



# ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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TO: St. Lawrence County Board of Legislators

FROM: Patrick J. Kelly  
Chief Executive Officer

DATE: April 1, 2021

RE: Annual Report to the County Legislature

Attached please find our 2020 Annual Report to the County Legislature.

This report provides a detailed summary of the initiatives and activities undertaken in 2020 by the St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency and its affiliated agencies and development partners. As such, performance reporting information is provided for the following entities:

- St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency
- St. Lawrence County IDA Local Development Corporation (including the St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency)
- St. Lawrence County IDA Civic Development Corporation
- St. Lawrence County Property Development Corporation

This report includes information on a variety of IDA, civic and infrastructure development projects, financial assistance packages for local firms, business support and economic development initiatives as well as a schedule of our planned 2021 marketing activities.

Highlights for 2020 include:

- The coordinated response and outreach efforts to assist local businesses, institutions, and communities throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The start of the Quarry Potsdam, LLC project rehabilitating the 88,572 square foot Old Snell Hall in downtown Potsdam.
- Structural Wood Corporation acquiring adjacent property to its facility in Waddington and upgrading its existing facility and product handling capabilities.
- Funding approval from the Northern Border Regional Commission and the Development Authority of the North Country for the continued renovation and redevelopment of the former Newell Manufacturing facility in Ogdensburg.
- The awarding of USDA funds to the IDA to offset training costs for the Commercial Truck Driver Training program at SUNY Canton's CREST Center as well as the award of a \$19,800 grant from the River Valley Redevelopment Agency to the CREST Center to acquire a semi-tractor-trailer truck for the program.

Please contact me with any questions or comments.

Thank you.

We are an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write:

USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington DC 20250-9410, or call 800-795-3272 (voice) or 202-720-6382 (TDD)

# St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency

## 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

### Mission Statement

*(Reviewed and Reaffirmed in Public Session on June 29, 2020)*

*The mission of the St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency (“IDA”) is to promote, encourage, attract and develop job opportunities and economically sound commerce and industry in St. Lawrence County. To accomplish its mission, the IDA constructs and owns industrial sites and buildings, administers loan packaging and industrial revenue bond financing and provides a variety of tax-reduction incentives.*

### Performance Goals

- *To create new employment opportunities for St. Lawrence County citizens through the attraction of or the creation of new businesses*
- *To create new employment opportunities for St. Lawrence County citizens through the expansion of existing businesses*
- *To retain existing employment opportunities*
- *To leverage the greatest level of private investment in St. Lawrence County businesses*
- *To educate County businesses, elected officials and community representatives regarding available economic development resources*
- *Act as a liaison with businesses and government to help coordinate economic development services and reduce bureaucracy*
- *Work cooperatively with area economic development agencies to market County assets and economic development resources to potential new or expanding businesses*
- *Ensure a transparent and accountable operation with responsibly managed Agency assets*

### COVID-19 ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY IDA

- *The St. Lawrence County Reopening Task Force began virtual meetings in May to help coordinate the economic and public health responses to the pandemic. IDA CEO Patrick Kelly, Chair of the committee, served along with the County Legislative Chairman and County Administrator, three County Legislators, the Director of the County Public Health Department, the Chief Medical Officer for the County, the Executive Director of the County Chamber, the Executive Director of the Small Business Development Center, the Executive Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension, and IDA staff. The goal was to reopen the County safely and provide businesses and residents with the best information and guidance possible to reopen the local economy.*

- *In light of the vast amount of information being passed around and covered on various news outlets, newsletters, web resources, social media, etc... the IDA implemented an organized outbound calling effort to reach businesses in March. This is consistent with our intent to distinguish ourselves from the other assistance providers by offering as much personal, direct contact as possible. The effort resulted in contact with over 500 businesses and remains active and ongoing.*

*Technical assistance and/or referrals to other service providers was provided. Initially this included assisting companies to qualify as “essential” businesses in order to remain open during the “NY ON PAUSE” period. Many of the manufacturing facilities in the County were able to remain open during the early stages of the pandemic due to this designation. The State issued a series of guidelines which businesses were required to meet, well over 1,000 jobs at key manufacturing facilities throughout the County were deemed essential and remained in place throughout the pandemic.*

- *In effort to make certain we were not overlooking any of our businesses, the IDA initiated a local advertising campaign highlighting the services available through the IDA as well as some of our local partners. In addition to promoting the message that we are a source of assistance, the campaign provided support to several local media outlets at a time when much of their advertising revenue sources had disappeared. Ads were placed on the various radio stations operating within the County, in print and on-line.*

*The ads continue and the message is continuously changing in response to the evolving challenges and needs during the crisis. Over 600 yard and window signs were distributed throughout the County to reinforce the concept of staying safe to keep businesses open in St. Lawrence County. Face shields, supplied by the County and required by executive order for reopening, were delivered to several salons around the County to help meet the needs for reopening. The IDA continues to work with the Reopening Task Force and our local development partners to coordinate the response effort with the latest focus being on the vaccination effort.*



*The IDA has again committed funds to the Drum Country Business Regional Marketing initiative, which helped us fund the COVID advertising and provides a way of marketing Fort Drum and the surrounding counties, including St. Lawrence County, on a regional basis.*

- *Technical assistance was provided to employers not only understanding and applying for CARES Act SBA programs (and other local programs) but are also tracking awards and the provision of funds to local applicants. This enabled us to share information related to the funding process and timing with other companies that were in the application process.*
- *The IDA took an active role coordinating business assistance and response efforts not only in St. Lawrence County, but also regionally and with our New York State partners. In addition to working with Jefferson and Lewis Counties and the Development Authority of the North Country, we worked across the North Country Region through our board and executive committee member status on the North Country Alliance and with our New York State partners in our role on the New York State Economic Development Council executive board.*

*We continue to host calls with our local Small Business Development Center, the County Chamber, community development partners, workforce development agencies, financial institutions, the Cornell Cooperative Extension, and the regional and State development agencies and organizations with whom we always work.*

- *To assist companies during the pandemic the IDA worked with the North Country Alliance to create an emergency loan fund for businesses in the region. This fund has been used to supplement the federal programs and other local and regional funds that were also made available, in some cases providing assistance before these sources were put into place. Ten companies have been approved for the North Country Alliance Regional Emergency Working Capital program, four of which are St. Lawrence County firms. The Program provides loans in the amount of up to \$10,000 for businesses with less than 20 full-time equivalent employees and up to \$25,000 for businesses with 20 or more full-time equivalent employees.*
- *In August 2020, the Lake Champlain - Lake George Regional Planning Board ("LCLGRPB") was awarded a \$2,940,000 Revolving Loan Fund CARES Act grant from the Economic Development Administration to assist small businesses within Clinton, Essex, Hamilton, Warren, Washington, Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence Counties that have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This fund was capitalized to alleviate the sudden and severe economic dislocation caused by the coronavirus pandemic, to provide permanent resources to support economic resiliency, and to further the long-term economic adjustment objectives of the region. An agreement between the LCLGRPB and the SLCIDA was executed for the IDA to act as the primary contact in St. Lawrence County to provide our companies with another avenue for recovery financing.*
- *Approximately 20 companies within the IDA and IDA-Local Development Corporation loan and lease portfolio took advantage of a three-month payment moratorium that we offered to our borrowers during the COVID Pandemic. This portfolio has approximately 60 borrowers with outstanding balances of nearly \$7 million. We coordinated this action with the North Country Alliance, North Country Economic Development Fund, Greater Massena Economic Development Fund, and Ogdensburg Growth Fund to provide consistency and a unified approach with the loans we have packaged with these organizations. Another dozen borrowers utilized a similar moratorium through these lending partners.*

- *In partnership with the SBDC, Chamber of Commerce, NYPA and other local partners, a virtual networking event was offered to manufacturers in the County. The webinar titled “Making It in St. Lawrence County: Best Practices for Manufacturers” was held on September 23<sup>rd</sup> and included panelist participation from DeFelsko Corporation, Dunn Paper, Seaway Pharma/SkinStitch and Curran Renewable Energy. The event covered several topics, including the challenges facing businesses as a result of COVID-19, opportunities with the CARES Act, and other regional programs that have been of assistance over the last several months. The speakers also discussed how they are managing their facilities and working to maintain their markets during these difficult times. In addition to information provided by the presenters, time was allocated for questions and answers, as well as a general discussion period to encourage networking and the sharing of ideas.*

*At the Manufacturers webinar, the panelists talked about the challenges with finding workers to fill job openings. Matching available jobs with qualified job seekers is a growing problem both locally and nationally. We have assembled a sub-committee of our local developers’ group, including local economic developers, the colleges, workforce system partners, the SBDC, and the Chamber of Commerce to work together to try to find ways to improve the process of matching workers with available jobs in the County.*

- *Additional webinars that were sponsored by the SBDC, Chamber of Commerce, NYPA and other local partners were presented in early to mid-fall included “Understanding the Virus: Best Practices for Business” featuring a Clarkson University professor who discussed research specific to the spread of the Coronavirus designed to help businesses better understand and prepare their workplaces for the upcoming winter months. A webinar titled “Food for Thought: Best Practices for Restaurants” included a panel of local restaurant owners who presented specific tools and techniques that they used during the pandemic to maintain their businesses and plan for the unknown future. Examples of marketing, capital investment, contact-less service, staff, and customer culture were presented to a virtual audience using real life examples. The St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce took the lead in hosting, promoting, and presenting these and numerous other webinars, bulletins, outreach efforts, and communication pieces throughout the pandemic.*
- *The Society of the United Helpers demonstrated a significant need for personal protective equipment and other essentials during the pandemic. Understanding the nature and severity of the impact of the pandemic on United Helpers’ facilities, including several resident deaths that occurred because of COVID-19 in the facilities, the SLCIDA approved a grant of \$10,000 to assist United Helpers with the urgent need to acquire personal protective equipment.*
- **COVID-19 Impact on Employment:** *According to New York State Department of Labor figures, St. Lawrence County lost 3,100 jobs from February to April. The County’s Unemployment Rate went from 6% in February to a high of 14% in April, then down to 5.9% by December. Total employment in the County, also according to the NYS DOL, fell from 41,400 in February to a low of 38,300 in April. As of December, the total employment level was 40,600. As a comparison, the New York State unemployment rate went from 3.9% in February to a high of 16% in July. As of December, the State’s unemployment rate was 8.5%, with total employment of approximately 8.5 million workers, down from 9.1 million in February.*



## 2020 Performance Review (January 2020 – December 2020)

- *Quarry Potsdam, LLC, a property development company based in Springfield, Missouri, has begun work on redeveloping the Old Snell Hall building on the former Clarkson downtown campus.*

*Quarry Potsdam plans to renovate, rehabilitate, and redevelop the 88,572 square foot building into a mixed-use facility with 59 affordable housing units. After a public hearing was held in February, the IDA approved a PILOT agreement for the project. Through this PILOT, the building, which was not previously on the tax roll, will generate over \$2.1 million in PILOT payments to the Village, Town, County, and School District over the next 30 years.*



- *The St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency approved a \$75,000 loan for In-Law Brewing Company, a Chase Mills microbrewery planning to expand its operations on property acquired by the Company's owners in the Town of Louisville. The business will agree to maintain 2 full time staff and create 2 additional jobs. In addition to the River Valley loan, the SLCIDA provided a Mortgage Recording Tax Exemption, a PILOT, and a Sales and Use Tax Exemption. Additionally, the Northern New York Power Proceeds Allocation Board and New York Power Authority approved a \$51,000 award for the project that will support the building construction, the purchase of machinery and equipment, and other items related to the expansion of the business.*

*The expansion is expected to provide a modern beer manufacturing layout with improved process efficiencies and will increase the Company's manufacturing capacity from 7 BBLs (217 gals) to 30 BBLs (930 gals) of beer, allowing for expanded distribution from Alexandria Bay to Lake Placid. The business, already a modest regional attraction, will continue to impact regional tourism by drawing from an expanded area, including Canadian visitors once the border reopens.*

- *Structural Wood Corporation dba Roll Lock Truss received a \$300,000 loan from the St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency and IDA-Local Development Corporation to renovate its existing facility and to acquire adjacent property to provide additional inventory storage along with a larger and safer delivery area.*



*The renovation of the facility provides improvements to the production area with expansions to the existing truss table and lumber tree, reconfiguration of a previously unheated area with heating and four garage doors. The improvements to the facility necessitate the purchase of two pieces of equipment, a tractor with a knuckle boom and a truss trailer. The project will allow the company to increase production and delivery capabilities to meet existing demand and allow for sales growth in addition to employment of 3 new full-time equivalent employees.*

- *JAPES Pet Surplus, Inc. was approved for a \$20,000 loan by the St Lawrence County IDA Local Development Corporation Microenterprise Revolving Loan Fund to obtain warehouse space in Winthrop. The project will enable the company to expand its business to include the distribution of high-end branded pet food products throughout the Northeastern United States that are manufactured in Canada. The micro loan will create 2 full time positions over the next 3 years. The owner of the business also currently owns and operates a bicycle shop business in Potsdam.*
- *Under Cover Storage, an indoor storage business serving customers located in Winthrop, and providing services in the Tri Town area, received a \$40,000 loan that was packaged by the IDA, including participation through the SLCIDA-LDC Microenterprise revolving Loan Fund and the Brasher Microenterprise Revolving Loan Fund, both of which are administered by the SLCIDA-LDC. In addition to 18 storage units, the business offers direct buying and selling of construction materials, a U-HAUL dealership, and as of January 2020, the facility became an official UPS and FedEx shipping center. The funds will help the company purchase twelve new mobile storage units to expand its existing indoor storage business by offering mobile storage units to service customers with temporary storage solutions on or off-site.*

- *The IDA applied to the Northern Border Regional Council (“NBRC”) to purchase and lease pieces of sawmill equipment to help North American Forest Group, Inc, an affiliated company of Curran Renewable Energy, turn its sawmill in the former ACCO Brands facility in the Town of Oswegatchie into an integrated wood products manufacturing operation. The NBRC approved \$535,000 of the \$800,000 amount requested in the application. The IDA is committing \$270,000 to assist with the funding gap as it will own and lease the equipment to North American Forest Group per the terms of the NBRC grant application. The balance of the financing, \$265,000 will be provided by the River Valley Redevelopment Agency through a Line of Credit advance which will be paid back by Curran Renewable Energy. With access to these funds, the project is fully funded and able to move forward, allowing North American Forest Group to continue with its plans to revive the former ACCO facility.*
- *The IDA referred APC Paper in Norfolk to CITEC, a not-for-profit business consulting organization which is part of the New York Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) and MEP National Network, to assist the company in meeting new FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) guidelines for the use of recycled materials in food industry packaging.*

*CITEC’s audits of APC’s system enabled the company to keep its largest client. A similar audit was provided against the FTC standards to ensure that APC met the requirements for labeling their materials with the “80% recycled material” label. Even though all of APC’s incoming material was previously heading for the landfill, the FTC has strict guidelines about what may or may not be considered recycled. CITEC’s annual audit and report allow APC to demonstrate they have good systems in place to label their materials properly, helping APC to meet their customers’ requirements for use of recycled materials. CITEC, a long-time local development partner of the IDA, has been instrumental in helping APC meet these high standards and representations. APC currently employs about 60 people.*

- *The SLCIDA–Civic Development Corporation approved amendments for Series 2010 bonds issued for the Canton-Potsdam Hospital and Canton-Potsdam Hospital Foundation. The original bonds were for additions and improvements to the primary hospital campus in Potsdam and for the acquisition and construction of a medical clinic facility on Lawrence Avenue in Potsdam. The amendments enabled St. Lawrence Health Systems to receive more favorable interest rates for the bonds.*
- *Solsberry Enterprises, LLC (Saint Larry’s, Potsdam) received \$65,000 in loan funds from the North Country Alliance Local Development Corporation through a loan sponsored by the SLCIDA. The project assisted a Waddington native and SUNY Potsdam graduate, Michael Solsberry, come back to the County and start up a restaurant in a vacant building (6 Elm Street) in Potsdam.*
- *Michels Corporation, a contractor for the NYPA SmartPath Project, signed a 2-year lease to occupy space in the Canton Industrial Building, once occupied by Parker Maple. IDA Building Occupancy continues to grow, with the following companies currently leasing or acquiring space in IDA developed or owned properties:*
  - *Potsdam Commerce Park: From the Heart Cabinetry*
  - *Massena Industrial Park: Fockler Industries, Op-Tech (now US Ecology), AmTech Yarns, Curran Renewable Energy, and New York Power Tools*
  - *Canton Industrial Building: Michels Corporation*



- *Butternut Assets in Lisbon has completed its PILOT period and the facility is now fully on the tax roll.*
- *Rushton Place in Canton has completed its PILOT period and the facility is now fully on the tax roll.*
- *Consent Agreements have been executed formalizing the assignment of the St. Lawrence Gas Company PILOT to the new owner of St. Lawrence Gas, Liberty Utilities.*
- *LKR enterprises, owner of the Great American store in Star Lake, announced it was closing the store, as well as its other store in Watertown, in late 2019. Shortly thereafter, the company agreed to execute a deed-in-lieu of foreclosure and transfer the property to the St. Lawrence County Property Development Corporation, which is working to sell the facility with the hopes of bringing a new retail entity or other productive operation to the community. Proceeds from the eventual sale of the building will be utilized to pay outstanding loan balances to the secured lenders which assisted LKR in opening the store in 2016.*
- *The IDA is working with the City of Ogdensburg to assist with renovations on the former Newell Manufacturing Building on Patterson Street in Ogdensburg. Over the winter a small part of the roof at the former Newell Manufacturing facility collapsed from excess snow, affecting approximately 1,000 square feet of former office space in the building. The City of Ogdensburg worked with its insurance company and contractors to repair the roof.*



*The IDA applied for and received a \$500,000 award from the Northern Border Regional Council and a \$200,000 loan/grant award from the Development Authority of the North Country for additional rehabilitation work on the building. The next phase of work will include additional paint removal and cleanup, the replacement of building utilities, and buildout of office and other common space within the building. The City officially approved the sale of the former Newell Manufacturing Building to the SLCIDA at the end of 2020.*

- *The IDA, in partnership with Arconic, continues to work on plans for the conceptual development of a business park on excess Arconic property in Massena. The IDA and Arconic received \$90,000 toward the project from Empire State Development Corporation. The goal is to create a comprehensive, cohesive view for developing the 2,500 acres as a mixed use industrial, technology, commercial, and agri-business campus. The feasibility study of the Arconic property in Massena will provide the information and data needed to develop the sites for future growth and expansion.*
- *The New York State budget that passed in 2020 included a proposal to remove an additional 2,500 beds from the prison system, prompting the SLCIDA and the County to take proactive measures by passing resolutions in support of the continued operation of the three State correctional facilities in St. Lawrence County. SLCIDA staff worked with our State elected officials and local community members from Ogdensburg and Gouverneur to highlight the economic and community benefits provided by the prisons. The local facilities are successful and operate very well. Staff are continuing their efforts to help keep all three facilities operational.*
- *National Grid announced a Brownfield Redevelopment Grant in the amount of \$22,300 was awarded to Newton Falls Land Reclamation, owned by Andy Leroux, as a result of a referral from the SLCIDA. The funds will assist with the cleanup and repurposing of land once owned by the former Newton Falls Fine Paper Company. Mr. Leroux, once employed at the Newton Falls facility, purchased property behind the mill buildings once used for wastewater treatment. With clean-up efforts now complete, Mr. Leroux plans to build a Christmas Tree Farm on the property, with future-plans for a maple syrup retail outlet, a fishing and hunting lodge and a campground to follow.*



- *As part of the restoration and repair efforts for businesses that have experienced loss due to flooding along the St. Lawrence River, Empire State Development Corporation is administering a fund for business resiliency improvements, referred to as the Lake Ontario River Resilience and Economic Development Initiative (“REDI”). The SLCIDA worked with numerous St. Lawrence County businesses to help them submit their projects for the program. The IDA is also assisting businesses to obtain the local matching funds (via loans or other financing) required to access the State financing program. The funding will help to address the immediate and long-term resiliency needs of businesses impacted by high water levels.*
- *Numerous inquiries related to potential solar power projects around the county have led to discussions with several municipalities concerning solar power PILOT requests. Eight community-scale solar development projects have been approved for PILOT assistance by the IDA. These projects represent over \$120,000 in new PILOT revenue for the County and local taxing jurisdictions in the first year of the PILOT agreements, a figure that will increase by 2% per year over the life of the PILOTs. There are over 20 similar projects in the development pipeline.*
- *The following loans were paid off over the course of the year:*

<i>Borrower</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Issuer</i>	<i>Issue Date</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<i>First Class Aire</i>	<i>Parishville</i>	<i>GMEDF/RVRDA</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>\$ 103,000.00</i>
<i>Hozmerica</i>	<i>Ogdensburg</i>	<i>RVRDA</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>\$ 17,500.00</i>
<i>North Racquette Greenery</i>	<i>Massena</i>	<i>GMEDF</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>\$ 50,000.00</i>
<i>Parker Maple</i>	<i>Canton</i>	<i>LDC/RVRDA</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>\$ 100,000.00</i>
<i>Wrights Tool Rental</i>	<i>Massena</i>	<i>MIC</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>\$ 20,000.00</i>

- *The St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency’s Community Development and Environmental Improvement Program Applications for the 2020 funding year were made available in January 2020, with an extended submission deadline of May 15<sup>th</sup>. Total amount of funds available was \$100,000 with a maximum of \$20,000 to be distributed to any one individual project. The following awards were made in 2020:*
  - ***Fort la Presentation (\$10,000)*** - mitigate shoreline erosion and flooding at Rensselaer Point
  - ***Black Lake Chamber of Commerce (\$5,000)*** - billboards, posters, panfish tournament event
  - ***St Lawrence County Arts Council (\$20,000)*** - purchase, renovate, and occupy 6-8 Raymond Street in Potsdam for a new Arts Center
  - ***CREST Center - SUNY Canton (\$19,800)*** - purchase a used tractor trailer for CDL Classes
  - ***St Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce (\$7,000)*** - create integrated approach to chamber services in County, allowing for administrative, marketing, and staffing efficiencies
  - ***Town of Louisville (\$18,200)*** - renovate Hockey Score Box and install dehumidification system to help renovated box survive weather
  - ***Village of Waddington (\$20,00)*** - gateway to downtown, new signage entering Waddington

- *The SLCIDA applied for, and was awarded, a Rural Development Block Grant “RDBG” funds from the USDA to support the costs of training individuals in the new CDL-A Driver Training Program offered at the CREST Center at SUNY Canton. This award will assist at least 12 adults as they work to obtain their Class A Commercial Driver’s License through the CREST Center. The St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency awarded \$19,800 to the CREST Center through the Community Development and Environmental Improvement Program for the purchase of a used truck tractor for the program. Pepsi-Cola Ogdensburg Bottlers previously donated a trailer to the program.*

*The rate for attending the course is much lower than if the student were to attend the class in Syracuse, which is the next closest location, but still comes with a cost that can be a barrier for potential applicants. The grant will cover approximately \$4,750 per student. Each student, or their employer if applicable, will then be responsible for the balance of the class cost (approximately \$1,500).*



ACQUISITION – Pictured (l to r) are St. Lawrence County IDA CEO Patrick J. Kelly, SUNY Canton Administrative Assistant Rebecca L. Blackmon from the Career Ready Education and Success Training Center, SUNY Canton President Zvi Szafran, and Provost Peggy A. De Cooke standing with the college’s new semi-tractor-trailer used in the college’s commercial driver’s license training program.

*In 2020, the CDL A Training program had 21 students enroll, with 15 successfully licensed. Ten of those participants were enrolled through the IDA funding from the USDA.*

- *The IDA is furthering its efforts to work in partnership with the Workforce Development Institute (“WDI”) to address workforce challenges and opportunities. Numerous projects around the County received assistance from the WDI, including Project Management training for R.T. Vanderbilt Minerals, two projects for skilled trades training at Arconic, and multiple training projects at LC Drives. Throughout 2020, the IDA worked with the WDI to include St. Lawrence County businesses in a forest economy project. The Northern Border Regional Commission provided the WDI with a state-wide grant to assist companies working in our forests and secondary wood producers. This includes loggers, sawmills, truss producers, pallet mills, pellet mills, pulp and paper and cabinetry. The WDI has reached out to the St. Lawrence County businesses to offer the availability of workforce training grants. Secondly, they are offering funding to provide a paid internship to the company linking them to the talent pipeline of area and regional educational providers.*



- *A Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership (“CEL”) program was formed in St. Lawrence County, sponsored by SUNY Canton, with assistance provided by the SLCIDA. The program is an offshoot from the program that has been in place at the University of Buffalo for over 30 years. It is designed for entrepreneurs to overcome business challenges, create new opportunities, and develop meaningful connections within the local business community. The first session began in October 2019 with ten (10) registrants. Weekly sessions continued in the SLCIDA conference room until March 2020, at which time the remaining sessions were conducted remotely until the April 16, 2020 commencement date. A total of six (6) participants finished the program and each received a certificate of completion at a ceremony held at Jakes on the Water in Hannawa Falls. The CEL program is part of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy’s goal to better connect the businesses of the County and to provide enhanced startup and expansion services.*
- *The Northern New York Power Proceeds Allocation Board (“NNYPPAB”) continues to make funding recommendations to the New York Power Authority for projects that demonstrate clear economic development benefits to St. Lawrence County. The Northern New York Power Proceeds Act, which Governor Andrew M. Cuomo signed into law in December 2014, authorizes NYPA to deposit the net earnings from the sale of a block of 10 megawatts of unallocated electricity from the Power Authority’s St. Lawrence-Franklin D. Roosevelt Power Project for this program.*

*The NNYPPAB is comprised of the following members appointed by Governor Cuomo: Chairman Patrick Kelly, CEO of the St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency; Ian Maxwell, Technical Sales Representative with DeFelsko Corporation, Ogdensburg; Robert McNeil, McNeil Accounting Services, Lisbon; Theresa Phalon, President and CEO of North Country Savings Bank, Canton; and Roger Sharlow, Principal of RJS Consulting, Waddington.*

*As of December 2020, Power Proceeds’ deposits exceeded \$5.2 million, with awards of \$1.9 million, leaving \$3.3 million currently available for qualifying projects. Supporting 190 jobs and \$14.5 million investments, projects which have received awards include:*

○ Canexsys Networks, Inc.	\$200,000
○ Clarkson University	\$60,000
○ North Country Children's Museum	\$140,000
○ Empire State Mines	\$330,000
○ Kingston Pharma, LLC	\$200,000
○ AmTech Yarns, Inc.	\$370,000
○ SLC Chamber of Commerce	\$220,305
○ Queenaire Technologies, Inc.	\$59,600
○ Criscitello & Criscitello LP	\$95,000
○ Structural Wood Corporation	\$169,112
○ St. Lawrence Power and Equipment Museum	\$25,000
○ <u>In-Law Brewing Company, LLC</u>	<u>\$51,000</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,920,017</b>

- *The IDA served as a non-voting member of the local planning committee for the Potsdam Downtown Revitalization Initiative (“DRI”) planning and implementation discussions.*

- *IDA CEO Patrick Kelly was appointed Chairman of the New York State Economic Development Council (“NYSEDC”) in 2020. The NYSEDC is the state's principal organization representing economic development professionals. The organization’s 900 members include the leadership of Industrial Development Agencies and Local Development Corporations, commercial and investment banks, underwriters, bond counsels, utilities, chambers of commerce, higher education institutions, and private corporations.*

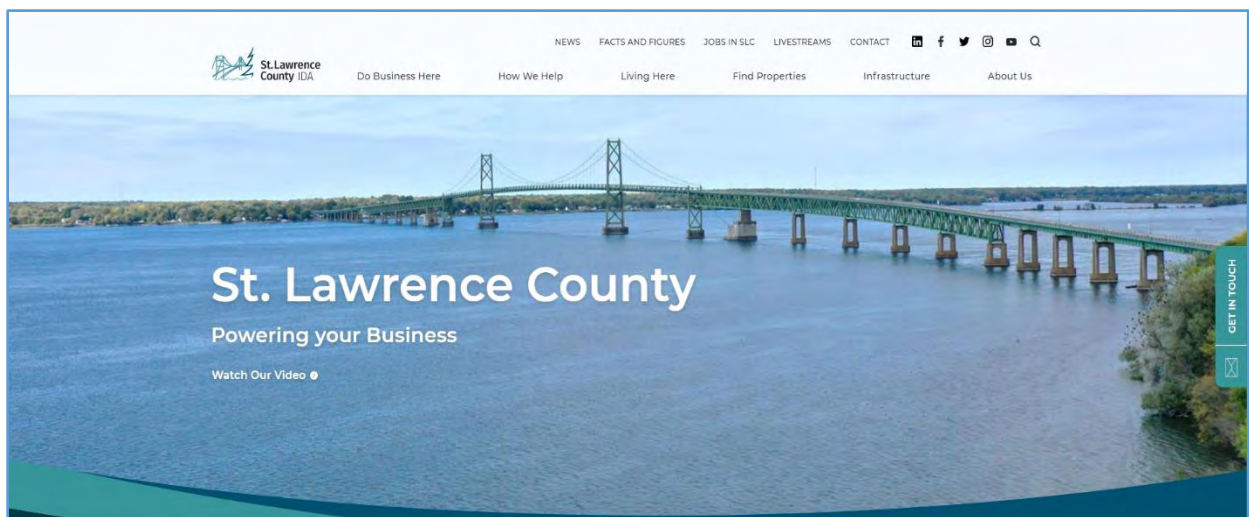
*The purpose of NYSEDC is to promote the economic development of the state and its communities, to encourage sound practices in the conduct of regional and statewide development programs, and to develop education programs that enhance the professional development skills of its members.*

- *Board members approved the 2019 Independent Audit reports in June of 2020. The reports showed no findings. Legislators have been provided the reports electronically. In addition, the reports are available on our website at [www.SLCIDA.com](http://www.SLCIDA.com).*
- *As part of our Public Authority Law compliance program, annual policy reviews are conducted by the IDA and its affiliated organizations. Conflicts of Interest, Procurement, Investment and Assessment of Internal Controls, Property Disposition, Investment of Funds, Whistleblower, Code of Ethics, Defense & Indemnification, and Compensation, Reimbursement & Attendance policies were reviewed. A new Records and Retention Policy and Schedule were added and the FOIL policy was revised. Performance documents for 2019 were also reviewed.*
- *Appointments/Reappointments: Both Brian Staples and Ernest LaBaff were reappointed for another three-year term in August 2020.*
- *At the IDA’s Annual Meeting, the following officers were elected to a one-year term: Brian W. Staples (Chair); Ernest J. LaBaff (Vice-Chair); Lynn Blevins (Secretary), Patrick J. Kelly (CEO) and Kimberly A. Gilbert (CFO). The firm of Silver and Collins was reappointed as General Counsel.*

*On September 6<sup>th</sup>, Thomas A. Plastino, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the SLCIDA, passed away. Through his work with the IDA, the IDA Local Development Corporation, the St. Lawrence County Workforce Development Board, CITEC, the North Country Alliance and many other regional organizations, Tom had a profound impact on St. Lawrence County and the North Country and is greatly missed.*



- *The IDA also continued aggressive marketing efforts to better inform local businesses of our resources, to attract outside businesses to St. Lawrence County, and seek-out alumni and former residents of the area who manage businesses outside the area to bring their businesses to the County. Some of those efforts include:*
  - *To generate future project activity, the IDA sent out a Request for Proposals for firms to assist with outreaching prospective companies in the milk processing/dairy industry to locate operations in the County. This initiative came out of several discussions with large farms in the County as well as with the Cornell Cooperative Extension regarding ability to utilize the local supply of milk to attract additional processors to the County.*
  - *The creation and utilization of advertising and media promotion pieces, including placements in North Country This Week and Northern New York Newspapers. The IDA took part in an internet streaming advertisement series during the Clarkson University hockey games. Ads were also posted on the Northern New York Newspapers websites and North Country Now to attract businesses from outside the area to St. Lawrence County. This is part of an effort to attract alumni living outside the County to come back here and expand their businesses into St. Lawrence County.*
  - *Maintaining memberships in Canadian trade organizations to facilitate access to events (virtual this year) and to maintain key contacts with Canadian companies and multiplier organizations.*
  - *Collaborating with NYPA to enhance the value of the IDA's website through a more modern platform, and expanded social media presence and promotions. The new site represents a significant improvement in our efforts to promote business resources in St. Lawrence County and to position the County as a location for new investment from outside the area.*



*A summary of work on the IDA website and related social media platforms includes:*

- *Restructured information architecture of site, content is better organized*
- *New site design that is responsive for desktop and mobile*
- *Developed an intuitive CMS in WordPress for easy client updates*
- *Produced sizzle reel (<1min) on homepage and longer-form video spot*
- *Created business spotlight format*
- *Integrated GIS/mapping data and available property tool*
- *Integrated dynamic demographic data*
- *Added pull-out CONTACT form that lives on every page, increasing opportunities for new business leads*



*Analytics summary of the website and social media channels:*

- *4,787 new users have visited the site*
- *Highest number of users per month in this period was in January 2021 (807 users), which demonstrates that our social media efforts are working*
- *Users spent an average of 4 minutes on the site*
- *Audience sources:*
  - *65% of audience came to the site directly*
  - *27% of audience came from organic search (search engine)*
  - *5% of audience came from social media*
- *Social traffic sources:*
  - *Facebook - 85%*
  - *LinkedIn - 7%*
  - *Instagram – 6%*
  - *YouTube - 3%*
  - *Twitter - 2%*



**St. Lawrence County**  
Industrial Development Agency



# ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

2021



## Marketing Activities

## Summary

The St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency will continue to promote St. Lawrence County as a business investment destination to our targeted geographies and industry sectors. As part of these promotional efforts, the Agency will focus on the activities and action steps highlighted in the 2017 St. Lawrence County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (“CEDS”) and in any subsequent updates to the CEDS.

As outlined in the CEDS, the County’s strategy for growing its economy starts by recognizing that jobs and tax base are created only by **profitable enterprises**. **As a result, the County must concentrate on expanding existing operations and growing new operations**, while pursuing a strategy which consistently demonstrates how it helps: (1) existing enterprises to become/stay profitable and expand their operations and/or (2) identify and create new enterprises that can start or locate profitable operations in the County.

While it is important for the County to ensure the continuing operations of enterprises that have reached maturity, the County can only reverse its economic deterioration by helping existing enterprises to expand and/or grow or to locate new enterprises in the County.

Four key objectives related to marketing and business outreach must be accomplished in order to achieve the goals of expanding and increasing the County’s employer base, they are:

- Encourage and assist existing employers to maintain their current operations (hereafter “retention”) that provide stable employment and traditional products and services to customers within and outside the County.
- Encourage and assist existing employers in the County to expand their operations (hereafter “expansion”) by using the tools at the developers’ command to help them to become more cost-efficient, to develop new products and services, and to locate new customers.
- Identify entrepreneurs already resident in the County and encourage them to start up new businesses in the County (hereafter called “already here” startups).
- Identify entrepreneurs and businesses located outside the County who could profitably start businesses in the County and/or profitably move their businesses to the County (hereafter called “come here” startups).

The resources to reach both existing in-County and outside individuals and enterprises are limited by cost and staff time available to commit on the sustained basis necessary to reach all, or even most, potential markets. As a result, in marketing resources will be focused on the highest probability, and most cost effective, outreach efforts. This includes the IDA managing its own series of promotional and sales activities and, especially, supplementing these efforts by partnering with other local, regional and State development organizations.

The 2021 marketing plan for the Agency will also include efforts to advance the “Research Agenda” outlined in the County’s CEDS. For example, exploring such questions as the destinations of “round” wood harvested in but exported from the County and whether and how turning such an exported

resource into value-added products in the County could give an enterprise a competitive advantage by locating here.

As it has historically, the Agency will highlight our border location, available power assets, and the collaboration opportunities with our local colleges and universities. We will undertake initiatives to target alumni of the colleges in specific industry sectors who might be enticed to return to the area either as entrepreneurs or as decision-makers with current companies.

There are a number of former industrial or otherwise under-utilized properties which will be promoted for economic development re-use throughout the year as well, including the Newell Manufacturing Facility in Ogdensburg, the Newton Falls Paper Mill, the excess Alcoa and Arconic sites and buildings and St. Lawrence Centre mall and former Hannaford spaces available in Massena. While some of these properties are currently vacant or not in productive use, the availability of these sites, each of which still have key infrastructure in place, is an asset to the County's redevelopment efforts.

Specific to the former Newell Manufacturing facility, The IDA is working with the City of Ogdensburg to assist with renovations to the Building on Patterson Street in Ogdensburg. The project is about half-way complete with the renovations for the roof and building shell near completion. The IDA is embarking on redesign of the building interior to accommodate multiple tenants, primarily manufacturers and distributors. The IDA has been showing the unfinished building to several companies that have expressed an interest in being in St. Lawrence County. That coupled with the fact that the occupancy rate for finished industrial buildings is high indicates there is a need for such facilities to accommodate further economic development.



## Assets, Strengths & Value Proposition



### Strategic Location:

Access to U.S., Canadian and World Markets

Power, Land, Water and Natural Resources

Available, Affordable Sites and Buildings

Productive and Capable Workforce

Educational Resources and Collaboration Opportunities

Aggressive Tax, Training, Financial and Energy Incentives

Air, Rail, Port and Road Transportation Systems

## Focus Areas

- NYPA Marketing Initiatives/Power Allocated for Use in St. Lawrence County
- Canada
- College-Based Outreach
- Upgrading Web and Technology-Based Tools
- Coordinated Regional Outreach
- Come Back Here/Come Here Initiative
- Research Agenda



## Schedule of Activities

The IDA will carry out specific marketing activities as outlined in the pages that follow which serve to further its 2021 objectives. In addition, our efforts consist of many supporting activities that are performed on an ongoing basis throughout the year. These include:

- Collaboration with local partners on tradeshow and site visits
- Coordination with local, regional and State partners on lead fulfillment
- Participation in local and regional marketing efforts and initiatives
- Service on various local, regional and State boards and committees
- Membership in strategic organizations; participation in events and seminars
- Investigation of improved ways to outreach existing businesses and entrepreneurs
- Maintaining awareness of issues that impact economic development in County

### First Quarter: *January, February, March*

- Ongoing engagement with lead generation firm **outreaching prospective companies in the milk processing/dairy industry to locate operations in the County**
- Finalize promotional materials for the marketing of the former Newell Building in Ogdensburg to prospective companies
- Design and print collateral materials and order promotional materials for tradeshow distribution
- Conclude the process for revamping slcida.com and other supporting websites, focusing on resources and tools for promoting sites, power resources, workforce, and incentives
- Strategic outreach and media placement and e-marketing highlighting local businesses and industries regarding stimulus and other COVID assistance programs
- Print Advertising: North Country This Week Progress Edition and Northern New York Newspapers Business Outlook
- Virtual Event: Attracting New Residents to the Adirondacks, (February 16)
- Virtual Event: International Trade Week, (March 9, 11 and 16)

### **Second Quarter: *April, May, June***

- Implementation of enhanced Contact Management System
- Addition of new Business Development Specialist with focus on new business generation
- Virtual site visit and contact program with historical portfolio of contacts, prospects, and leads
- Drum Country Business (Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence counties, DANC, National Grid, and Fort Drum) regional resident, workforce, and business attraction program
- Collaborative outreach with colleges to alumni
- Direct outreach: Power – Montreal and Toronto Audiences
- Lead generation firm expansion to include additional industries
- Social media: Local business profiles, quality of life, general economic development
- Print Advertising: North Country This Week Visitor's Guide
- Print Advertising: NNY Newspapers Vacation Guide

### **Third and Fourth Quarters: *July - December***

- Digital Ad Campaign & Print Advertising: Marketing to former residents returning to the area for the summer
- Direct Mailing: POWER – for potential upcoming tradeshow & collaboration with colleges and universities to target alumni returning for campus events
- Social Media: Facebook outreach to identify potential alumni
- Tradeshow: Exhibit at Canadian Manufacturing Technology Show ("CMTS") - Toronto, Canada, (10/4 – 10/7)
- Virtual Sessions - Day Home Edition: Society of Manufacturer Engineers will provide two (2) days of informative and professional educational sessions offered over two weeks throughout October a unique opportunity for small and medium size enterprises to learn what it takes to succeed within the defense and security industries
- Print Advertising: Montreal and Ottawa areas and PackEx Show Guide
- Digital Ad Campaign: Marketing to former residents returning to the area for the holidays
- Planning for more traditional market program and activities in post-COVID 2022