



Mission Statement and Performance Measurements

Our Mission

The mission of the Development Authority is to serve the common interests of Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties by providing technical services and infrastructure, which will enhance economic opportunities in the region and promote the health and well-being of its communities.

Performance Measurements

April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023

Meet or exceed Federal, State and local regulatory requirements.

Meet or exceed Federal, State and local safety requirements.

Manage the Authority's assets in a prudent and fiscally responsible manner.

Operate transparently and with accountability to partners and general public.

Encourage environmental stewardship and advance as a more sustainable organization.

Provide regional initiatives and partnerships that provide value added services to communities.

Develop internal analytic data to improve assessment and decision making.

Fiscal Year End 2023

Performance Measurements Report

April 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023



The Development Authority of the North Country adopted the following measurements as indicators of the Authority's performance. Listed for each objective are the activities which addressed the objective during the fiscal year. Actions reflected in red are non-performance issues.

Meet or exceed federal, state and local regulatory requirements.

- The Authority-owned Army Sewer Line and Regional Water Line operated with no violations.
- The Materials Management Division operated the regional solid waste landfill in accordance with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Part 360 Solid Waste Management Permit, the NYSDEC Air Title V Permit, the NYSDEC Part 364 Waste Transporter Permit and the NYSDEC Multi Sector General Permit for Storm Water Discharges, with no violations.
- The Regional Recycling Transfer Station operated as a NYSDEC-Certified Recyclables Handling and Recovery Facility and complied with Part 360.15 of DEC regulations with no violations.
- Nineteen Authority employees in the Water Quality and Engineering divisions obtained additional NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH) water and NYSDEC wastewater licenses.
- The Telecommunications Division was subject to a pole attachment audit performed by National Grid, NYSEG and Verizon to ensure the Authority's fiber was not attached to unlicensed poles. The 10-year audit was successfully completed and few issues were identified.
- The Authority established a Service Disabled Veteran-Owned Business goal of 4%, and SDVOB utilization from April 1, 2022 through March 31, 2023 was 4.8%.
- Regional Development staff completed and submitted a HOME-ARP allocation plan on behalf of Jefferson County and the North Country HOME Consortium.
- Regional Development staff conducted annual inspections of HOME grant recipients as required by HUD.
- For the fiscal year ending March 31, 2022, the Authority received an A+ on its Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) report card, based on an evaluation by NYS Empire State Development.
- The Authority reviewed 71 special waste disposal requests for 52,770 tons for calendar year 2022 to ensure the materials being delivered to the Materials Management Facility were acceptable as non-hazardous waste in accordance with the Authority's Part 360 permit.
- The Telecommunications Division completed all surveys for work on New York State rights-of-way as part of a new NYS Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) requirement.
- The Materials Management Division completed the Annual Planning Unit Recycling Report for submission to NYSDEC.

- The Materials Management Division submitted required documents to the NYSDEC to renew its Part 360 Operating Permit.
- The Regional Recycling Transfer Station completed a required annual report for the facility for submission to NYSDEC.
- The Authority completed Sexual Harassment Prevention in the Workplace training for all employees, as annually required by the NYS Department of Labor (NYSDOL).
- Human Resources completed Affordable Care Act required reporting that demonstrates affordable health insurance coverage is provided to its employees.
- Human Resources completed Public Employee Safety and Health (PESH) annual reporting of work-related injuries and illnesses.
- Human Resources coordinated with a third-party vendor to conduct required annual random on-site drug and alcohol screening for CDL drivers.
- Human Resources ensured that all Board members and required employees completed the NYS Joint Commission on Public Ethics comprehensive ethics training and filed annual financial disclosure statements.
- The Authority completed and submitted the required annual Confidential Evaluation of Board Performance Survey to the NYS Authorities Budget Office (ABO).
- Human Resources completed the required annual reporting of NYSDOL Workplace Violence Prevention training, employee survey results, site evaluations, and checklists.
- The Telecommunications Division filed all Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and NYS Department of Public Service forms required to operate a telecommunications network, in a timely manner.
- The Telecommunications Division worked closely with the Fort Drum Regional Health Planning Organization to provide all required USAC forms in a timely manner.
- The Army Water Line is operating under an EPA Administrative Order due to violations of Disinfection Byproducts. During the year, there were two quarters in which the locational running average on the AWL exceeded the maximum contaminant levels for disinfection byproducts. The Authority is actively working with the water supplier, the City of Watertown, to address the issue at its source.
- The Authority established an MWBE goal of 30%, consistent with state requirements, and Authority MWBE utilization from April 1, 2022 through March 31, 2023 was 25.2%.
- A total of 23 Environmental Incident Reports were completed for environmental violations and potential environmental violations, exceeding the Authority's goal of less than 16 incidents.
- Municipal wastewater treatment plants operated by the Authority had 16 SPDES violations; proper documentation was filed with the NYSDEC.
- Municipal water treatment plants operated by the Authority had four violations; proper documentation was filed with the NYSDOH.

Meet or exceed federal, state and local safety requirements.

- The Authority coordinated and implemented a safety training program for Authority and municipal partners that included 25 sessions with 592 attendees. All required Authority personnel attended training to meet OSHA safety requirements.
- The Authority completed 126 of 137 Safety Compliance items on schedule – 92% for calendar year 2022. All items have since been completed.

- The Authority maintained a Board-Certified Safety Professional on staff to facilitate monthly Safety Committee meetings.
- The Authority developed and implemented a new Heat Illness Prevention plan to help mitigate safety risks from heat for employees.
- The Authority had a reportable incident rate of 5.3 in calendar year 2022. This is up from a rate of 0 in 2021 and our 10-year historical rate of 4.3.

Manage the Authority's assets in a prudent and fiscally responsible manner.

- A construction contract for the first phase of the Army Water Line Rehabilitation Project has been awarded and construction will begin in the spring of 2023. Regional Development secured grant funding from the Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation to complete the engineering design and bid documents for the first phase of the project.
- Regional Development and Telecommunications staff worked with National Grid to submit a grant application to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) for a middle-mile broadband project that will benefit the North Country.
- The Telecommunications Division worked with the New York Power Authority (NYPA) to begin construction of a fiber-to-the-premise network in Lewis and St. Lawrence counties. The project was funded by the NYS ConnectAll office, enabling the construction of last-mile fiber with no capital cost to the Authority.
- After analysis determined continued operation of the Regional Recycling Transfer Station was not financially sustainable, the Authority closed the facility and sold the property to a private company which is expected to provide services for difficult-to-recycle materials such as tires and mattresses. The closure of the RTS facility will reduce costs for the Authority and its partners and is anticipated to reduce the carbon footprint of hauling tires and mattresses to Buffalo, NY for recycling, as a local solution for providing such services is expected to be available in Harrisville.
- Asset Management Plans were updated for the Telecommunications and Materials Management divisions, the Army Sewer Line, Army Water Line, Route 3 Sewer Line and the Regional Water Line. Asset management planning is key to efficiently managing equipment to extend its usable life.
- The Telecommunications Division acquired two new fibers between Plattsburgh and Albany as part of a larger agreement with NYPA, allowing the Authority to save \$24,000 per month going forward.
- The Telecommunications Division entered into a fiber lease for pole attachment construction with Lake Placid Municipal Electric, saving \$40,000 in make-ready costs.
- Information Technology implemented several security measures to protect the Authority's digital information: launched a network control system; performed audits of file and software permissions; began separating SCADA and moving it to a sub-network.
- Of the Authority's 48 capital projects within its operating divisions planned for completion during FYE 2023, all were completed within Board authorized budgets.
- The Authority completed a televised inspection of the Army Sewer Line and, based on the findings, is proceeding to the design phase of a project to rehabilitate over 15,000 feet of infrastructure.
- The Water Quality Division completed 388 preventative maintenance work orders for equipment related to the Army Sewer Line, Army Water Line and Regional Water Line.
- The Materials Management Division completed 1,113 preventative maintenance work orders.

- Regional Development and Information Technology staff participated in training for loan/finance software to provide greater efficiency in utilizing the software and for cross-training purposes.
- The Telecommunications Division entered into an overlash-for-services agreement with Frontier, saving approximately \$80,000 in construction costs for a project in the Keesville area.
- The Authority maintained bad debt reserves for questionable loans in order to manage loan portfolio risk.
- Information Technology completed quarterly phishing testing and yearly cybersecurity training for employees.
- The Authority publicly accepts bids for all used equipment and assets, using a public electronic auction site.
- The Water Quality Division operated the Regional Water Line at a water loss of 8%, exceeding contractual requirements allowing for a water loss of 7%.

Operate transparently and with accountability to partners and general public.

- The Authority completed a Watertown/Fort Drum housing market analysis and senior housing market analysis to encourage private housing development in the target area. The reports were shared with stakeholders throughout the area.
- In conjunction with the opening of the southern expansion of the regional landfill, a Landfill Fact Sheet was created and made available on the Authority's website.
- The Authority updated its annual waste division report that summarizes progress toward strategic initiatives.
- Communications issued several Authority press releases to inform the public about its activities and events. Media stories numbered 74 for the fiscal year.
- The Fort Drum Compatibility Committee met, increasing interaction between Fort Drum and communities regarding compatible land use planning.
- The Authority maintained a Facebook page and its northcountryrecycles.org website to provide information about recycling to the public.
- Annual partner letters summarizing the Authority's services in general and particular to each, were sent to county partners of Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence, and to the City of Watertown.
- The Authority provided its annual newsletter to Rodman residents, to keep residents updated on landfill activities.
- The Materials Management Division conducted periodic meetings with haulers and its county solid waste division partners to obtain feedback and discuss operational changes at the landfill, as well as waste diversion activities.
- The Water Quality Division conducted regular scheduled meetings with the Route 3 Sewer municipalities, Regional Waterline municipalities, and the U.S. Army for fiscal and operations review, and discussion and review of proposed budgets and capital improvements.
- Finance completed annual PARIS reporting for staff, board of directors, and benefits information for the state ABO.
- For the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2022, the Authority retained the Bonadio Group to complete a Financial Statement Audit, Agreed Upon Procedures for the Regional Waterline, Report on Investments and a Single Audit. All audits were completed without findings and were approved by the Authority's Board of Directors.

- Water Quality and Engineering staff routinely participated in municipal board meetings.

Encourage environmental stewardship and advance as a more sustainable organization.

- In FYE 2023, the Authority purchased 24.13% of its power from renewable sources.
- The Authority completed 1,006 of 1,026 Environmental Compliance items for calendar year 2022. The four outstanding items will be completed by May 31, 2023.
- The Authority assessed the feasibility of using waste heat from the Landfill Gas to Energy Plant to offset building heating costs and determined that it is not feasible.
- The Finance Division electronically distributed employee paystubs and used a direct deposit program for expense reimbursement, continuing the Authority's conversion to electronic paperless transactions.
- The Authority processed requisitions, purchase orders and payments using various software systems, which allows for a paperless process.
- Human Resources used an HR software system (BambooHR) to onboard new hires, process acknowledgement forms for electronic signature and electronically file all personnel records, resulting in a reduction in paper usage.
- Human Resources used the Employee Navigator software system to process annual employee open enrollment for health, dental, and vision insurances, and onboarding new hires, resulting in a reduction in paper usage.
- Human Resources and Finance used the NYS Employees' Retirement System Employer Online system to enroll new hires, update employee information, and submit reports electronically, resulting in a reduction in paper usage.
- Human Resources used OnBase to store and share all Authority job descriptions and internal audit results, resulting in a reduction in paper usage.
- Compliance conducted several internal and human resources audits using information stored electronically in Authority software systems, resulting in both a reduction in paper usage and travel costs.
- The Authority used a file share software system (ShareBase) to enhance file sharing capabilities and reduce the need for printing internally and externally.
- Information Technology continues to support and create additional workflows within the Electronic Content Management System to reduce the need for paper.

Provide regional initiatives and partnerships that provide value added services to communities.

- The Authority is assisting its county partners with planning associated with broadband deployment in rural areas. The Authority received funding from the Northern Border Regional Commission to assist with this planning. The Authority has assisted its partners with writing and cost development for several grants, creation of maps and other tools using the Authority's GIS, and project development. Projects to provide service to areas unserved by broadband throughout the three counties are in various stages of development and implementation.
- The Authority partnered with Advocate Drum to update the Fort Drum Economic Impact Model, which provides data on the indirect and induced effects of Fort Drum's financial impact on the region and the state. This is a critical tool in demonstrating Fort Drum's economic impact.

- The Engineering and Water Quality divisions completed a study for St. Lawrence County to assess the feasibility of constructing a centralized biosolids processing facility that would process wastewater sludge from 20 community wastewater treatment plants. Although it was determined that it would not be financially advantageous to pursue a centralized facility at this time, the study provided valuable information that may help the communities reduce future operating costs.
- Telecommunications worked with the Olympic Regional Development Authority to design and construct fiber to several new facilities in advance of the 2023 World University Games held in Lake Placid. Telecommunications also worked with ORDA to design and operate the successful communications network for the Games and was a key partner during the event.
- The Engineering and Water Quality divisions assisted 15 communities to apply for a total of \$733,000 in grant and loan funding to complete state-mandated inventories to determine if there is lead in the communities' lateral water lines.
- The Engineering Division assisted the villages of Alexandria Bay and Tupper Lake, as well as the towns of Clifton, DeKalb, Diana and Louisville with NYS Water Infrastructure and Improvement Act grant applications, resulting in awards totaling approximately \$14 million for water/sewer capital improvement projects. All are in various stages of the design process, preparing to go to bid.
- The Engineering Division assisted five communities with their applications to the St. Lawrence County American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding Initiative for Water/Wastewater Projects, resulting in a total of \$935,346 awarded to the towns of Clifton, DeKalb, Louisville and Parishville, as well as the Village of Heuvelton.
- The Telecommunications Division completed a \$2 million contract with NYPA to deliver dark fiber between Plattsburgh and Albany.
- Regional Development continues to actively support the Drum County NY regional marketing initiative to attract and retain workers and businesses to the three-county region, including speaking at public events to promote the campaign to the public, businesses and organizations.
- The Engineering Division began work on a three-year grant-funded project that will develop GIS data for highway and public works assets for 25 municipal partners in Franklin and St. Lawrence counties.
- The Authority hosted five Household Hazardous Waste collection days in the tri-county area, allowing residents to dispose of hazardous waste for free, resulting in 56,368 pounds of material from approximately 1,000 households being diverted from the landfill.
- Regional Development secured a grant from the NY Main Street program for the Town of Hermon to address its downtown blight.
- The Engineering Division provided technical support services for water/sewer capital improvement projects in the villages of Alexandria Bay, Clayton, Clifton, Heuvelton, Theresa, and Tupper Lake, the City of Ogdensburg, and the towns of DeKalb, Diana, Louisville, Morristown and Pitcairn. These multi-year projects total approximately \$133 million in investment in North Country infrastructure that will help support existing and future economic development.
- Regional Development staff participated in two Fort Drum community planning sessions held by the Commanding General of the 10th Mountain Division.
- Regional Development staff met with Ignite PTAC (Procurement Technical Assistance Center) to explore opportunities to partner to increase certified MWBEs and SDVBEs in the North Country.
- Telecommunications was awarded contracts to continue to provide services to 82 telemedicine sites throughout the region.
- The Authority's GIS system hosted data for 67 customers in seven counties and the Authority's Internet Mapping Application received an average of 10,700 visits each month.
- The Engineering Division is continuing to assist the villages of Alexandria Bay and Clayton with the design and implementation of several Resiliency and Economic Development Initiative projects

totaling over \$12.6 million, which will upgrade public waterfront assets and enhance resiliency to changing water levels.

- Telecommunications upgraded all circuits for Lewis County from 100Mbps to a dark fiber network with a 1 Gbps backbone for little additional cost to the county.
- The Engineering Division continued to assist the Village of Malone and towns of Rutland and Tupper Lake with municipal facility improvement projects estimated to total more than \$7 million.
- The Authority, as a Local Development District designated by the Northern Border Regional Commission for St. Lawrence, Jefferson, Lewis, and Franklin counties, provided project management/grant administration for five projects.
- Regional Development provided grant administration and program delivery services for housing programs in the Town of Gouverneur, villages of Massena and Tupper Lake, and St. Lawrence County.

Develop internal analytic data to improve assessment and decision-making.

- The Authority purchased a drone to obtain more frequent survey data of the landfill. Two staff members were certified to operate the commercial drone. Initiatives are underway to develop 3D models of the landfill fill progression which will assist landfill management to maximize air space.
- The Telecommunications Division designed network management analytics for the 2023 World University Games held in Lake Placid, and made the analytics available for use in the Games' operations center.
- Information Technology continues to build upon WIMS (the Authority's water/sewer database) to increase analytics and improve processes.
- Operating divisions are using the Authority's Computerized Maintenance Management System (Nexgen) to more effectively maintain assets and to assist with asset management planning.
- Telecommunications installed and turned up a backup network management server to ensure access to alarm information, network usage data and trouble tickets is not lost if there is a server problem.
- The Telecommunications Division implemented a fiber tracking system using the Authority's Computerized Maintenance Management System.