



Jefferson County Local Development Corporation

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

2024 Annual Report

Jefferson County Local Development Corporation (JCLDC)

## CEO's ANNUAL MESSAGE--- 2024

While we are focused on our goals for 2025, it is also important to reflect on the changes of the past year and how our agency has addressed them. I am proud of our staff and our board of directors serving at the pleasure of the Jefferson County Board of Legislators. We are all united in our pursuit of an increased standard of living for the residents of Jefferson County.

The current trend for economic development in New York State continues to be available sites and workforce. Our investments in infrastructure have Jefferson County, NY, well positioned for the future, and our workforce efforts through many educational partners will provide these projects with the human resources they need for success.

We continue to administer American Rescue Plan Act funds, allocated to us by the Jefferson County Legislature, to support business recovery from the COVID pandemic. From the outset of this grant program, we awarded 214 grants totaling more than \$3.3 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 \$4 million in additional private investment.

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 Regional Economic Development Council.

Jefferson County Economic Development stands ready to assist your business in any way possible! Let's work together to achieve success!

F. Marshall Weir  
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](http://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.

## 2024 Agricultural Highlights

### Jefferson County Food Resiliency Grant Program

Jefferson County Economic Development (JCED), in partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County, continued the highly successful Jefferson County Food Resiliency Grant Program. This program was funded by Jefferson County using funds from the American Recovery Act. Forty-two awards were made in the areas of food processing and food production. The projects ranged from increasing livestock, hog, and poultry production, to expanding dairy, fruit, and vegetable production. Processing grants also supported the growth of cider, honey, maple syrup, juice, and meat and poultry products.

### Agricultural Business Attraction

JCED partnered with neighboring counties through Drum Country, a regional marketing initiative led by the Development Authority of the North Country, to create several short videos. These videos were designed to serve as marketing tools to attract potential businesses to our region. Topics covered in the videos included manufacturing, agribusiness, and tourism. It is essential to collaborate with our regional partners to attract new businesses to our community. For instance, a manufacturer locating in St. Lawrence County will benefit Jefferson and Lewis Counties as well. Likewise, a dairy processing plant in Jefferson County will benefit the entire region, and a tourism business in Lewis County can positively impact the region's economy.

JCED spends a portion of every day working to attract new businesses to our community. This is a long-term process that requires patience. As part of our efforts, we are consistently working to identify sites in Jefferson County with available infrastructure that companies seek when choosing locations for new facilities. A prime example is the new chicken hatchery at the Thousand Islands International Agriculture and Business Park. Without the "shovel-ready" sites available in the park, the CWT Farms hatchery might not have been able to locate here. JCED worked hard to bring the hatchery to the region, but without a suitable site, it could have chosen another location.

As we write this report, an agribusiness company has contacted us, expressing interest in visiting a site in Watertown within the next few hours. We have sent them information about the location, and schedules are being adjusted to ensure that we can meet with both the property owners and the prospective company. Will they choose to locate here? We won't know unless we do everything we can to encourage them to say yes. Often, it may take a year or two to reach a decision. This is a highly competitive aspect of our work.

### Supporting Existing Farms and Agribusinesses

Our mission for the agricultural development program is to support the retention, growth, and promotion of Jefferson County's agricultural industry. This has been our goal for the past 24 years. The largest portion of our time is dedicated to assisting existing farms. This often involves helping farms find the right resources to overcome challenges, identifying grants that could support farm or agribusiness growth, and ensuring that farmers are aware of opportunities that could benefit their businesses. There is always an abundance of tasks to be done in service of our agricultural industry.

We also take agricultural promotion seriously, as reflected in our mission statement. This commitment is the driving force behind our podcast, *Jay Matteson's Rural America*. Co-hosts Jay Matteson and Ron

Robbins bring a wealth of valuable topics and interviews to the podcast, providing an excellent platform for educating listeners about agriculture and rural America. Additionally, we host several key agricultural events, including the Jefferson County Dairy Parade, the Jefferson County Agricultural Development Conference, the Jefferson Leadership Institute Agricultural Day, and various other educational and promotional activities centered around agriculture.

## 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

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

### **Clayton Loan Program**

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