



Development Authority OF THE North Country

ANNUAL REPORT: 2022 - 2023

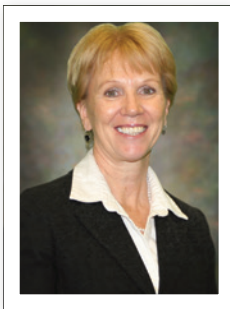
MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

After 18 years of planning and a lot of hard work on the part of many, we are pleased to report that the Development Authority opened its landfill expansion in June, 2022 and the operation is running smoothly, efficiently, and safely.

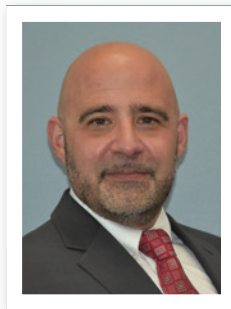
The 2022-2023 year was a busy one at the Authority, across all divisions. Our telecommunications network continues to grow and expand, increasing its reach to help areas that are unserved with broadband connections. We have been working with our county partners to identify areas in need of service and to identify solutions. Our continued focus on housing resulted in the completion of a study to identify needs, and working with communities to implement housing rehabilitation projects.

We have begun work on a significant capital project to upgrade the Army Water Line, which serves not only Fort Drum, but several other communities along the line. The water quality management and technical services that we provide to communities - upon request – continue to grow as we work to help municipalities meet their infrastructure challenges.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Development Authority, we pledge to work together with our partners and our communities to help the North Country be the best place to live, work and visit. ■



Margaret Murray
Chairperson



Carl E. Farone, Jr.
Executive Director

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors sets the policy and strategic direction for the Development Authority and provides oversight through established policies for implementation by the executive director. All members serve in a voluntary capacity and are not paid for their service.

In October, 2022, the Board welcomed Kenneth M. Bibbins, who was appointed by Jefferson County to serve the remainder of the term of Alfred E. Calligaris, who passed away in 2022 while still serving. ■

OFFICERS

Margaret L. Murray, Chair
Thomas H. Hefferon, Vice Chair
Alex MacKinnon, Treasurer
Dennis Mastascusa, Secretary

Appointed by Jefferson County
Appointed by City of Watertown
Appointed by St. Lawrence County
Appointed by Lewis County

Kenneth M. Bibbins
Mary Reidy Doheny
Mark Hall
Nancy C. Henry
James C. Hollenbeck
Stephen M. Hunt II
Brian McGrath
Eric Virkler

Appointed by Jefferson County
Appointed by City of Watertown
Appointed by St. Lawrence County
Appointed by Governor
Appointed by Governor
Appointed by Governor
Appointed by Governor
Appointed by Lewis County

**A Board vacancy currently exists for a gubernatorial appointee*

DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OVERVIEW



The Development Authority of the North Country is a New York State public authority that serves the common interests of Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties by providing technical services and infrastructure that enhance economic opportunities in the region and promote the health and well-being of its communities.

The Development Authority of the North Country is a self-supporting, public benefit corporation operating under the authority of the Public Authorities Law of the State of New York. It is without taxing power and operates as an enterprise fund. The Development Authority is not an agency of New York State nor Jefferson, Lewis, or St. Lawrence county government.

The Development Authority is committed to environmental stewardship, fiscal integrity and building partnerships. To achieve these objectives, the Development Authority works with its municipal partners through shared service solutions, using advanced technology and fostering municipal cooperation to achieve cost-effective services for the region.

The majority of the revenue the Development Authority receives is obtained from the sale of services to its customers. The Development Authority is nonprofit; all revenue received must be used for operating expenses, construction costs, designated reserves, and outstanding debts.

The Development Authority of the North Country is unique among public authorities in New York State in its scope of activities. Unlike other single-purpose state authorities, the Development Authority owns and operates a number of revenue-based infrastructure facilities and manages a wide range of business and housing development programs. The Development Authority owns and operates water and sewer infrastructure linking the City of Watertown's facilities to Fort Drum, a regional waterline serving communities in western Jefferson County, a materials management facility in Rodman and a 2,000-mile open access telecommunications network. In addition, the Authority provides contract operations and maintenance services to communities to support water and sewer facilities, technical assistance in geographic information systems and other telemetry services, and administers revolving loan funds for housing and small business development.

The Authority also provides services on behalf of New York State and contractually for municipalities throughout the state's North Country Regional Economic Development Region, including Franklin, Essex, Clinton, and Hamilton counties, in addition to the tri-county area. ■



MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

After 18 years of planning and more than three years of construction, the landfill “expansion” area opened in June, 2022. The opening was celebrated by the Development Authority and its local partners.

The landfill opened in 1992 and is nearing capacity. This expansion extends the life of the existing landfill by approximately 50 years and secures uninterrupted, long-term disposal capacity that is locally-controlled, environmentally sound and cost-efficient, a critical resource for the economic stability and security of the region.

The expansion footprint is on the landfill property, just to the south of the current working face and encompasses approximately 88 acres, including new access roads, leachate pump houses and a storage building.

Select municipal solid waste is being placed in the new open cell initially to ensure the base is sufficiently built up to protect the cell’s liner. The original working face remains in operation concurrently. It is estimated that the original section of the landfill will cease operation in about two years, at which time it will be permanently closed and capped.

Individual cells will be constructed as additional disposal capacity is needed and the total expansion will consist of nine cells. Two new cells have been constructed to date. ■



WASTE DIVERSION

Five free household hazardous waste collection events were held for residents of the tri-county region so that hazardous materials could be safely collected and disposed of properly. Through these events, a total of 55,620 pounds of hazardous material was diverted from the landfill.

Diverting waste from the landfill through recycling, reuse and reducing the generation of waste helps prolong the life of the landfill and safeguard the environment. The Authority, with its partners, continues to focus on diversion efforts. In 2022, approximately 19,432 tons of recyclables were diverted from the landfill, along with 13,206 mattresses and 1,098 tons of tires. ■

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

ASSISTING OUR COUNTY PARTNERS

Telecommunications, Regional Development and GIS staff worked with the planning staff and leaders of Jefferson, St. Lawrence and Lewis counties to better determine where broadband service is available, develop strategies for expanding service, and to refine the mapping system on the Authority's GIS platform to make it more valuable to the end user. Authority staff also collaborated with county staff to identify funding opportunities to fill the gaps in broadband service.

The Authority helped Lewis County celebrate the launch of broadband projects funded through the New York State Homes & Community Renewal's Community Development Block Grant program. The Authority assisted Lewis County in determining viable broadband projects, seeking funding and implementing the grant. These projects are enabling service to unserved residences in the Harrisville and Port Leyden areas. The Authority also worked with the county to create a public broadband dashboard on the Authority's GIS platform to share with its residents.

The Authority assisted St. Lawrence County with Requests for Proposals to identify service providers to complete fiber builds throughout the county using \$3 million of the county's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. Authority staff are working with Jefferson County and service providers to verify data and further define areas to be built out using funds that Jefferson County is targeting for broadband projects.

Authority staff continues to assist with management, mapping, and overall community development assistance for these projects. The Authority received a grant from the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) to assist the counties with telecommunications broadband planning. ■



FEDERAL MIDDLE MILE GRANT APPLICATION

Working in partnership with National Grid, the Development Authority has submitted an application for a National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) grant for the construction of middle-mile fiber in a large area of northern New York. Middle-mile fiber is the backbone that is necessary to reach underserved and unserved areas. The construction of new middle-mile fiber will interconnect communities and enable internet service providers to offer broadband service in areas of significant need.

The proposed project calls for approximately 344 miles of new middle-mile fiber to be constructed in 12 counties across northern New York. This will enable broadband service to approximately 2,500 unserved residences along the fiber route and 287 community anchor institutions (fire stations, libraries, health care sites, etc.).

The project will also increase telecommunications resilience for Fort Drum, a critical installation for national defense that serves multiple branches of the armed forces. ■

TELECOMMUNICATIONS



THE WORLD STAGE

The Development Authority played a critical role in the success of the World University (FISU) Games held in Lake Placid in January, 2023. The Authority's Telecommunications team worked with event officials and community leaders to build the infrastructure required to link all the competition sites, provide network operations and management, allow for internal

communications among event organizers, provide event timing, and support broadcast communications for the global media in attendance as well as wifi for athletes and attendees.

During the athletic events, Authority staff were onsite to provide an immediate, hands-on engineering response in case of a failure in the fiber network the Authority had set up for the event. (Which did not occur!) The Authority also developed a real-time, comprehensive monitoring system for the various components of the infrastructure which allowed for a rapid response when any issues were identified. ■



PROJECT VISITORS

Officials from the Northern Border Regional Commission visited the joint Authority/Town of Tupper Lake broadband project in Tupper Lake, which was funded in part with an NBRC grant. The project expanded access to unserved and underserved businesses and residents using a combination of fiber-to-the-home and wireless technology. The officials were visiting NBRC projects to understand their progress and the needs of northern border communities.

State officials from the NYS ConnectAll office also visited the Tupper Lake broadband project and toured the Authority's facilities at the Wild Center. The director of the ConnectAll office recognized the Authority for "two decades of integrating telecommunications into regional planning and economic development." ■

NYPA/CONNECTALL PILOT PROJECT

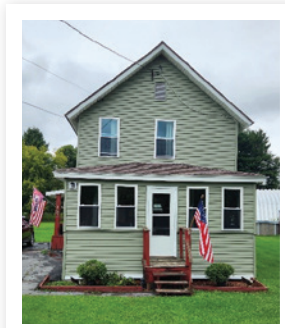
The Telecommunications Division was selected by the New York Power Authority to implement a \$2.3 million broadband-to-the-home project in the towns of Diana and Pitcairn, funded by the state ConnectAll office. The Development Authority is building 16 miles of residential broadband in the town of Diana in Lewis County and 24 miles in the Town of Pitcairn in St. Lawrence County. The new fiber-to-the-home network will pass over 500 homes, more than half of which are unserved. The Development Authority will own the fiber infrastructure and a local internet service provider will provide the customer installations and deliver internet service to the customers. ■

HOUSING

The Authority commissioned a comprehensive study of rental and senior housing in the Watertown/Fort Drum market area to gain a better understanding of the housing market post-COVID and the needs in the market, defined as a 30-mile radius around Fort Drum.

In general, the study showed that housing needs are not based on an influx of people as in the past, but that the existing available housing is unaffordable or of poor quality, making it difficult for some people to secure adequate housing. The data indicated that the greatest need is for “affordable” housing, which is targeted for those at lower income levels.

The Authority shared the data with appropriate agencies and developers and will work with others to develop solutions.



Authority staff completed the allocation plan for the HOME-American Rescue Plan funds for Jefferson County and the North Country HOME Consortium. The consortium received \$2,988,032 to assist those that are homeless, at-risk of homelessness, victims or survivors of domestic violence, and other at-risk populations. Based on that plan, service providers will be invited to apply for funding in 2023.

The Authority is also providing housing grant administration and program delivery services for the Town of Gouverneur, St. Lawrence County and the villages of Massena and Tupper Lake. Staff assisted with the completion of 20 housing projects last year. ■

WATER QUALITY SERVICES



Work began on the replacement of a deteriorated section of the Army Water Line, an 11-mile pipeline that transports up to three million gallons a day of drinking water from the City of Watertown to Fort Drum. The Authority owns the line and two pump stations along the route. The water line also provides over 120,000 gallons of drinking water per day to the towns of Champion, LeRay and Pamela, which are situated along the line.

An inspection of the 30-year-old water line in 2021 showed that some sections need to be replaced. In the first phase of the project, approximately 13,000 feet of iron pipe near Patterson Road just north of the City of Watertown will be replaced with 24-inch high density polyethylene pipe. The first step is construction of a temporary bypass line within the existing easement to ensure that water service will not be interrupted during the pipeline replacement.

This project is expected to be complete by the end of 2023.

Under a shared services model, the Authority provides municipal wastewater and water treatment plant operations and maintenance services at the request of the municipality and tailored to specific needs of the community. Sharing certified/licensed operators among municipalities saves taxpayer funds. New contracts for these services were awarded to the Authority last year by the Village of Hammond and the Town of Wilna/Hamlet of Herrings. ■

TECHNICAL SERVICES



The Development Authority operates under a shared services model, believing that sharing technical resources among municipalities saves money for all, yet ensures that communities can access the resources they need to help them understand and solve complex technical challenges. Municipalities have limited internal resources and staff and the Authority's licensed professional staff, supported by sophisticated equipment, can serve as a critical resource in times of need.

At the municipality's request, the Authority often provides assistance to communities undertaking water and sewer capital projects. Under these arrangements, the Authority coordinates multiple aspects of the project, including fiscal administration, and ensures that the project aligns with the municipality's future operational needs and existing equipment and facilities.

Last year, the Authority provided technical support services for water and sewer capital projects in the villages of Alexandria Bay, Clayton, Heuvelton, Malone, Theresa and Tupper Lake, the City of Ogdensburg, and the towns of Clifton, DeKalb, Diana, Edwards and Louisville. These multi-year projects total approximately \$153 million in infrastructure that will help support existing and future economic development.

Development Authority staff assisted the towns of DeKalb, Clifton, Louisville and Parishville, and the Village of Heuvelton in obtaining \$10 million in grant funding for water and wastewater system projects. Approximately \$9 million of the funding is through the NYS Water Infrastructure Improvement Act and \$1 million is through St. Lawrence County ARPA funding.

The Authority successfully assisted 15 communities with their state grant/loan funding applications totaling \$733,000 to inventory individual system connections in their communities to identify the extent of lead in the pipes. The Lead Service Line Inventory is mandated by the NYS Department of Health.

TECHNICAL SERVICES



Clayton

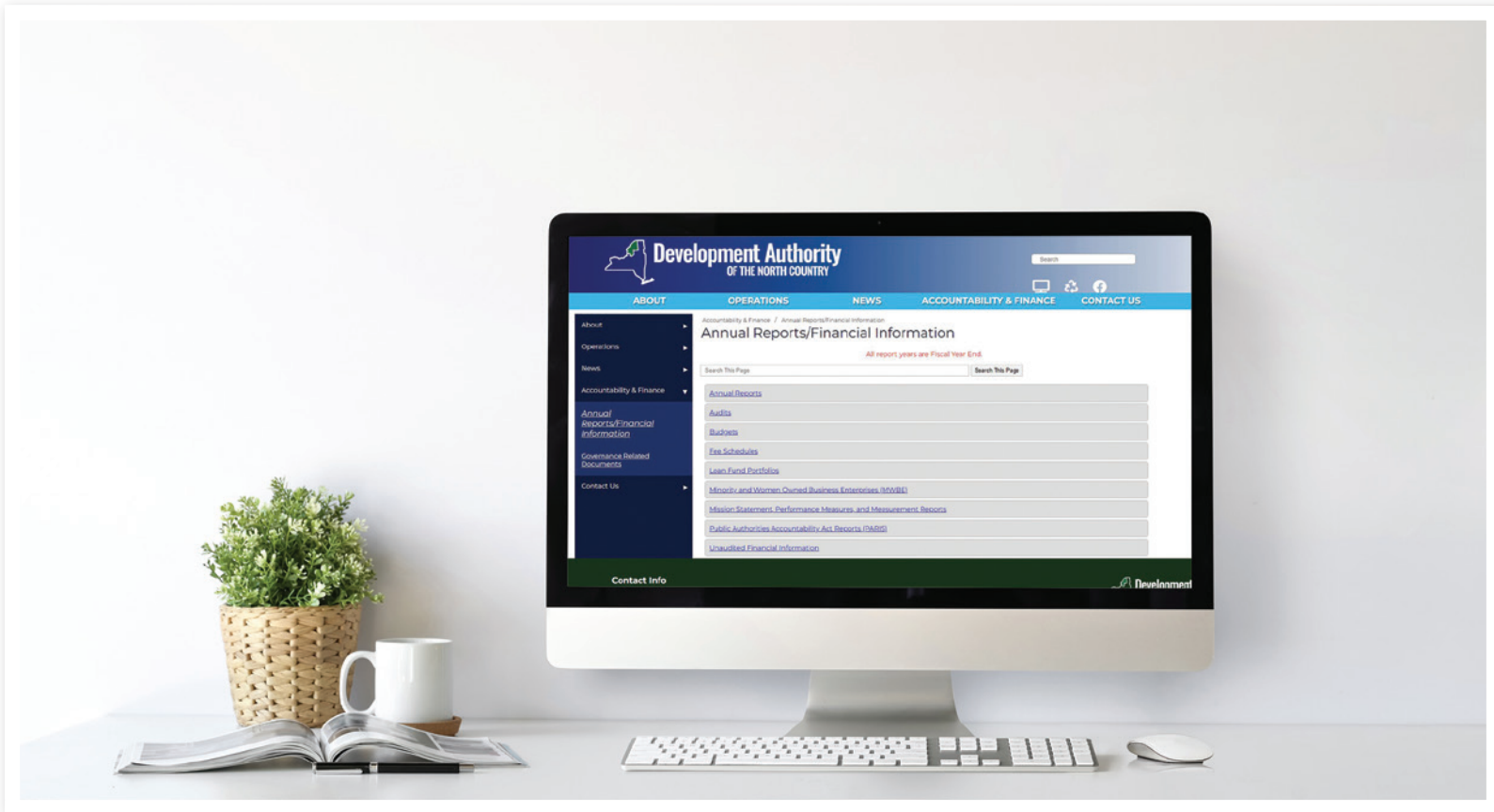
Authority staff assisted the villages of Alexandria Bay and Clayton with the design and implementation of several Resiliency and Economic Development Initiative (REDI) projects totaling over \$12.6 million that are upgrading waterfront public assets to be resilient to changing water levels.

Communities face a variety of challenges that the Authority tries to help them overcome. Sometimes developing solutions also requires exploration of a variety of possibilities. The Authority was asked by St. Lawrence County for assistance in helping communities reduce their costs for disposal of municipal sludge. The Authority completed a feasibility study of a centralized wastewater biosolids facility to help reduce operation and maintenance costs for 20 communities. The study found that such a facility would not be financially advantageous for the communities at this time. ■



Alexandria Bay

FINANCIALS



All of our financial information, including audits, budgets and reports to the Public Authority Reporting Information System (PARIS), are available online.

For complete information on the operations of the Development Authority of the North Country, please visit our website at www.danc.org.

DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE NORTH COUNTRY

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