



Jefferson County Local Development Corporation

800 Starbuck Avenue, Suite 800 • Watertown, New York 13601

2023 Annual Report

Jefferson County Local Development Corporation (JCLDC)

CEO's ANNUAL MESSAGE--- 2023

In economic development, we are often focused on what needs to be done, although it's just as important to reflect on what has been accomplished. There has been plenty of activity in 2023, with much of it setting the stage for an even bigger year in 2024.

We continued to administer American Rescue Plan Act funds, allocated to us by the Jefferson County Legislature, to support business recovery from the COVID pandemic. From 2022 through 2023, we awarded 147 grants totaling more than \$1.8 million to local businesses for small business productivity improvements, incumbent worker training, value-added food processing, and tourism business enhancements. These grants were easily matched by more than \$2 million in additional private investment.

We joined the YMCA in the December 11th ribbon cutting for its new YMCA Community and Aquatics Center. The new facility will have a transformative impact on downtown Watertown's appearance and its economic vitality as it draws more pedestrian traffic to the city center. Both of our sister agencies—JCED and the JCIDA—are proud to have supported this \$27.5 million investment with direct financial assistance and as the sponsor of a \$9 million Department of Defense Grant through the Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation.

Convalt Energy continues its activities to line up customer commitments and secure permanent financing to construct a 315,000 sq. ft. solar panel manufacturing facility adjacent to the Watertown International Airport. Although progress slowed as Convalt and its potential customers awaited IRS guidance on the renewable energy incentives to be available through the Inflation Reduction Act, the project has continued to move forward. We hope to see construction begin in 2024.

Regionally, Jefferson County Economic Development and Naturally Lewis have continued joint hosting of the Jefferson-Lewis Manufacturing Alliance, which brings together Jefferson and Lewis County manufacturers to network; identify partnership opportunities and issues of common concern; and host peer group tours of local manufacturing operations. We remain an active partner in the "Drum Country NY" regional marketing effort, working with our counterpart economic developers in Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties, the Development Authority of the North Country, National Grid, and Advocate Drum. We are also actively engaged in the tradeable sectors work group for the North Country Region Economic Development Council.

David J. Zembiec
Chief Executive Officer

JCLDC Mission Statement

The Corporation was established pursuant to the LDC Act with purposes and powers as set forth within the Certificate. The Corporation's Mission includes undertaking projects and programmatic initiatives in furtherance of and to advance the job opportunities, health, general prosperity and economic welfare of the people of the County In furtherance of the purposes and powers vested in the Corporation pursuant to the LDC Act, the Corporation shall undertake projects, programs and initiatives to achieve the purposes as set forth within the LDC Act. In addition, and in doing so, the Corporation shall adhere to its adopted policies and applicable statutory requirements, including PAAA, PARA, OML, FOIL, and SEQRA. The Corporation's goals include continued compliance with current obligations and responsibilities associated with ongoing projects and programs, in addition to identifying new projects and programs that will achieve the Corporation's purposes and Mission In furtherance of these stated goals, the Corporation will endeavor to comply with all applicable provisions of the Act, PAAA and PARA. With these stated goals established, the Corporation's values are to maintain the highest ethical standards applicable to public officials and local authorities.

JCLDC Performance Review Measures

The Corporation shall annually review this Mission Statement and identify whether the Corporation (i) continues to meet its stated mission, goals and values; (ii) can quantify measures of improvement better to meet its stated mission, goals and values; (iii) can become more effective and efficient; and (iv) is meeting the interests of the Corporation, the Agency and the County In furtherance of the foregoing Performance Measures, the Corporation shall further undertake the following annual measures:

- 1) Assure that all current Corporation Members have acknowledged that they have read and understood the mission of the Corporation;
- 2) An annual review and affirmation of the Corporations membership, board, committee and management structure;
- 3) An annual review and affirmation of its policies, along with Corporation appointment of Management of the Corporation, along with articulation of the Respective roles, goals and expectations of each.

Activities:

ADVOCATE DRUM / Drum Country Business

The Drum Country Business initiative includes the Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence County economic development agencies and the Development Authority of the North Country working together through ADVOCATE DRUM to promote the tri-county region's collective assets and its proximity to Fort Drum to attract business investment to the region. Funding from the project partners is matched by a grant to FDRLO by project sponsor National Grid. The initiative includes regional advertising and direct outreach to prospective businesses.

This year Drum Country, NY partnered with BLK DOG, a digital marketing company to aid in a campaign entitled "Let's Meet." This campaign will work through social media, email, and the www.drumcountryNY.com website. All are geared to increase engagement with people both inside and outside the area.

North Country Regional Economic Development Council

JCED staff participates in the Council's work groups and are actively involved in preparing the regional plan submission as part of the Governor's annual competition for economic development funding. The staff has also assisted local businesses and organizations in submitting successful funding applications to the program.

North Country Alliance

The NCA is a private-public alliance of businesses and economic development organizations working together to grow the economy of New York's seven-county North Country region. JCED is a member organization with a seat on the NCA's board of directors. The NCA administers a regional revolving loan fund—often in partnership with local revolving loan funds. NCA is also an advocate for ensuring that the region's economic interests are fairly addressed at the state level.

**JCLDC Current Projects
RLF's**

	Name of Company	Amount of Loan	Loan Date	Maturity Date	Purpose
1	Clayton Island Tours, LLC	\$ 40,000.00	4/29/2020	5/1/2026	Repair of flood damage and prevent future damage
2	Clayton Yacht Club Inc.	\$ 40,000.00	8/4/2021	8/1/2027	Complete repairs from damage due to high water flooding during the spring and summer of 2019
3	North Branch Farms	\$100,000.00 (ESD Grant \$45,000) (Bal. \$55,000 termed out)	4/26/2017	7/1/2026	Construct and equip a 1,500 sq. ft. combined packing and cold storage house in Belleville, NY
4	WICLDC	\$ 200,000.00	12/1/2010	1/1/2031	Building A roof replacement

COVID-19 LOANS

	Name of Company	Amount of Loan	Loan Date	Maturity Date	Purpose
1	Steven & Helen Brotherton	\$ 10,000.00	4/29/2020	5/1/2026	Working Capital
2	Anne's Fisherman's Fare	\$ 10,000.00	4/24/2020	5/1/2026	Working Capital
3	Aubrey's Shopping Center	\$ 10,000.00	4/24/2020	5/1/2026	Working Capital
4	Busted Grapes LLC	\$ 10,000.00	4/29/2020	5/1/2026	Working Capital
5	Colleen's Cherry Tree Inn, LLC	\$ 10,000.00	4/24/2020	5/1/2026	Working Capital
6	Elmer Creek Farms	\$ 10,000.00	5/8/2020	6/1/2026	Working Capital
7	GL Wills & Sons, LLC	\$ 10,000.00	4/29/2020	5/1/2026	Working Capital
8	Gould - The UPS Store in Alex Bay	\$ 10,000.00	4/22/2020	5/1/2026	Working Capital
9	Hearing Solutions of NNY	\$ 10,000.00	4/24/2020	5/1/2026	Working Capital
10	Kids R Kids Daycare	\$ 10,000.00	5/8/2020	6/1/2026	Working Capital
11	Morgia Masonry	\$ 10,000.00	5/15/2020	6/1/2026	Working Capital
12	North Branch Farms	\$ 10,000.00	5/15/2020	6/1/2026	Working Capital
13	Northern Commercial Cleaning	\$ 10,000.00	5/15/2020	6/1/2026	Working Capital
14	Northrop & Sons	\$ 10,000.00	4/29/2020	5/1/2026	Working Capital

	Name of Company	Amount of Loan	Loan Date	Maturity Date	Purpose
15	Painfull Acres	\$ 10,000.00	5/8/2020	6/1/2026	Working Capital
16	Rhodes Greenhouses Inc.	\$ 10,000.00	5/15/2020	6/1/2026	Working Capital
17	The Mustard Seed	\$ 10,000.00	4/29/2020	5/1/2026	Working Capital
18	The Scrub Hub, LLC	\$ 10,000.00	4/24/2020	5/1/2026	Working Capital
19	Thriftd	\$ 10,000.00	4/29/2020	5/1/2026	Working Capital
20	White Caps Winery, LLC	\$ 10,000.00	4/24/2020	5/1/2026	Working Capital
21	Zero Dock Street, LLC	\$ 10,000.00	7/13/2020	7/1/2026	Working Capital

Clayton Loan Program

	Name of Company	Amount of Loan	Loan Date	Maturity Date	Purpose
1	DiPrinzio's Kitchen	\$ 5,000.00	1/7/2021	2/1/2027	Working Capital
2	DiPrinzio's Market	\$ 5,000.00	1/7/2021	2/1/2027	Working Capital

2023 Agricultural Highlights

Meat Processing Capacity

One barrier to growth in our agricultural industry and in building a more secure and reliable local food supply is the lack of meat processing capacity. Farms frequently remind us that the availability of meat processing facilities that can harvest and process livestock into packaged products for a farm is a problem. This is true for large livestock, small livestock, and poultry.

Jefferson County Economic Development has been focused on this issue for many years. In 2023 we've worked with three custom processing companies located in Jefferson County to help them grow their operations. Through our first round of grants from our Jefferson County Food Resiliency grant program, we've provided financial assistance to each of the processors helping them grow their capacity and hopefully have one or more become USDA processing facilities in the future.

Dairy Processing Capacity

We are fortunate to have HP Hood in Lafargeville, NY, who process milk into cultured dairy products such as cottage cheese, yogurt and sour cream and Great Lakes Cheese Company in Adams NY who makes cheddar cheese. These two companies provide a secure foundation

for our dairy industry. Our agency is in frequent contact with both processing plants to help them address any issues that arise and look at future growth.

We are excited to work with local farms to grow on farm dairy processing capacity. In 2023 we offered grants to Grimshaw's Dairy – Next Generation Creamery, Bechaz Riverdale Cheese and Gelateria, Old McDonald's Farm and Alteri's La Bella Dolce Gelateria. Whether we are working with our large processing companies or with small on farm dairy processing, it is important to maintain and grow our local dairy industry and provide local food to County residents.

We continue to work to attract new dairy processing capacity to not just Jefferson County, but all of northern New York. Jefferson County is working closely with our partners in Lewis County and St. Lawrence County to offer the right locations and benefit packages for potential dairy processing companies looking for new sites. The three counties center our efforts through the Development Authority of North Country and the regional Drum Country program.

Jefferson County Food Resiliency Grant Program

As mentioned above, Jefferson County Economic Development was able to fund many great projects to grow our local food supply in 2023. We worked closely with our partners at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County to offer small grants to grow meat processing capacity, on-farm dairy processing, and increase production of other local foods such as vegetables, honey, and maple syrup. All of this was made possible through the support of the Jefferson County Board of Legislators.

The first round of grant funding was so successful that the County Board of Legislators allocated additional funding for a second round of food projects in 2024. Jefferson County Economic Development and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County are working together to consider several dozen applications to grow on-farm food production and food processing capacity across Jefferson County. Announcements for funding of projects are expected in March of 2024.

Since we developed our agricultural economic development program in December of 2000, our mission continues to be assisting in the retention, growth, and promotion of Jefferson County's agricultural industry.