



2024 Annual Operations and Accomplishments Report

ORGANIZATION

- EDC Warren County (EDC) acts as the primary entity responsible for economic development for the County. The organization utilizes a team of economic development professionals in a variety of roles and manages multiple key area forums and processes designed to attract, maintain, and grow the county's long term, sustainable economy.

PROGRAMMATIC

Organizational Goals and Investment Areas

- **KEY AREAS OF FOCUS** – EDC has expanded its organizational goals and resources beyond the traditional support of attracting, retaining, and growing the area's business base. The new areas of resource allocation include economic sector analysis and positioning, demographic analysis, greater regional engagement, placemaking/marketing, broadband and cellular expansion & capacity both in county and regional, entrepreneurial development, workforce development, and housing.
- **BUSINESS ASSISTANCE, RECRUITMENT & SUPPORT** -Traditional business inquiries and project support continue with a focus on collaboration with other area resources such as the Warren Washington County IDA, Warren County Local Development Corporation (LDC), The Lake Champlain Lake George Regional Planning Board, the Center for Economic Growth (CEG), multiple area Chamber of Commerce's, neighboring economic development entities and a variety of local, state, and national organizations including New York State's Empire State Development group. As of December 2024, EDC had a total of 56 active projects in progress. Breakdown of projects by category: 22 Business Assistance & Expansion, 16 New Business Location Inquiries, 18 New Real Estate Development Opportunities. Among the many projects the EDC engaged in during 2024 were the sale of lots in each of the County's business development parks and private properties including F.W. Webb – \$20 million 101,000 SF, 50 jobs; Kru Coffee - \$1 million 5,400 SF, 10 jobs; Prime Arrow LLC - \$10 million, 25 jobs.
- **ALLIANCES** – The EDC collaborates with many local economic development agencies and related organizations, as well as relationships with our local municipalities. EDC regularly meets with regional peers, including the IDA, various economic development leaders and groups and Chambers of Commerce for Washington, Warren, and Saratoga counties. Our outreach on regional issues saw us engage both in the Capital District and in the Adirondack Park as the specific opportunities were recognized. This collaboration will continue to be a priority in the coming year.
- **ONGOING COMMUNITY SUPPORT** - A key aspect of the EDC is representing the long term, sustainable economy in a variety of areas including transportation, housing, relocation, infrastructure development and communications. This occurs in both forums managed by the

EDC and by others. We also engage with town and county municipalities to help them in their planning and development efforts as needed. A list of planning advisory groups & committees EDC directly participates in includes the following: Warren County Comprehensive Planning Committee, Warren County Recreational Study Plan, Town of Queensbury Comprehensive Plan, Warren County Airport Comprehensive Plan, Lake George DRI, City of Glens Falls DRI, North Creek Sewer Committee and District and a host of other community and municipal initiatives.

- **TELECOMMUNICATIONS** - EDC continues to lead the North Country Broadband Alliance (NCBA), a regional grassroots workgroup that works on broadband across Northern New York with a consortium of municipalities, carriers, and community organizations. The EDC hosts weekly forums focused on broadband expansion and acts as a liaison with NYS Empire State Development's Connect All broadband office, coordinating regional planning for funding over the next several years. EDC & the NCBA actively advocates for the removal of legislative and regulatory barriers concerning expansion of rural broadband in New York. A major focus in 2024 for the EDC was also actively recruiting competitive broadband and cellular providers to Warren County and the region.
- **ENTREPRENEURIAL** – Warren County continues to see a disproportionately influx of new business registrations and domain registrations over the last several years that has remained strong post-pandemic. EDC continues to work with a consortium of organizations to develop a better coordinated network of resources for local entrepreneurs seeking to establish new enterprises in the region, including START-UP ADK and Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC). EDC is a partner in Start-Up ADK at SUNY Adirondack with the US Small Business Administration. The EDC is part of the Innovate 518 Board and community as well. EDC has developed and participated in new partnerships with both RPI Severino and UAlbany Innovation Centers that can generate new entrepreneurial activity in Warren County and the surrounding region.
- **TALENT RECRUITMENT/RELOCATION** - Helping the community and area businesses manage the transition to a continued remote and independent workforce is a major area of study and activity for the EDC. Much of this effort is focused on expanding our data around workforce mobility and acting as a communications entry point for those looking to move their professional lives to the area. EDC focuses on an effort to recruit younger professionals, families, and expatriates seeking to come back to the region.
- **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT** - The EDC has long been a member of the area's Workforce Development Board (Saratoga Warren Washington Workforce Board) and continued robust engagement in 2024. EDC serves on the board's Business Needs Committee, which is focused on specific areas of need relative to the region's business sectors. In 2024, the EDC worked with the Workforce Board to understand changes in the regional economy being brought on by demographic shifts, supply chain constraints, higher operating costs including power, and changes underway in a variety of industry sectors impacting business models.

GRANTS – EDC advocated and received two ARPA grants distributed by Warren County through the BOS ARPA Committee. The first grant (\$50,000) offsets expenses incurred by EDC for Housing data and information research and public engagement. The second grant

(\$30,000) was used to reimburse broadband asset inventory mapping and surveying early in the pandemic. In December 2023, Governor Hochul announced a \$10 million Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant award for Lake George in which EDC participated in a planning/advisory role throughout 2024.

- FORUMS, PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS & SPECIAL EVENTS –
 - o In late October 2024, EDC co-sponsored and participated on the panel discussion for the Albany Business Review Power Breakfast at the Queensbury Hotel in Glens Falls which saw 150+ people showed up to hear about tourism, seasonal workforce, transportation, construction, broadband, AI, waste water system, infrastructure, and overall growth.
 - o EDC hosted its long-standing Annual Luncheon at the Queensbury Hotel in October 2024– total attendance over 230. Keynote speaker was Drew FitzGerald, co-founder of JUST Water. The topic of the presentation centered on why the North Country is a place that has unique sustainable economic assets that will attract new residents, businesses and talent and why after many years working in high level positions in NYC and L.A. he is coming home to his native Glens Falls.
 - o LIFE SCIENCES - EDC continues its partnership with LifeSciencesNY (formerly MedTech), New York’s trade association for the biotech industry. EDC participated in the annual RPI Life Sciences & Healthcare event at RPI Tech Park in April. Interest in engaging EDC as a partner and engaged local Warren County medical device and biotech companies and healthcare organizations ensued.
 - o AI – EDC co-sponsored an AI Agility Summit at SUNY Adirondack featuring a workshop and panel discussion on "AI Agility in the Workplace," led by Todd McLees the Co-Founder of humanskills.ai. The program examined the extraordinary impact of generative AI on our daily lives and workplaces. The panel of regional leaders including EDC shared their insights on how AI is fundamentally transforming our economy, workforce, and the future of business.
 - o PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS – EDC reached a combined audience of over 1,000 individuals in over 20 public presentations covering a variety of topics in 2024.
- INFRASTRUCTURE - EDC helps municipalities and the county assess the economic value of potential infrastructure investments on the long-term viability and sustainability of the area economy and future. Last year, EDC participated in the effort to gain a “yes” vote enabling North Creek to establish a new municipal sewer district for the first time in its history. EDC continued to act as an advisor to move the project forward and participated in several public forums held in 2024.
- TRANSPORTATION - EDC continues to participate in planning efforts for the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) post-merger with the Greater Glens Falls Transit (GGFT) regarding enhancing and extending transportation services via CDTA year-round in select areas of Warren, Washington, and Saratoga County. Public transit ensures the basic level of mobility for the local population and for the economy. This expansion not only enhances

local transportation for residents but also benefits tourists exploring the region as well as employers with access to services for employees.

- **CLEAN ENERGY** - The North Country and Warren County specifically, have long been sources for hydro power. The EDC is aligned with statewide goals for reliance on renewable energy through its involvement in the Community Hydro Project and other companies. EDC continues to be an enthusiastic advocate for the hydro industry and will continue to do so. North Country Hydro can act to support larger energy users and preserve jobs.
- **FRESHWATER** - EDC seeks to build on the success of the Jefferson Project at Lake George and the Darrin Freshwater Institute by expanding the research conducted in and around Lake George and inviting experts from around the state, the nation, and the world to take part and to develop additional opportunities for regional tourism and economic development. Engagement with research partners, adding to the contributions of IBM and RPI and continued public outreach and presentations to relevant stakeholders. EDC is working in conjunction with partners such as RPI and the Lake George Association to generate new economic activity resulting from freshwater protection.
- **FOCAL POINT** - EDC acts as the conduit for multiple federal, state, and organizational programs and resources. EDC also acts as a contact point for local, state, and national political figures in their engagement around topics of economic development and investment and regularly participates in Capital Region Economic Development Council meetings. EDC also meets regularly with the Warren County Board of Supervisors, primarily through the Economic Growth and Development Committee, to provide updates and share information.