

St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency Local Development Corporation

2023 Annual Report

Mission Statement

(Reviewed and Reaffirmed in Public Session on March 30, 2023)

The mission of the St. Lawrence County IDA Local Development Corporation is to stimulate the growth of private sector employment in St. Lawrence County by providing financial assistance to new and expanding industries, and to certain retail/market-driven facilities.

The purpose of the Corporation shall be to relieve and reduce unemployment; promote and provide for additional and maximum employment; better and maintain job opportunities; to instruct or train individuals to improve or develop their capabilities for jobs; carry on scientific research for the purpose of aiding the community of St. Lawrence County, New York by attracting industry to the community and by encouraging the development of, or retention of, an industry in the community; lessen the burdens of government and act in the public interest and administer the St. Lawrence County Revolving Loan Fund.

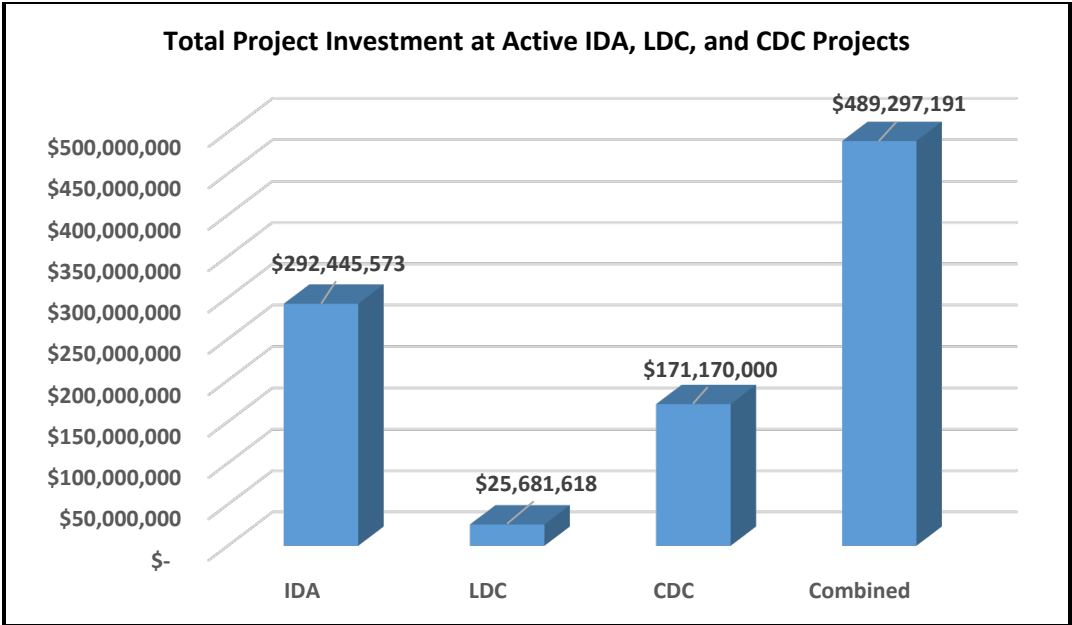
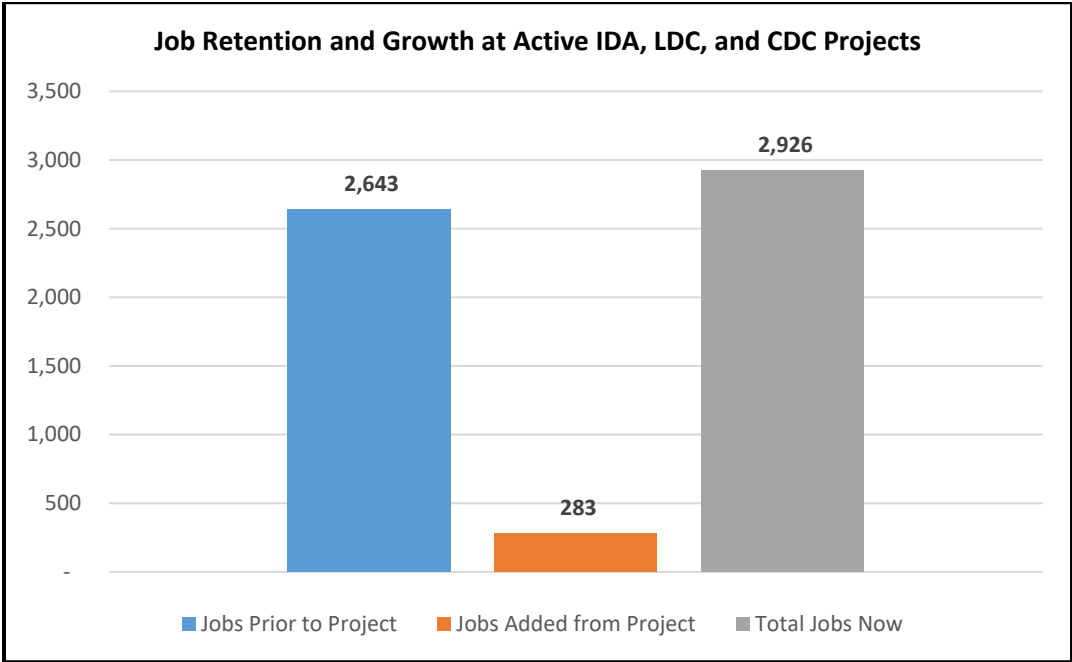


Performance Goals

- 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

2023 Performance Review (January 2023 – December 2023)

The combined totals of active St. Lawrence County IDA, LDC, and CDC projects represents over 2,600 jobs retained, over 280 created, and a combined project investment in St. Lawrence County of nearly \$490 million. This is for active projects only and does not include historical project activity where IDA assistance has been completed or for LDC loans and CDC bonds which have been repaid.



Bent Beam Brewing

St. Lawrence Suds dba Bent Beam Brewing has acquired the former McCarthy's Furniture Barn in the Village of Canton. The company will construct a microbrewery in the building to be operated under the planned name of "Bent Beam Brewery."

The Village of Canton received a Restore NY grant for the restaurant component of the project. IDA incentives and a \$50,000 loan by the IDA Local Development Corporation ("IDA-LDC") will assist in the equipping and rehabilitating of the building envelope and brewing section of the facility. While experiencing supply chain issues, changes were necessary regarding the Project Amount and Benefited Project Amount, so the Estimated Value



Construction underway at the future home of the Bent Beam Brewery in Canton

Northeastern Sign

Northeastern Sign Corporation, a sign manufacturer and installer in South Colton, is undertaking an expansion of their facility. As part of the project, the IDA- LDC provided \$110,000 in low-interest loan funds for the acquisition of equipment through the St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency loan fund.

The company currently employs eight full-time equivalent employees and plans to add two full-time equivalent jobs as a result of the project.



Michels Power

Michels Power, Inc. moved out of the Canton Industrial Building and is now leasing approximately 6,600 square feet of space in the Massena Industrial Park Lot 19 building owned by the St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency.

As Michels Power, Inc. moves forward with the NYPA SMART Path Project, the company will be focusing on construction on the eastern side of the region.



Moses-Adirondack SMART Path Project

The lease rate charged to Michels includes a PILOT figure that will be collected and passed to the jurisdictions for the time frame that the space is leased. The other tenant in the Massena building, Fockler Industries, is already on a full-payment PILOT for its space. The building, which was once fully vacant, will generate approximately \$18,000 in PILOT payments.

St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency Community Development and Environmental Improvement Program

The St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency’s Community Development and Environmental Improvement Program Applications for the 2023 funding year were made available earlier this year, with a submission deadline of April 14th. A total of 15 applications were accepted, requesting \$277,590 in funding, representing \$665,830 in total proposed project costs. The following projects received funding:

Organization	Project Description	Award
Lisbon Depot Museum	Two Mini split units	\$15,000
Louisville, Town of	Parking area paving for Municipal Building	\$10,000
Macomb, Town of	Historical building renovations to include flooring, lighting, electrical and kitchen upgrades	\$10,000
Massena, Town of	Water study specific to property for development on Route 37	\$10,000
Ogdensburg, City of	Dobisky Center – Improve fire suppression, A/C & hot water heat	\$10,000
Potsdam Humane Society	Best Friends Thrift Store renovations to roof and insulation	\$15,000
St. Lawrence Power & Equipment Museum	Utility expansion – potable water	\$10,000
St. Lawrence Valley Sportsmen Club	Walleye restocking program	\$5,000
Waddington, Town of	Campground at Leishman Point, infrastructure for 4 sites	\$15,000

ATL

Atlantic Testing Laboratories, Limited was approved for a loan of up to \$322,000 by the St. Lawrence County IDA – Local Development Corporation and St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency to acquire specialized Geoprobe drilling equipment. The equipment will support ATL’s focus on expansion into environmental, geotechnical, and exploration activities.

The company has locations all around the state, with its headquarters and drilling division located in St. Lawrence County.

Previous drill rig projects the Agency has undertaken have met employment requirements. This project is expected to create two more full-time equivalent employees at the company’s drilling division in Canton.



ATL's CME rubber track drilling rig

Loan Repayments

The following loans were paid off in 2023:

Borrower:	Location	Fund	Year Issued	Amount
Thew Associates	Canton	RVRDA	2018	\$ 97,000
Undercover Storage (Loan #1)	Winthrop	BMRLF	2021	\$ 30,000
Undercover Storage (Loan #2)	Winthrop	MIC	2021	\$ 10,000
Bregg Winery	Norfolk	LDC	2018	\$ 30,000
Swift Eyewear	Massena	RVRDA	2016	\$ 30,000

Marketing and Promotion

The IDA also continued aggressive marketing efforts to better inform local businesses of our resources, to attract outside businesses and investment to St. Lawrence County, and to seek out alumni and former residents of the area to return to the County. Some of these efforts include:

- Streaming TV advertisements in Canada using the video created for the IDA website. While reviewing analytical data, response to the commercial appeared strong with a higher percentage than expected of people viewing the commercial in its entirety.
- Distributing informational flyers with the “Come Back Home and Bring Your Business” theme at local alumni events, reunions, and festivals this summer to foster attraction efforts, such as the Bass Masters Open in Massena. On-air ads during the Clarkson and St. Lawrence University hockey games also promote this theme as well.
- Staff attendance at the Canadian Manufacturing and Technology Show in Toronto, the EpTech show in Montreal, Advanced Design and Manufacturing Expo in Toronto, the Select USA-Canada event in Montreal.

Staff also attended the North Country Alliance Fall Symposium and after the event, provided a tour of the county to the NYSERDA representatives.

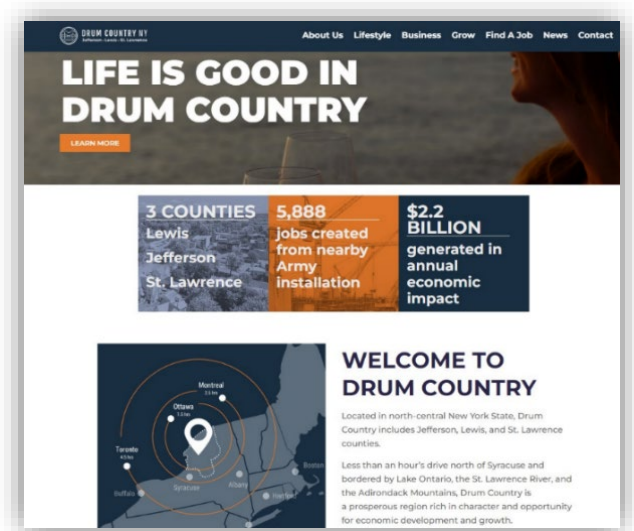
- Additionally, staff hosted Empire State Development agri-business sector representatives to show the potential for agri-business development in St. Lawrence County as part of a Drum Country regional tour.
- The creation and utilization of advertising and media promotion pieces, including placements in North Country This Week and Northern New York Newspapers.
- Maintaining memberships in Canadian trade organizations to facilitate access to events and to maintain key contacts with Canadian companies and multiplier organizations.
- Collaborating with NYPA to enhance the value of the IDA’s website and social media presence. We continue to promote business resources in St. Lawrence County and to position the County as a location for new investment and a destination from outside the area. Since the start of the new year, there has been an increase in utilization of our website and social media platforms. Postings offer information pieces as well as general updates and promotional messaging.



IDA Business Development Specialist Brian Norton at the Canadian Technology Show in Toronto

- Outreach to numerous businesses in the following industry sectors:

- Food production
- Glass manufacturing
- Plastics and plastic manufacturing, molding, extrusion
- Fiber, yarn, filament, thread manufacturing
- Paper/packaging industries
- Music industry
- Businesses whose operations would benefit from the graduates, faculty, and facilities at the local universities.



Drum Country Website

- The IDA continued a commitment of funds for the Drum Country Business Regional Marketing Initiative. This effort represents a collaboration of the St. Lawrence, Jefferson, and Lewis County IDAs, the Development Authority of the North Country, and National Grid partnering with Fort Drum to promote and develop the region. The goal is to promote St. Lawrence County to audiences that might not recognize the County but do know the region.

Representatives from Fort Drum attended our Business Mixer event in March and discussed the process of transitioning soldiers into the regional workforce. This relationship with Fort Drum was developed as part of this initiative.

- The addition of a Business Spotlight video featuring Potsdam Specialty Papers to our existing set of spotlight videos which include Atlantic Testing, Curran Renewable Energy, Five Mile Farm, Russell’s Groom and Board, and a feature video on the IDA.
- Notable highlights to the website and related social media platforms include:
 - Developed a platform for spotlighting successful businesses in SLC, fostering a sense of local pride and economic growth.
 - Further developments to the Jobs in SLC page to include a multitude of resources, job postings, and a form for job posting submission.
 - Continuation of the “Come Home to St Lawrence County” campaign to encourage alumni and previous residents to come back to the county.
 - Further developments to social content highlighting prominent community events that benefit workforce development.
 - Weekly posts have included information about key sectors in the local economy.

- Website and social media analytics include:
 - On average, there are about 13,000 people visiting the site per month, with an engagement rate of 51.69%.
 - Highest number of users per month in this period was in January and March, with another spike in early November, which demonstrates that our social media efforts are working.
 - Users spent an average of 4 minutes on the site showing users are continuing to spend more time during their sessions than last year.

Social Media Analytics Key Takeaways in 2023:

Over the course of the year, we saw performance levels grow significantly with Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn:

- Incorporated more quality-of-life posts/posts about community members. Stories about people interest people.
- There was a significant increase in page reach by 302%, and page and profile visits increased 90.5% compared to 2022. This means more viewers are seeking the information that the page provides. We posted a minimum of 2 times per week on the SLC IDA Facebook page throughout the year
- Twitter impressions reached roughly 6,000 for the year, with July being our best performing month with over a thousand impressions in a month. The Engagement Rate on Twitter increased in 2023 and performed better than 2022.
- On Instagram, we saw page reach increase dramatically by 3.0k%. This has to do with the Family Child Care Training Program ad that ran. Regardless of that ad, reach still would have increased.

At the IDA-LDC's Annual Meeting, the following officers were elected to a one-year term: Brian W. Staples (Chair); Lynn Blevins (Vice-Chair); and Ernest J. LaBaff (Secretary).

Brian Staples and Ernie LaBaff were reappointed by the County Board of Legislators to serve another three-year term on the IDA and the IDA-LDC.

Board members approved the 2023 Independent Audit reports in March of 2024. 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.

As part of our Public Authority Law compliance program, annual policy reviews are conducted by the IDA and its affiliated organizations. In the first quarter the Property Disposition, Whistleblower, Code of Ethics, Defense & Indemnification, and Compensation, Reimbursement & Attendance policies were reviewed. Performance documents for 2023 were also reviewed. Staff members participated in interactive harassment prevention training, in conjunction with a revised policy and training materials.

St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency Local Development Corporation

Additional Questions

1. Have the board members acknowledged that they have read and understood the mission of the public authority?

ANS: Yes – the Board members reviewed and approved (by formal resolution) the mission statement and performance measures of the board.

2. Who has the power to appoint the management of the public authority?

ANS: Management is appointed by the Board members of the authority.

3. If the board appoints management, do you have a policy you follow when appointing the management of the public authority?

ANS: The Board of the St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency Local Development Corporation appoints its Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer. The Chief Executive Officer appoints management and staff.

4. Briefly describe the role of the Board and the role of management in the implementation of the mission.

ANS: The Board, with assistance of management, works to develop the authority's mission, and evaluate the authority's goals and performance.

Management ensures that the board's mission and goals are carried out in a manner which achieves the intended public purpose - a process involving program evaluation, reporting, feedback and recommendation.

5. Has the board acknowledged that they have read and understood the responses to each of these questions?

ANS: The Board acknowledges its understanding of this document by formally approving the document in public session.