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**NORTH COUNTRY REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL THANKS
PARTNERS AND THE PUBLIC FOR PARTICIPATION AND INPUT**

The North Country Regional Economic Development Council has been named one of four “Best Plan Awardees” for its Strategic Plan submitted in November. The North Country, which is composed of Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties, will receive \$103.2 million in state support for 70 projects across the region.

Included in the list of projects to receive funding are:

- Rehabilitation of 46.25 miles of the rail line serving the Newton Fall Fine Paper, Benson Mines and Slack Chemical — \$9.97 Million (St. Lawrence County)
- Expansion of the Bombardier Mass Transit Corporation’s production facility and extension of the railcar test track to increase efficiency, flexibility and capacity for new contracts — \$2.5 Million (Clinton County)
- Development of a destination boutique hotel along the south shore of the St. Lawrence River in Clayton — \$2.25 Million (Jefferson County)
- Modernize laboratory medical facilities and hire additional scientists to explore disease protection techniques at Trudeau Institute — \$1.2 Million (Franklin County)
- Redevelopment of the former Lyons Falls Paper Mill site to make it shovel-ready for mixed use as a business park — \$330,000 (Lewis County)
- Expansion of broadband access throughout Hamilton County — \$4 Million (Hamilton County)
- Rehabilitation of a combined wastewater and stormwater sewer system in the Town of Ticonderoga — \$598,575 (Essex County)

For a look at all of the 70 projects awarded funding in the North Country, go to <http://www.governor.ny.gov/assets/documents/CFAAWARDSBooklet.pdf>

The Council's Strategic Plan is the product of an unprecedented level of collaboration and cooperation from hundreds of North Country residents across the largest region in the State. Council Co-Chairs Garry Douglas and Tony Collins praised the tremendous work of the Council and thanked its partners and the public for their involvement. The planning process involved Regional Council and work group members, stakeholders from across the region, and community input gathered during public forums and workshops and on the Council's website.

"This announcement marks not only a huge investment from the state, but also recognition of the North Country as a region that makes valuable contributions to the economy of New York State," said Anthony Collins, President of Clarkson University and North Country Regional Economic Development Council Co-Chair. "Our region demonstrated innovative solutions to advance agriculture, energy, small business development and tourism that benefit our communities as well as the world. We are grateful to the Governor and his administration for this opportunity."

"This was an extraordinarily satisfying outcome following an extraordinarily satisfying process," said Garry Douglas, President of the North Country Chamber of Commerce and North Country Regional Economic Development Council Co-Chair. "Over \$103 million for 70 important economic and community development projects in one fell swoop is unprecedented for our region. But even more satisfying is our ability to look back at a process that brought this vast and diverse region together in a whole new way and produced a roadmap that will now take us even further than these initial projects. We owe this success to all of our council members and more than 120 volunteers who did the impossible in just 90 days and did it exceedingly well. We are deeply grateful to Governor Cuomo and Lieutenant Governor Duffy for placing their faith in our region's ability to define its own future through its own strategy. Onward and upward!"

The North Country Regional Economic Development Council Strategic Plan, "Transformational: Leading the Economic Renaissance of New York's Small Cities and Rural Communities," provides a long-term roadmap to attract private investment, promote and facilitate connectivity between communities, revitalize and diversify communities, and create a climate that will allow entrepreneurs to flourish. It puts forth ways to achieve its vision by capitalizing on the region's shared assets: the iconic 1000 Islands and Adirondacks; the opportunities presented by the border with Canada; some of the best clean water resources in the Northeast; significant agricultural and forest reserves; abundant "clean" energy; incomparable four-season recreational opportunities; and its talented labor pool and entrepreneurial population.

Announced in July, Regional Councils represent a fundamental shift in the state's approach to economic development from a top-down development model to a community-based, performance driven approach which empowers individual areas to develop comprehensive strategic plans that invest in regional solutions to create jobs and economic growth. As part of

the Regional Council process, a Strategic Plan Review Committee was chosen to analyze and rank the strategic plans for each region competing for \$200 million in specially targeted economic development funding.

In addition to the strategic planning grants made available through the Regional Council initiative, a Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) was created to give businesses and other entities streamlined and expedited access to economic development funding from nine state agencies and 29 existing programs. Awards for CFA projects were based on the endorsement of the local Regional Council and the technical scoring of various state funding agencies. Additionally, eligible applicants will receive funding from NYSERDA's energy efficiency and renewable energy programs.



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