

North Country Region Economic Development Council
Elizabethtown Public Forum
10/18/11
Public Speaker Notes

Assemblywoman Sayward: A Representative read a letter on her behalf. Stated she welcomed the Gov's approach to redesign relationship between private sector and State Gov. One size does not fit all.

The letter highlighted the region's remoteness and lack of "21st century" infrastructure as factors that are critical to improve the North Country region's economic competitiveness. It called for emphasis on the expansion of broadband technology.

Questions about the Process:

- Disappointed in lack of info available online. It is hard to comment without materials to review. Regarding ex-official members: why only one town supervisors on council?
- Given timeline how will Council decide on project proposals that are controversial for example - Route 11 "rooftop highway proposal".

When will public see the draft plan for comment?

Explain in more detail how the Council will vet proposals...

- Projects that are not submitted as priority projects – does the Council want notice of their existence/timeline for readiness... How should applicants submit these??

Public Input:

- Chamber members are mostly small family owned businesses. Need assistance to grow small businesses. Need investors here. Not manufacturing – more mom/pop. Small Businesses with 2-5 employees are foundation of economy
- I98 is more a federal project, largely funded through federal money. State DOT would be key partner. Jason considers this (I98) project a very important project for the Council. 1,200 elected officials have supported the project. All seven state reps have signed on for support.

- Identified outdoor recreation as key to ADK economy. Is it part of the tourism working group? Outdoor recreation must be a priority. Lots of jobs, opportunities for small businesses related to outdoor recreation industry.
- Survival of small health care centers. It is difficult to attract medical providers to this region. Health care reform will make more people eligible so need to expand local health centers. She encourages Council to look at small town doctors. This issue is critical to the quality of life for citizens. Regulations that govern facilities are same regardless of size. Need to incorporate the one size does not fit all into this aspect
- Speaker was born raised in ADK, left due to lack of employment. Ken made referenced to Portland, OR, as a community similar to Adirondack region. Craft beer brewing was big industry in Portland. Inside ADK – there is nine to ten trillion gallons of pure water. Water is important asset of this region. Encourage craft brewing inside Park – large brewers on Parks edge. Brand craft beer. Blue – gold flowing out of the Park (H2O).. Prompt ADK Brewing.... Speaker mentioned that Sierra Nevada looking to relocate on the East Coast. There is a need to reach out to this industry... Some major west coast breweries can not ship to the Eastern U.S. Some of these breweries want to expand to the east coast. This Region could use our water resource and quality of life to attract this industry. Average Salary is 40K in micro-brewing. Comes with hops farming... Water costs driving breweries out of western US.

Craft brewery in Oregon created 3,000 jobs and \$5 billion in profits. Breweries renovating old hotels and installed brewing facilities

“Let’s think about brewing some beer to create jobs.”

- Infrastructure is foundation to industry. Water and Sewer are key elements to development. Public sewer should be priority. Small ADK communities are hard pressed to finance water/sewer districts. Need assistance to pay for water/sewer projects. Will help build density in communities and attract the critical mass needed to support small biz.
- Traditional Environmental Facilities Corp. process is still in place. Monies are still available from EFC.
- Crucial that communities work together creating comprehensive tourism plans... Not fight for tourism dollars but collaborate to develop region wide plans.

Speaker stated - “My generation is moving back because we have Forest Preserve, clean water and hopefully Jobs...”

Agricultural is huge industry in NY's crown. Produce from NNY is exported in great volume resulting in significant economic development. Highest yield in soy beans in the US – from NNY.

Adirondack Harvest project is a labeling project that emphasizes local food production. This is something that should be supported by the Council. ADK Harvest is linking growers to consumers. Farms to forks.

- Strong element of smart growth should be a priority. Work to revitalize existing hamlets and community centers...