specifications and drawings for clients, identifying product classification codes, and any post-award issues that may arise.*

Conduct an economic gap analysis that explores any opportunities that may exist to provide goods and services to Fort Drum and its population either by way of development of local business capacity or by attracting new businesses to the County. *The North Country Business and Resources Gap Analysis was completed in 2007. It contains extensive recommendations for targeting specific industries that would be appropriate employers in the region as a result of the presence and activities of Fort Drum. A three county committee has been formed to pursue implementation of findings.*

6. Retrain and reorient the workforce to take advantage of emerging jobs and strengthen our ability to attract high-technology manufacturers, while addressing wage and skill levels in the region.

Lead Agent: Workforce Investment Board

Facilitator: Marty DelSignore

Work with employers to identify the specific skills and jobs they expect to need in the future and develop plans to help them meet those needs.

Work with regional economic developers to identify specific industrial clusters that will be targeted for recruitment and development in the future, as part of regional economic development strategies. Develop plans to meet the expected workforce needs of these clusters.

Promote the expected future jobs\skills needs to area educators and workforce members and help coordinate their future dissemination among the student population and general public in the region.

Expand the availability of general technology and workplace “soft skills” training for all students, to prepare them for success in a variety of future careers and industries.

Disseminate future workforce needs data among students, parents, and the community served by each school\institution.

Work with area educators, economic developers, and the WIB to establish in-house or cooperative training programs for existing and potential employees. These can be focused around specific technical skills and\or more general workplace skills.

The Workforce Investment Board (WIB), as lead agent for Goal #6, has received outstanding support from community stakeholders in addressing the wide-ranging elements associated with the issues imbedded in this strategy. Several initiatives have evolved over the past 18 months, and the collaborative approach employed has been successful in making significant progress to date (a full summary of initiatives undertaken is included at the conclusion of this narrative brief). The stakeholders have actively embraced the CEDS strategy, and recognize that long-term investment is necessary to attain successful outcomes.

The barrier(s) to success revolve around the time and resources required for systemic change, and the realization that progress is oftentimes measured in incremental change and the ability to exercise flexibility and “change on the fly” in response to emerging trends. There are, at times, limitations in human and financial investment capital that preclude progress and success from occurring as quickly as expected. However, there is a singular commitment in this community by the stakeholders to be change agents for the betterment of economic development, and it has become a common theme in every discussion about our economic future.

New opportunities for success in meeting strategy goals have been focused on strategic partnerships necessary to accomplish the tasks before us. Local stakeholders have acknowledged the importance in engaging the key players to design, develop, and deliver the elements for success, and will need to continue to employ a collegial approach among partners, and conduct a community “scan” to make sure key partners continue to be brought in for valued input and involvement in initiatives. New opportunities exist for skill alliance strategies, skill improvement initiatives, workforce improvement, talent mapping for recruitment/retention/expansion of the local workforce, and business-education linkages, that will continue the progression toward fulfilling the current and emerging needs of our local economy.

Some specific activities that have occurred in relation to CEDS Strategy #6:

Workforce 2020

This event has been held three times, in December 2005, January 2007, and January 2008. Workforce 2020 brought 80-90 local businesses and area high school students together to discuss career awareness, local employment opportunities, and identification of skills necessary to secure employment. The event hosted approximately 600 students and 80 businesses in 2005, and 90 businesses and 1,000 students in 2007 from the 15 school districts in Jefferson and Lewis Counties. A partnership of the Workforce Investment Board, Jefferson Community College, Jefferson-Lewis BOCES, Greater Watertown-North Country Chamber of Commerce, and NYS department of Labor.

Entrepreneurship Week USA

This event, held in March 2007, provided 125 students from Watertown High School and Jefferson Community College the opportunity to learn more about the responsibilities of operating a business. Students learned about franchising business ownership, independent business ownership, and developing a business concept and plan, through a business plan competition. The second Entrepreneurship event was in November 2007. A partnership of the Workforce Investment Board, NYS Small Business Development Center, Jefferson Community College, JCC Faculty-Student Association, JCC Social Cultural Club, and the Watertown City School District.

North Star Community Web Site (www.northstarweb.org/jefflewis)

A local community website was launched in February 2007, designed to enhance the community economy by connecting students and job seekers with local education and employment opportunities. Career development and career exploration, as well as skill assessment are component elements of this unique community-based project. To date, many employers have had their business information included as portals on the website, and the site provides a valuable access point for the community for employment and educational development. A partnership of the Northern New York Community Foundation, the Workforce Investment Board, Jefferson County Job Development Corporation, Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization, Jefferson Community College, and Jefferson-Lewis BOCES.

Skill Development/Workforce Training

Marketing and development of business and industry training for local businesses to train and upgrade the skills of the incumbent workforce. Four specific opportunities have been provided in 2007 (to date): the SUNY Workforce Development Training Grant, available through Jefferson Community College, On-the-Job Upgrade Training contracts available through the Jefferson County Department of Employment & Training workforce programs, and two state/federal level competitive RFP's that provide training funds for employee skill development and emerging workforce skill needs – ADVANCE-NY, and Community-Based Job Training Grants. Various stakeholders groups have collaborated to discuss the elements and applicability of these skill development opportunities in the past year.

Emerge-NNY

An event designed to encourage, empower, embolden, excite, and enact our young professionals to become involved in the elements of our community. The event (and follow-up activities) are designed to stop the "brain drain" from our communities, and encourage our young professionals to utilize their skills to shape the future of our communities. The initial Emerge-NNY event, held in October 2006 attracted 200 young professionals, and the second and third Emerge-NNY conferences were held in October 2007 and August 2008, respectively. The events focus on professional and personal resources that contribute to success in our area.

Young Professionals Award

Recognition of three local young professionals that have made successful professional and personal contributions in our communities. This event evolved from the Emerge-NNY initiative, and continues to support the theme of engaging our young professionals into the fabric of our communities, and retaining our young people in our local area. The program is the result of a partnership between the Greater Watertown Jaycees and the Workforce Investment Board. The initial award ceremony was held in July 2007, and is expected to be an annual event.

ACT Test Center

Opening of a job skills testing and skill assessment system that measures work and basic skills that are critical to employment success. Jefferson-Lewis BOCES piloted this center in the Spring of 2007, and now offers a full compliment of skill assessments and individualized training modules. Assessment for work readiness credentials for entry level employment are also available at the ACT Center. This center will assist businesses to make better employee recruitment, screening, and selection decisions, and reduce human resource costs for businesses.

2008 CEDS Priority Goals and Strategies

The following priority goals and strategies were formulated by the CEDS Committee through the aid of a facilitated, collective ranking exercise to evaluate the relative value and cost of each action. The master list of Goals and Strategies from the 2006 CEDS Plan was used as well as new goals and strategies suggested by members that reflected changes in opportunities and challenges since the 2006 Plan. The Committee members individually voted for a fixed number of priorities and the results were tabulated to produce the initial 2008 list. Subsequent Committee discussions and deliberations resulted in some adjustments to the exercise results.

It is important to note that many of the goals reflect needs and objectives across several sectors of the County's economy, such as agriculture, manufacturing, Fort Drum, and technological and business services. Clearly, improvements in the community's workforce development resources will have far reaching benefits across all components of our local economy. Similarly, improvements in local infrastructure, our local energy climate, and the expansion of transportation alternatives, will serve to strengthen our foundation for quality business and employment opportunities.

The Committee further acknowledged the continuing expansion of Fort Drum's impact as the most significant feature of the County's economy. With over \$1.8 billion in annual economic output, and as one of the largest employers in Upstate NY, the local military base permeates nearly all aspects of local commerce, our housing and employment markets, and our rich and diverse community character. While previous CEDS reports have highlighted specific Fort Drum related growth and strategies, the Committee has noted progress on previous Fort Drum goals related to housing, community growth and development, and business expansion. Continued vigilance is necessary in these areas to continue to fully leverage our economic development and quality of life opportunities afforded by recent expansion at the base.

1. Workforce Development

Establish a support network for entrepreneurs and new businesses, designed to help them grow and compete successfully.

Develop employee training programs that are available for small employers\new start ups. These should include training opportunities for technical skills, soft skills, and various managerial and business skills.

Develop shadowing programs, internships, and student project assignments that bring students and entrepreneurs together.

Include entrepreneurs in career days and other vocational experiences for students.

Increase support to employees interested in enhancing skills in new business areas, including international business\markets, new product development\marketing, and business partnerships\teaming.

Establish a regional venture capital fund or identify and facilitate other sources of equity investment available to local entrepreneurs. These may include public or private funds.

Focus some efforts on identifying key entrepreneurial niches and opportunities in the region and recruiting skilled individual entrepreneurs to fill those niches.

Lead Agent:

Jefferson County Job Development Corporation

Recommended Supporting Partners:

Small Business Development Center, Workforce Investment Board, BOCES, Jefferson Community College, Chambers of Commerce, Metropolitan Development Association, Development Authority of the North Country, Empire State Development, JCADC, Cooperative Extension, Fort Drum Regional Health Planning Organization.

CEDS Committee Facilitator:

Donald Alexander

2. Workforce Development

Retrain and re-orient the workforce to emerging employment opportunities, and address local workforce sustainability issues to ensure that our ability to attract new business and retain existing business is strengthened. Concurrently develop a consistent approach to assess workforce skill levels and skill shortages, and address and improve work-related support systems such as adequate and flexible child care, elder care, and workplace transportation.

Work with employers to identify the specific workplace skills they expect to need in the future and develop plans to help them meet those needs. Ensure this strategy covers all major employment sectors including agriculture, manufacturing, business services, health care, etc.

Work with regional economic developers to identify specific sectors and clusters that will be targeted for recruitment and development as part of regional economic development strategies. Assess needs and develop plans to meet the expected workforce needs of these sectors and clusters.

Disseminate and promote the expected future workforce skill needs to area educators, workforce members, students, and the community by providing timely and current workforce data, emphasizing the diversity of skill sets needed and anticipated in the County.

Expand the availability of general technology and workplace “soft skills” training for all students, to prepare them for success in a variety of occupations and industries.

Work with area educators, economic developers, and the WIB to establish in-house or cooperative training programs for existing and potential employees. These can be focused around specific technical skills and/or more general workplace skills. Increase emphasis to raise skill and productivity levels of the workforce.

Integrate service and resource information pertaining to child care, day care, and transportation alternatives in outreach efforts to local employers and employees.

Workforce development officials should participate in strategic planning efforts related to these workforce sustainability issues to ensure the future needs of employers and employees are adequately addressed.

Lead Agent:

Workforce Investment Board

Recommended Supporting Partners:

Jefferson Community College, Empire State Development, Board of Cooperative Educational Services, Small Business Development Center, Jefferson County Job Development Corporation, FDRLO, Jefferson\Lewis Childcare Project, NYS Dept. of Labor, Jefferson County Agriculture Development Corp.

CEDS Committee Facilitator:

Martin DelSignore

3. Economic Resources and Community Infrastructure

Industrial Real Estate, Transportation, Tourism, and Recreation Infrastructure

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

Local economic developers, agriculture economic developers, and tourism promoters should package technical assistance for existing tourism businesses to promote the availability of business plan\capital upgrade services, public and private financing programs, and market research resources to support increased investment.

Lead Agent:

Thousand Islands International Council

Recommended Supporting Partners:

Thousand Islands Regional Tourism Development Corporation, Chambers of Commerce, Seaway trail, Inc., Thousand Islands Bridge Authority, Jefferson County Job Development Corporation, Lake Ontario Fisheries Coalition, Soil and Water Conservation District, Jefferson County Agricultural Development Corp., Tug Hill Commission.

CEDS Committee Facilitator:

Gary DeYoung

4. Economic Resources and Community Infrastructure

Alternative Energy Development

Develop a comprehensive Alternative Energy Strategic Plan for the County to exploit local energy production advantages related to business opportunities.

Develop an inventory of the County's existing and potential renewable generation capabilities and our distribution assets. Continue progress made with completed Scoping Analysis and identify distributive energy opportunities available in the community.

Prepare a regional energy plan that guides policies, programs, asset allocations, and conservation efforts in order to present a unified, collective and marketable approach to these matters. Promote the importance of developing a cluster of alternative energy activities, such as wind, hydro, bio-mass, geo-thermal, and photovoltaic capabilities. Emphasize the need to analyze and manage such resources for broad community benefit.

Continue to identify and cultivate energy experts from the private sector, education and government to assist the region in developing a strategy.

We should position all existing educational outlets, high schools, BOCES and colleges to offer energy level exposure, practical application techniques, and degrees in alternative energy development.

Lead Agent:

Jefferson County Job Development Corporation

Recommended Supporting Partners:

New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, National Grid, DANC, Hudson River-Black River Regulating District, CITEC, Empire State Development, Citizens Campaign for Environment, NYPA, NYSPSC, JCADC, Cooperative Extension, JCC.

CEDS Committee Facilitator:

Donald Alexander

5. Economic Resources and Community Infrastructure
Downtown Revitalization

Improve the appearance and physical condition of the downtowns and village centers in the County.

Develop a sense of uniqueness based upon local heritage, access to waterfronts, and architectural character that is unavailable in conventional regional shopping districts. In turn this uniqueness needs to be promoted and celebrated.

Develop a more standardized and strategic approach to the reuse of distressed/tax delinquent properties in downtowns, one that doesn't necessitate the satisfaction of tax liens but rather focuses on the return to productive use of such properties.

Explore opportunities for code waivers in unique circumstances that will allow for the more economical rehabilitation of downtown buildings.

Municipalities should make full use of resources at all levels of government that will allow them to make appropriate investments in downtowns, streetscapes, and public spaces, such as: partnering/cost sharing with the private sector to improve individual buildings (facade programs, tax credit deals, etc.; transportation and parking improvements; and tax abatement programs 485b, 444a, EZ, etc.

Lead Agent:

Empire State Development

Recommended Supporting Partners:

Empire State Development, Chambers of Commerce, Local Municipal Governments, Carthage Industrial Development Corporation, Watertown Local Development Corporation, Tug Hill Commission.

CEDS Committee Facilitator:

James Fayle

6. Economic Resources and Community Infrastructure

Industrial Real Estate, Transportation, Tourism, and Recreation Infrastructure

Transportation and commuting alternatives should be developed to link new and existing housing concentration areas with employment and commerce centers.

Conduct a transportation analysis to identify mass transit and assisted transportation needs for County residents, including the Fort Drum military community.

Lead Agent:

TBD

Recommended Supporting Partners:

FDRLO, Fort Drum, NYS Dept. of Transportation, County government, non-profit transportation providers, City of Watertown, DANC, Capital Corridor Initiative.

CEDS Committee Facilitator:

TBD

7. Economic Resources and Community Infrastructure

Industrial Real Estate, Transportation, Tourism, and Recreation Infrastructure

Identify opportunities to assist in further growth of Jefferson County's agriculture and rural-based industries.

Analyze Jefferson County's soils and existing land use databases to identify areas suitable for dairy, or grape and wine production.

Work with existing landowners to identify those interested in sale/lease options for maintaining or initiating agriculture production.

Promote identified opportunities to existing producers within Jefferson County and promote to potential buyers outside of Jefferson County.

Lead Agent:

Jefferson County Agriculture Development Corporation

Recommended Supporting Partners:

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County, Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District, North Country Regional Office of Empire State Development, Dairylea Farmers Cooperative, New York Center for Dairy Excellence.

CEDS Committee Facilitator:

Jay Matteson

Appendix 1

“End State” Results

The CEDS Committee has identified a series of “End-State” economic development results that represent desired community objectives by the year 2011. These results are put forth to articulate a vision that capitalizes on community strengths and opportunities in order to create a stronger and more diversified Jefferson County economy. The following End-State results establish the foundation for more specific economic goals and strategies identified through the CEDS planning process. They will also be useful to measure the impact of CEDS strategies and local economic development efforts over the next several years.

General Results

The Jefferson County economy will support more diverse and higher quality job opportunities.

Jefferson County will retain and attract more college educated residents through growth in the number of knowledge-based job opportunities.

Jefferson County will be a full and contributing partner in regional redevelopment initiatives, such as the Syracuse Metropolitan Development Association’s Essential New York Initiative.

Jefferson County will have a greater level of product diversification in its agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism sectors, as evidenced through niche product development and success in the global marketplace.

Jefferson County’s communities will have enhanced comprehensive planning capability to address both local and regional growth and development issues.

The CEDS Plan will become the community’s “go to” economic development plan that directs actions and strategies for all local groups and organizations active in economic growth and renewal.

Fort Drum Growth

Fort Drum will have an increased presence in our County - in terms of force structure, resident population, and employment and economic impact.

Local businesses and development organizations will have capitalized all possible direct and indirect economic opportunities associated with the growth of Fort Drum.

Workforce Development

The area’s educational institutions will embrace their role of training the County’s workforce of the future, and will offer more extensive educational offerings for the emerging job opportunities of the 21st Century.

Jefferson County will have an ample and growing supply of workers suitable for the “knowledge-based” workplace.

The County's skilled trade employers will have an ample supply of workers to sustain and grow job opportunities.

Entrepreneurial Opportunities

Jefferson County will have an improved entrepreneurial climate with a greater number of start-ups and established small businesses.

Economic Resources and Community Infrastructure

Jefferson County will have enhanced recreational and tourism opportunities and upgraded facilities for residents and visitors leading to substantially increased tourism revenues.

Commercial, business and recreational traffic across the Thousands Islands Bridge will flow in a timely and efficient manner so as to support a healthier bi-national tourism economy.

Jefferson County will have cutting-edge utility, alternative energy, and telecommunications infrastructure to support economic and employment growth.

The downtowns and village centers in the County will offer residents and visitors the opportunity to experience a variety of unique and engaging cultural and commercial offerings in settings that are strongly influenced by area heritage, architectural character and the natural environment to improve and become hubs for business and tourism development.

The area's public and private finance organizations will be adequately supporting local capital needs.

The area will be aggressively developing alternative energy production opportunities to provide energy cost advantages for local businesses.

The County will be adequately served with a multi-modal transportation system that will meet the economic development needs of the community. This system will include a new limited access connector route between Interstate 81 and Fort Drum, and a County Airport facility that accommodates general and commercial aviation.

Government Services and Efficiency

The Jefferson County area will have more efficient government at all levels and will be actively engaged in restructuring the delivery of services to attain this goal. By being more efficient, governments will control the cost of service delivery which will allow them to strategically direct their resources towards both community needs and economic growth.

Appendix 2

2008 CEDS Membership

Jeff Wood, Chairperson
Douglas Schelleng, Vice-Chair
Bruce Armstrong, Secretary

Dennis Affinati
Jill Bettinger
Kent Burto
Frank Cean
Lorraine Clement
Eric Constance
Karen Delmonico
Marty DeSignore
Gary DeYoung
Jim Fayle
Robert Juravich
Jay Matteson
Ken Mix
John Montondo
George Yarnall