



NORTH COUNTRY REGIONAL COUNCIL

Meeting Notes

11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

(Friday, August 19, 2011/SUNY Potsdam)

NCREDC Working Session

Attendance: Lt. Gov Robert Duffy, Anthony Collins, Garry Douglas, John Martin, Donna Wadsworth, Dan Wilt, John Donoghue, Dr. John Ettling, Ron Davis, Carl A. McLaughlin, Terry Gach, James W. Wright, Kate Fish, Anne L. Merrill, James McKenna, Bridget Hart, Jon Greenwood, Mark Trynski, Lisa Weber

Ex-Officio Voting: Chair Jim Langley, Chair Sallie Brothers, Chairman William Farber, Chair Randy Douglas, Mayor Jeffery Graham, Mayor Don Kasprzak, Supervisor Marie Regan

Ex-officio Non-voting: MOA Addie Russell, MOA Blankenbush, Representatives from Senators Griffo and Ritchie

Excused: Adore Kurtz, Bill Murray, Cali Brooks, Eric Virkler, Carolyn Fitzpatrick, Guy Smith

Facilitators: John Jablonski, Kevin O'Neill, Colin Read

Staff: Irene Baker/Director of Regional Councils, Roseanne Murphy/Executive Director, Cliff Donaldson/Deputy Director, Terry Martino/Council Liaison, Betsy Lowe/Facilitation.

Lt. Gov opened the meeting, introduced Co-chairs Tony Collins and Garry Douglas and turned meeting over to Tony Collins who explained that Working Groups have been organized and he then introduced the leadership teams for each committee:

PLANNING COMMITTEE: Adore Kurtz, The Development Corp., Chair.
Kate Fish, ANCA, Vice-Chair
Susan Matton, North Country Chamber of Commerce, Vice Chair
Tom Sauter, DANC, Vice Chair

ADIRONDACK PARK: Bill Farber, Hamilton County, Chair.

INFRASTRUCTURE: Jim Wright, DANC, Chair.

Rodney Brown, Clinton County Deputy County Administrator & County Planner, Vice Chair

CANADIAN CONNECTION: Garry Douglas, North Country Chamber of Commerce, Chair.
Howard Kelly, Capital Corridor, Vice Chair

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: Jim McKenna, Office of Regional Sustainable Tourism/Lake Placid CVB, Chair.
Gary DeYoung, 1000 Islands International Tourism Council, Vice Chair

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Cali Brooks, Adirondack Community Trust, Chair
Melissa McManus, Vice Chair

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT: Anne Merrill, Lewis County Chamber of Commerce, Chair.
Jim Murphy, Adirondack Economic Development Corp (AEDC), Vice Chair

STRATEGIC CLUSTERS: Bill Murray, CITEC, Chair.
Carl McLaughlin, Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization, Vice Chair

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Eric Virkler, Lewis County, Chair
Keith Tyo, Exec Asst to Pres, SUNY Plattsburgh, Vice Chair

The Regional Council process was outlined including the new Consolidation Funding Application initiative. Governor Cuomo is now focusing on how to 'kick-start' the economy of New York State. We need thoughtful decision making in the region to improve our economy. Coupled with this, he is changing the way decisions are made on economic development funding; it will no longer be top down. It will be grass roots decision making coming from a locally developed regional strategic economic development plan, looking out for the next five years, at a minimum.

Consolidated Funding Application (CFA): To streamline and expedite the application process for projects supported by the Regional Councils, the NYS Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) has been developed. The CFA will serve as a threshold application for multiple State funding sources (17 programs from 9 agencies), in some cases eliminating the need to file multiple applications for multiple funding sources for a single project. A CFA can be submitted by a Regional Council for single or multiple sources of funding. \$1 billion + in State resources will be accessible through the CFA process to support the Regional Councils' priorities and goals as identified through the work of each Council's strategic planning process. The \$1 billion includes the \$200 million Regional Council allocation as well as the \$800 million in other NYS economic development program funding.

Council's role in CFA: The Council will play an advisory role in the allocation of NYS economic development resources. They will review all applications covered by the CFA program. The NCREDC plan will help guide and prioritize the deployment of economic development funds. The Council will

apply endorsement standards to each application. The NCREDC endorsement standards are being developed by the planning committee and will be presented to the Council at the September 9th meeting for action.

CFA in future years: Ultimately the Governor wants everything to come through the Council. This is a way to help state government spend its money in a thoughtful way. At the present time, the Council won't be formally reviewing applications outside of the CFA process. There are 55 agencies that are currently not part of the CFA program, but these agencies will take into account the recommendations of the Council. The Resource Guide contains information on all agencies.

The competition: This plan will be part of statewide competition among the ten economic development regions in the State, \$200 million will be allocated to help implement these regional investment plans. A Strategic Plan Review Committee will analyze and compare each region's Strategic Plan. Based upon this review, four regions will be awarded \$40 million each in capital funding and tax credits to be applied toward the priority capital projects identified in their plans. The remaining allocations will be divided among the other six regions. The NCREDC's strategic plan must be completed and filed by November 14th. This plan will include the identification of strategic projects that the Council determines to have potential to transform the economy.

The strategic plan has to be focused on the needs of your region. Strategic plan should be a clear statement of what you see your region doing, and where it is going. Plan will evolve 5, 10 years.

NCREDC Planning Process: A description the NCREDC planning process was presented to Council which included an outline of the working group process, the bottom-up work flow from working groups into the planning committee. The Planning Committee's work flow - both process and work product - will require focused coordination of information. There will be a full day charette for planning committee on September 1. Timeframe for all elements is immediate. The committee is looking for clear and concise direction from the Council. (Handouts are attached)

NCREDC Public Engagement: The committee is focusing on three elements: series of public meetings to seek community engagement and information; increased use of technology through an NCREDC website, the goal is to have it operational in two weeks - an online presence to get broad based public input and support for the strategy; and to stimulate discussion through press releases, presentations, announcements, etc. Tentatively initial public forums will be held in Plattsburgh, Tupper Lake and Watertown during week of September 12th. A second set of forums where a draft of the strategic plan will be presented and input will be solicited on Council's work and whether it meets the public's expectations. These are being targeted for the end of October. The goal is to hold at least one public meeting in each County in the Region, to help ensure grass roots participation. Plans are also underway to develop materials for members to use in meeting and speaking engagements, e.g. short PowerPoint and could be presented at Rotary Clubs, Chambers, Forever Wired session on October 4, ANCA annual meeting. Meetings will be staffed by Regional Leadership Team: ESD, DOL, APA, DOS, DEC. A media plan is also under development with goal of getting our message out. Members were asked to identify possible locations for the public sessions.

The Council then moved into a facilitated sessions building on discussions from Inaugural Meeting and moving Council to consensus on the NCREDC Vision Statement; on the top five or seven critical issues and opportunities, those that are truly important to the region's economic prosperity; a discussion on priorities to be factored into development of NCREDC priority, transformative projects and actions which should dovetail into the NCREDC CFA endorsement standards. Following are the Facilitators' Synthesis; these are the overarching themes, not a comprehensive list.

I. Baseline Assessment (Where are we now?)

- Declining population base (especially among those of working age)
- Declining tax base
- Inadequate infrastructure
- Lack of coordinated regional plan, regional brand
- Dubious regional reputation
- Long international border; strong Canadian ties
- Vast natural resources (forests, water)
- Significant agricultural sector
- Significant potential for tourism
- Higher education as an anchor industry

II. Economic vision (Where are we going?)

By 2040 the North Country will be sustained by successfully attracting 5,000 new families who value our unique geography, economy, and access to a long and well appreciated international border.

III. Priority action statement (How do we get there?)

- Brand the NC region as a destination, collaborate across sub regions
- Improve the quality of life, architecture and housing in our population centers (cities, towns, villages)
- Capitalize on existing strengths (Fort Drum, tourism destinations, international border, higher education, agriculture)
- Improve connectivity/connectedness to other regions and the world (broadband, supply chain, distribution networks)

Lt. Governor expanded on the Governor's efforts to make State government more efficient and accountable. If there any problems with NYS agencies that are holding up or interfering with development in the Region, get this information to Roseanne Murphy, Executive Director. She will work with Executive Chamber staff to help solve these problems. The Governor wants every agency to be economically driven. Tony Collins presented the Village of Potsdam street swap with DOT that has been languishing for five years. Lt. Governor said we will get back to you by close of business on Monday. The potential closure of the Croghan Dam was also brought up as long standing issue with DEC. The next NCREDC meeting will be held on September 9, 11AM at SUNY Potsdam. Brief description of purpose of public forums and the locations: September 12 Monday at SUNY-Plattsburgh from 6- 8 pm; September 14 Tupper Lake Wild Center; September 19 Watertown JCCC. Details will be finalized. All are proposed to run from 6 to 8 pm.

NCREDC Public Session

Lt. Governor welcomed the public; he described Council leadership from 7 North Country Counties and Governor Cuomo's economic development goals to build capacity and jobs. He introduced the co-chairs and turned the session over to Tony Collins.

Tony Collins welcomed everyone and summary of the morning session for the audience including the strategic plan competition, the new Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) program, NCREDC's role, an explanation of the plan and the Council's current goals. A discussion of the Council's plan for community engagement and the dates of the public forums were presented.

Following is a summary of the questions and answers for the remainder of the meeting.

Question: Applications that were submitted in April/May, will those awards be delayed and will projects have to be reviewed by the Councils? Irene Baker reviewed CFA process; said housing awards are going through their traditional processes. The ultimate goal is not to delay any funding that is currently in process. We are trying to change the way government works, having NYS agencies become a one-stop shop, available to businesses.

Question: where do we send comments or questions about the process? Go to website, there are links to all agencies.

Question: how does a volunteer group that uses culture to bridge gap between the youth and the elderly, get more exposure and involvement in the process? They were directed to work with Jim McKenna heading up the Tourism Work Group.

Question: the last time a consolidated application was developed, it didn't work. Will there be a chance for the public to comment? This is a new process; we ask for your patience. We want it to work on the customer side, let us know.

Lt. Governor expounded on the change that was occurring. A huge change in the way the state does business. State agencies are now working together; they're here in this room. Roseanne Murphy will handle triage for all the state agencies. He encouraged public to have patience in how changes are being done in how the state does business.

Question: Quality of life is a big selling point for the North Country but he doesn't see this reflected in the membership of the Council. "I hope I am overlooking it." How can the need to develop quality and beauty of North Country be fit into the committee structure as identified? The structure and process of workgroups was briefly discussed and it was suggested that the questioner maybe interested in working with the Community Development Working Group.

Tony Collins emphasized that there will be plenty of opportunity for public input. He thanked everyone for coming, for committing to a new paradigm. This is our a great opportunity.

Lt. Governor emphasize that the Governor wants to see the state change. You need to look at this region and telling us how the state can help. Plans will be turned in November 14th and then targeted economic development investments will go to work. This gives me great hope for the state.