



# 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, 2021 – March 31, 2022

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 2022

# Performance Measurements Report

April 1, 2021 - March 31, 2022



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 water line, 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.
- The Regional Recycling Transfer Station operated as a NYSDEC-Certified Recyclables Handling and Recovery Facility and complied with Part 360.15 of DEC regulations.
- Several Authority employees in the Water Quality and Engineering divisions obtained additional NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH) water and NYSDEC wastewater licenses.
- For the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021, 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. Of 26 criteria, the Authority scored a 25, resulting in grade of A+.
- The Authority reviewed 84 special waste disposal requests for over 27,681 tons 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.
- Regional Development staff assisted Jefferson County during HUD's monitoring of the Jefferson County HOME Consortium. No major findings were identified.
- The Materials Management Division completed the Annual Planning Unit Recycling Report for submission to NYSDEC.
- 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).
  - Regional Development staff completed and submitted a HOME 5-year Consolidated Plan.
  - 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.
  - Human Resources 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.
  - Telecommunications sent Universal Service Fund certificate requirements to all customers as required by the FCC.
- 
- The Authority established a Service Disabled Veteran-Owned Business goal of 4%, and SDVOB utilization from April 1 through December 31, 2021 was 2.82%.
  - The Authority established an MWBE goal of 30%, consistent with state requirements, and Authority MWBE utilization from April 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021 was 24.75%.
  - Water pollution control facilities serving the villages of Carthage/West Carthage, Clayton and Malone, and the City of Ogdensburg, which are managed by the Authority, experienced a combined total of seven violations, down from 20 violations last year. The Authority is working through a SPDES permit modification process in Malone as well as significant capital upgrades to Ogdensburg which will allow these facilities to better operate within the required SPDES limits and further reduce the number of violations.
  - The Authority received a Notice of Violation pertaining to the Army Water Line as a result of disinfection byproducts contained in water received from the City of Watertown that exceeded the maximum allowable contaminant levels. The city is proceeding with a capital improvement project to implement measures to reduce disinfection byproducts.
  - Municipal wastewater treatment plants operated by the Authority had two SPDES violations; proper documentation was filed with the NYSDEC.
  - Municipal water treatment plants operated by the Authority had one violation; proper documentation was filed with the NYSDOH.

## Meet or exceed federal, state and local safety requirements.

- Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the Authority continued to serve all of its customers, providing essential services for communities, while implementing increased safety measures warranted by the pandemic.
- The Authority had a reportable incident rate of 0 in calendar year 2021, down from 1.1 in calendar year 2020 and a significant decrease from 6.5 in 2019.
- The Authority completed 503 of 503 Safety Compliance items for calendar year 2021.
- The Authority hosted the South Jefferson Rescue Squad and other local emergency response volunteers at the regional landfill for an emergency drill to familiarize local responders with the facility and the types of potential incidents that could occur there.
- The Authority coordinated and implemented a safety training program for Authority and municipal partners that included 32 sessions with 511 attendees. All required Authority personnel attended training to meet OSHA safety requirements.
- The Authority maintained a Board-Certified Safety Professional on staff to facilitate monthly Safety Committee meetings and complete internal safety compliance audits for confined space and respiratory protection.
- Authority employees completed Vehicle Safety Training and Defensive Driving and received a Guide to Preventing Lyme Disease.
- CPR training, respirator fit testing and annual employee physicals were not completed on schedule due to delays resulting from COVID-19.

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

- A Telecommunication Business Plan was completed by staff to provide the Board of Directors with an update on the current status of the open Access Telecom Network and to discuss potential strategies for optimizing the network.
- The integrity of the Army Water Line was assessed using federal grant funds to allow the Authority to be proactive with any needed repairs rather than reactive. The comprehensive inspection indicated that the replacement of certain sections of pipeline is necessary. The Authority is working to minimize disruptions in service by proceeding with a planned capital replacement project in the next fiscal year.
- The Authority used federal funding from the Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation to complete the integrity assessment of the Army Water Line and to create a query tool on the Authority's IMA.
- Materials Management managed landfill operations to reduce leachate production by 45%.
- The Water Quality Division operated the Army Water Line and Regional Water Line with less than 3% and less than 7% water loss, respectively.
- The Authority completed a study to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) at the Regional Recycling Transfer Station. Although the analysis concluded that building a MRF would not be financially feasible, the Authority determined that the closure of the RTS facility and the transfer of some equipment to St. Lawrence County will reduce costs for the Authority and its partners.

- An Asset Management Plan was developed for the Telecommunications Division and the Materials Management and Water Quality Asset Management Plans were updated. Asset management planning is key to efficiently managing equipment to extend its usable life.
- The Authority established bad debt reserves for questionable loans in order to manage loan portfolio risk.
- Information Technology implemented several security measures to protect the Authority's digital information: installed a network access system; conducted an ongoing audit of file and software permissions; installed a web application firewall to mitigate Log4J security vulnerability and; updated operating systems to ensure supportability and security from Microsoft.
- 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.
- Regional Development staff assisted Water Quality staff in moving historic information on the Army Water and Sewer Lines into the Authority's water/wastewater software to assist the Water Quality Division with decision-making.

### **Operate transparently and with accountability to partners and general public.**

- Regional Development created a query tool on the Fort Drum Compatibility website which allows users of the GIS portal to better identify encroachment or other issues relating to specific parcel data. This increases the communication between Fort Drum and developers/community leaders pertaining to encroachment.
- Communications issued 11 Authority press releases to inform the public about its activities and events. Media stories numbered 84.
- The Authority's primary website was enhanced and updated to be more user-friendly; the North Country Recycles website, which functions to assist the public with recycling, is being updated to contain more educational resources.
- The Fort Drum Compatibility Committee met twice over the past year, increasing interaction between Fort Drum and communities regarding compatible land use planning. This included a symposium held on Fort Drum to allow for discussion between Fort Drum Garrison staff and community leaders.
- The Materials Management Division maintained a Facebook page 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 virtual 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 budget and capital improvements.
- Finance completed annual PARIS reporting for staff, board of directors, and benefits information for the state ABO.

- 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.

- The Authority completed 929 of 929 Environmental Compliance items for calendar year 2021.
- The Authority conducted a study to evaluate the feasibility of installing solar arrays at the Warneck Pump Station, Recycling Transfer Station or Materials Management Facility. The study concluded that a solar array may be feasible at MMF but additional information is required from National Grid. The Authority is working with National Grid to obtain additional details.
- Lights at Warneck Pump Station were replaced with LEDs, which will result in \$6,955 in annual energy savings.
- In FYE 2022, through February, the Authority purchased 23.45% of its power from renewable sources.
- Information Technology created and implemented an electronic accident investigation form which has reduced the need for printing this form by 100%.
- Regional Development staff are participating on the United Way of Northern New York's Food Policy Council, which is developing a plan for food security in Jefferson County.
- 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.
- 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.
- Human Resources 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.
- Telecommunications performed room integrity testing on all Central Offices to ensure fire suppression systems operate properly.

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

- The Development Authority partnered with Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence counties to conduct broadband user surveys and broadband facility inventories to better understand where gaps in broadband coverage exist. The Authority mapped the data in its GIS system so its partners can develop geographic and funding strategies for addressing needs, and presented results to each county legislature. Authority staff are working with individual county broadband committees that were developed by the counties to determine priority areas for infrastructure build-out as well as potential technical solutions. The Authority received funding from the Northern Border Regional Commission to assist with the planning associated with broadband deployment. Over the past fiscal year, planning and funding efforts have resulted in two projects to expand service in Lewis County, which will be completed in 2022. As part of these projects, the Authority worked with Lewis County to secure grants for the installation of three wireless towers.
- On behalf of its regional partners, Authority staff advocated for rural broadband solutions with various state agencies, by articulating issues and potential solutions in public hearings and at roundtable discussions with state leaders and with the president of the NY Federal Reserve.
- The Authority enhanced regional recycling education by creating four new television ads, a digital recycling marketing campaign using 15-second video clips, and the placement of two billboards promoting [northcountryrecycles.com](http://northcountryrecycles.com) in high-traffic areas in Jefferson and St. Lawrence counties. The digital ads garnered 214,877 impressions with a 78% average completion rate for viewing the entire video.
- The Authority launched the Drum County NY regional marketing initiative, a partnership between the economic development organizations of Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties, the Authority and National Grid. The new initiative is focused on the attraction and retention of workers and businesses to/in the North Country.
- The Engineering Division successfully coordinated and submitted a Local Government Efficiency Grant application to develop GIS data for highway and public works assets for 25 municipal partners in Franklin and St. Lawrence counties. Implementation of the three-year project begins in 2022.
- 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 56,664 pounds of material from 1,130 households being diverted from the landfill.
- Telecommunications worked with the Olympic Regional Development Authority to design the communications network that will support the World University Games in 2023.
- 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 \$125 million in investment in North Country infrastructure that will help support existing and future economic development.
- The Telecommunications Division worked with the Town of Tupper Lake to implement a broadband expansion project partially funded by a Northern Border Regional Commission Grant.
- Regional Development staff is working with the Village of Turin to develop a comprehensive plan for the village.
- Telecommunications was awarded contracts to continue to provide services to 82 telemedicine sites throughout the region.
- The Authority's GIS system hosted data for 66 customers in six counties and the IMA website received an average of 10,000 visits each month.

- Regional Development staff participated on the planning committee for the NYS Coastal Lakeshore Economy and Resiliency (CLEAR) Initiative and continues to seek ways to partner with state and local entities to identify programs to support resiliency along the coastlines in Jefferson and St. Lawrence counties.
- The Engineering Division is assisting 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.
- The Engineering Division provided project management services to the Village of Lyons Falls to oversee the fifth and final phase of hazardous material abatement and demolition of the Lyons Falls Paper Mill brownfield site.
- The Engineering Division assisted the Town of DeKalb, Town of Clifton, and Village of Theresa with Water Quality Improvement Project Act grant applications to move wastewater disinfection projects forward. All three communities were awarded grants estimated to total \$2.3 million, pending final agreements.
- The Engineering Division assisted the villages of Alexandria Bay and Theresa, as well as the towns of Clifton, DeKalb, Diana and Louisville with NYS Water Infrastructure and Improvement Act grant applications for water/sewer capital improvement projects.
- The Engineering Division assisted 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 three projects.
- The Telecommunications Division was awarded a contract by the New York Power Authority to deliver dark fiber between Plattsburgh and Albany.
- The Telecommunications Division upgraded its DWDM network between Syracuse, Watertown, Fort Drum, Lowville and Utica to allow up to forty 100 Gbps waves.
- Regional Development staff assisted Lewis County in development of an RFP for the Lewis County Public Transportation System.
- The Telecommunications Division upgraded its Ethernet service to 100 Gbps in Syracuse, Watertown, Potsdam, Plattsburgh and Albany.
- 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.
- Regional Development staff participated on the Jefferson County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) planning committee.

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

- Information Technology programmed the water/wastewater software in order to properly record and track information for the Carthage/West Carthage wastewater treatment plant.
- Operating divisions are using the Authority's Computerized Maintenance Management System (Nexgen) to more effectively maintain assets and to assist with asset management planning.
- The Telecommunications Division developed an off-net circuit report and strategy that will help the team determine when services can be renegotiated for more competitive rates.

- The Telecommunications Division updated its fiber and circuit tracking system to include off-net circuits, construction prints and customer premise pictures, providing “one-touch” access when trouble-shooting and reducing the time required for customer assistance.
- The Telecommunications Division developed a fiber management system for its new fiber deployment in Tupper Lake. The system is very different than systems the Authority has deployed in the past and the fiber management required a brand new process.