

# Chautauqua County Economic Development Organizational Plan

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County of Chautauqua Industrial Development Agency



120 West Avenue, Suite 303  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

518.899.2608

[www.camoinassociates.com](http://www.camoinassociates.com)

## About Camoin Associates

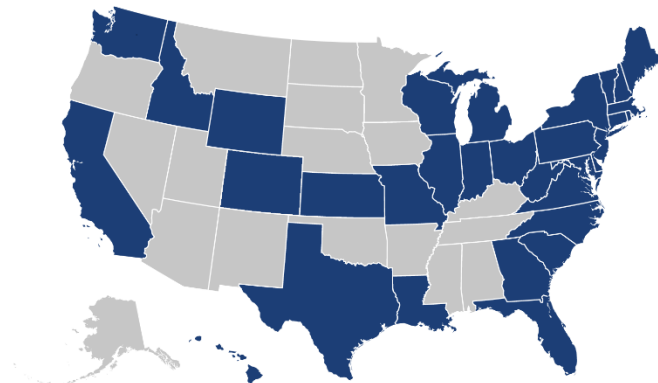
Camoin Associates has provided economic development consulting services to municipalities, economic development agencies, and private enterprises since 1999. Through the services offered, Camoin Associates has had the opportunity to serve EDOs and local and state governments from Maine to California; corporations and organizations that include Lowes Home Improvement, FedEx, Amazon, Volvo (Nova Bus) and the New York Islanders; as well as private developers proposing projects in excess of \$6 billion. Our reputation for detailed, place-specific, and accurate analysis has led to projects in 32 states and garnered attention from national media outlets including *Marketplace* (NPR), *Forbes* magazine, *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*. Additionally, our marketing strategies have helped our clients gain both national and local media coverage for their projects in order to build public support and leverage additional funding. We are based in Saratoga Springs, NY, with regional offices in Portland, ME; Boston, MA; Richmond, VA and Brattleboro, VT. To learn more about our experience and projects in all of our service lines, please visit our website at [www.camoinassociates.com](http://www.camoinassociates.com). You can also find us on Twitter [@camoinassociate](https://twitter.com/camoinassociate) and on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/camoinassociate).

## The Project Team

Daniel C. Gundersen  
*Senior Vice President, Project Principal*

Christa O. Franzi  
*Senior Project Manager, Project Manager*

Jessica Ulbricht  
*Analyst, Project Staff*



# Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	2
Purpose .....	4
Economic Development Best Practices .....	4
Economic Development in Chautauqua County .....	10
Proposed Recommendations .....	13
Tentative Goals and Objectives .....	19
Action Matrix.....	21
Appendix A: Relevant Case Studies.....	22
Appendix B: Stakeholder Interviews.....	31
Appendix C: Workshop Attendees .....	54



## Executive Summary

Our work with stakeholders throughout Chautauqua County revealed that there is strong interest in collaborating to better position the county for continued economic success. Chautauqua's numerous assets including a high quality of life, good infrastructure, a strong tourism industry, opportunities for skilled workers, and rising incomes provide the necessary foundation for growth in the coming years. The energy and interest in overcoming challenges and seizing opportunities shows that Chautauqua County can be stronger when acting together as a group. Coming together and forming robust countywide partnerships will result in a stronger economic development strategy, increased efficiency and effectiveness of programs, and optimization of financial and human resources.

Through our discussions with stakeholders we found that:

- The county is at a crossroads, with stakeholders recognizing that improvements can only be made with strong leadership, a plan of action, and a commitment to collective efforts;
- 100% of stakeholders that we spoke to believed that better positioning the county for economic success needs to be a top priority for professional, elected, and civic leaders and, to do this, a new model for approaching economic development is needed;
- The authentic character of its people and places are considered some of the strongest attributes that Chautauqua County offers residents, visitors, and businesses. There are opportunities for the county to grow and gain a competitive edge with increased focus on tourism, quality of life initiatives, and place making;
- Finding skilled workers to meet business needs is a challenge and therefore workforce development is integral to achieving economic prosperity;
- Data, resources, and ideas are not always shared between stakeholders and this fact alone provides the most obvious justification for establishing a collaborative approach to advance economic priorities;
- Improving the county's economic position will be possible if the county itself becomes the top priority, rather than the interests of individual jurisdictions.

To improve collaboration and promote a unified vision for economic prosperity, we recommend establishing a new entity that brings together public and private interests. This involves, but is not limited to:

- Adopting clear and focused Vision and Mission Statements;
- Developing a Communications Plan to share information with stakeholders and the general public;
- Bringing together a diverse Board of Directors that is committed to the organization's mission and ensuring that leadership and committee members are in place;
- Hiring a full-time staff person to coordinate the actions of the board and facilitate the activities of the organization;
- Securing commitments for initial funding and establishing a dedicated revenue stream.

One of the first tasks for this new entity would be to participate in the development of a county-wide economic development strategy. This will help build trust and working relationships among the stakeholders, particularly as discussions center on longer term priorities and public funding of initiatives.

In the mid-term, the entity will become involved in community development, workforce development, housing, and quality of life issues. It will begin to positively influence local mindsets regarding economic priorities and the county will begin to experience needed change.

In the long term, this entity will be recognized as the “go to” economic development-related leadership organization in the county. In addition to providing focus on business formation, attraction, retention and expansion initiatives, the entity will be regarded for having established stronger relationships with regional and state organizations and providing credible voice for securing new financial resources to advance county priorities.

By coming together in this way, Chautauqua County will be able to unlock opportunities which previously seemed out of reach.

## Purpose

The Chautauqua County Executive and leaders of the County of Chautauqua Industrial Development Agency resolved in 2018 that prior to preparing a new economic development strategy they would complete a thorough analysis of the way economic development activities were being conducted in the County.

The prevailing opinion among public and private leaders throughout Chautauqua County is that the delivery of services related to economic development is not well-coordinated across the various public and quasi-public agencies, nor with respect to civic, non-profit, and business groups. To address the situation, the County Executive pledged to bring together stakeholders to rationalize service and delivery systems to better foster outcomes. Two immediate objectives that the County expected from this process were that a) annual financial contributions by the County and philanthropic sources to such efforts will be more effective and meaningful and that, b) gaps within the economic ecosystem would be identified and addressed.

Camoin Associates was hired to assist the County to evaluate the situation and develop actionable recommendations to help change behaviors, coordinate actions, and open-up new possibilities for advancing countywide economic prosperity.

## Economic Development Best Practices

The following section presents a summary of the research on EDO best practices that informs the subsequent action plan and recommendations.

### State of the Industry

Economic development is a process that influences the growth and restructuring of local economies. It is done by understanding the dynamics of business change and taking early, proactive, business-friendly steps to help companies grow. The purpose of economic development activity is largely to create jobs and draw new income into the regional economy so that it can then be spent within the community and support non-basic employment sectors. The ultimate goal is to assure economic prosperity and contribute to a better quality of life.

The profession has matured quickly from its transaction-oriented real estate and finance beginnings. At the beginning of this millennium, the approach was much more on understanding and responding to the investor's perspective, that is, focusing on the needs of businesses. Instead of just deals and incentives as areas for expertise, economic developers today must be data-driven, provide advice and advocacy, and know what it takes for a business to sustain growth and productivity, while competing in global markets.

These changes require organizations that are at the center-of-it-all as leaders in their communities, able to strategize and integrate resources and assume roles for effective collaboration. In recent years, economic development organizations ("EDOs") have focused more attention on the entrepreneurial ecosystem, diversifying the economic base, resiliency and disaster planning, all in an effort to protect and grow their economies.

The International Economic Development Council ("IEDC") issues an annual report on the state of the economic development industry. Survey respondents include several thousand EDOs from across the nation and the world. Findings of this report were reviewed with workshop attendees, and are summarized below:

- Only 15.5% of EDOs expect budget decreases this coming year, approximately half would stay steady, and nearly 36% are increasing their operating budgets. Operating expenses show that 36% are hiring more staff and increasing pay and benefits for their employees. Thirty-seven percent are increasing program spending.
- For 2018, the program areas where EDOs increased efforts included: workforce (55%), entrepreneurship (47%), infrastructure (33%), and measuring performance (30%). Twenty-six percent provided focus on leadership development for their boards and employees.



- In terms of industry focus, on average, 67% of EDOs have business recruitment efforts focused on advanced manufacturing, 36% on information technology, 36% logistics, 29% healthcare, and 26% on services.
- In just the past year alone, 86% of all EDOs in the world today entered into new partnerships or combined their resources with other community stakeholders to enhance their economic efforts.
- Equity and economic opportunity are a moderate or very important concern for 88% of EDOs. The debate over incentives is of high concern to 26%, as is lack of political support (22%), numbers that have been on the increase in recent years.
- The three greatest challenges facing EDOs in the past year were lack of skilled labor (55%), inadequate infrastructure (30%), and City/County/State budget cuts (27%).
- Forty-four percent of EDOs revamped their strategic plans in 2017 and 17% had plans to launch strategic fundraising campaigns in 2018.
- Sixty-two percent of all EDOs provide leadership skills training for their boards and employees and 44% offer their local officials economic development training, further verifying the new expectations that these organizations have in their communities.
- The IEDC reports that 62% of EDOs were more optimistic in 2018 than they were in 2017.

## High-Performing Economic Development Organizations (EDOs)

Camoin Associates presented a series of best and emerging practices in the field of economic development, including organizational mission, structure, and areas of focus from across the country. The following best and emerging practices were derived from three sources: (1) standards and frameworks set by leading national economic organizations like the International Economic Development Council (“IEDC”); (2) original research conducted on economic development organizations (“EDOs”) recognized for their performance in growing an economy and/or for utilizing cutting-edge techniques and approaches and that have proven to be successful; and (3) first-hand experience of Camoin’s senior partners through professional interactions and research.

A recent white paper from IEDC, *High Performing Economic Development Organizations*, examined the activities and results of numerous EDOs and defined the qualities and characteristics of those that have achieved high performance as defined by fulfilling a mission, conducting internal best practices, building relationships and community capacity to foster broad prosperity, and learning to be adaptable and responsive. According to IEDC’s research, and confirmed by Camoin’s experience, high-performing EDOs share ten similar success traits:

1. **Leadership & Capacity:** Providing the resources for implementation.
2. **Strategic Planning:** Developing a strategy based on consensus, information, and competitive advantage.
3. **Responsiveness & Adaptability:** Reacting effectively to rapid change.
4. **Customer-Driven:** Responding to client and funder needs.
5. **Funding Efficiency:** Leveraging funding to create programs and initiatives with tangible results.
6. **Measure Results & Adjust:** Reporting results periodically to funders and leadership to reallocate resources.
7. **Creative Risk Taking:** Calculating risks to complete transformational projects.
8. **Trust & Respect:** Earning engagement of partners allowing pursuit of opportunities.
9. **Strong Alliances & Networks:** Sharing resources through partnerships and networks.



**10. Effective Communication:** Informing partners, funders, and stakeholders on efforts and accomplishments.

Chautauqua County is part of Invest Buffalo Niagara, a regional economic development organization (“REDO.”) The operations of REDOs have been studied by the International Economic Development Council. Some best practice findings of IEDC’s work reveals qualities and traits that are applicable to private sector-led, countywide EDOs. As the Chautauqua County rethinks its approach to economic development, it will be important to incorporate these traits into how it operates:

**Board Leadership**

Successful EDOs are led by corporate leaders willing to fund efforts that address economic development issues, such as workforce, targeted industry collaboration and quality of life enhancements. The combination of shrinking financial resources of states and cities to support healthy communities, and the need for larger corporations to exist in a desirable regional economy has forced many employers to become engaged in influencing their host communities.

**Collaborative Partnerships**

IEDC notes that most of these organizations are structured as public-private partnerships, meaning that interests of both the public and private sectors are served. However, the findings indicate that no two are identical as they are all a product of the collaboration and negotiation that takes place amongst its members over time.

**Proactive Governance**

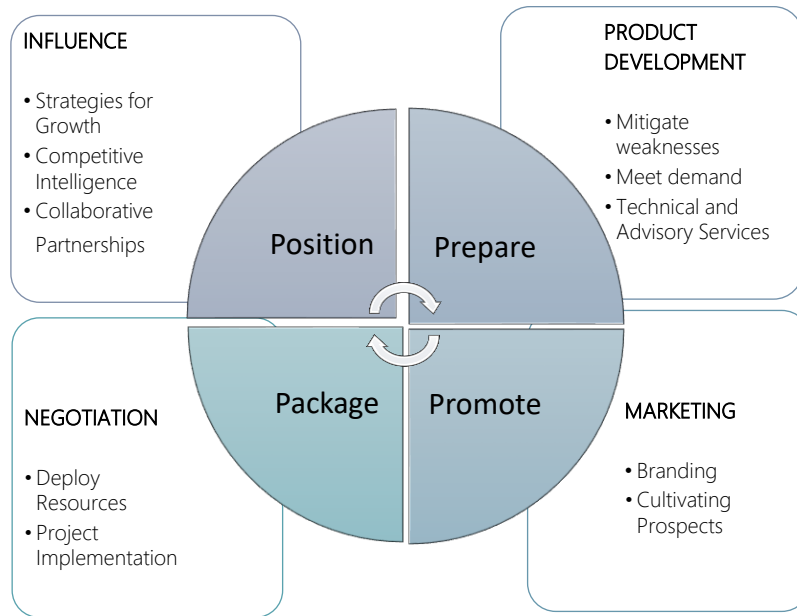
The organization’s bylaws are typically designed to create an environment in which economic development efforts can more proactively address the needs of the businesses, industries, and jurisdictions they serve. These EDOs are represented nearly equally by public and private individuals. This helps to ensure a balance of public-private influence in the governance structure.

**Financial Support**

Board representation by both public and private organizations can be a function of financial contribution. Organizations typically require a financial investment to support the organization in exchange for engagement and decision-making influence. Advisory Boards are sometimes established for EDOs that are unable to make a financial investment, but whose experience, insight, and/or cooperation may be critical.



## Roles Assumed by EDOs:



The roles that EDOs serve vary from community to community. In some jurisdictions, a single organization, public or private, might be expected and empowered to do it all, from forming the overall economic growth strategy, to developing the product (such as office space) and providing technical assistance, to marketing and branding their communities, working prospective business leads to negotiation of deal financing and incentives.

In larger communities, these roles are often dispersed amongst different public and/or private entities. Where this is the case, it is imperative that close coordination and cooperation take place. Regardless of who is conducting EDO activities, there exists four primary roles:

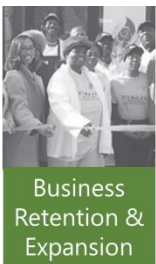
- 1. Position:** This lead role involves influencing the economic agenda, conducting competitive intelligence and strategies for growth, and ensuring that multiple stakeholders come together to achieve common goals.
- 2. Prepare:** The next role is to develop the overall product. It is here that market weaknesses are mitigated. Examples include upgrading infrastructure, developing a business or industrial park where supply is lacking, establishing small business support programs, or providing technical assistance and services where needed to help encourage investment.
- 3. Promote:** The third role is to market the product—the locality. This includes brand development and promotion, business development involving lead generation campaigns, and cultivation of prospects in targeted industries and global markets.
- 4. Package:** Finally, the community must be able to close the deal. At this stage, the EDO or designated entity must implement the project, provide the financing and incentives, or deploy the resources needed to create new jobs and investment.

Currently, different stakeholders in Chautauqua County are engaged in some aspects of the Prepare and Promote stages. They provide essential information for decision makers and promote the County through messaging and hosting of events and activities. The October 2018 Workshop revealed strong interest for county leaders to use its voice to better Position (by educating and forming collaborative partnerships), while also expanding its roles to better Prepare (by conducting more in-depth research and helping existing businesses) and Promote (by participating in robust business development) the county.

## Typical EDO Program Priorities

The role of EDOs has broadened over the last 20 years. Where EDOs once focused on incentives and sites, they now design innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystems, create innovation districts, develop solutions to labor force skills gaps, support quality of life elements to attract and retain a quality workforce, identify and target specific industries for business retention, expansion, and attraction, address existing business needs, and advocate for business and public policies that support a stronger economy, and more. Simultaneously, the tightening of Federal, State and local budgets has forced EDOs to find alternative funding to support a wider array of activities.

While the programs and initiatives vary, economic development organizations (“EDOs”) typically provide a number of traditional economic development functions. The degree to which these functions are offered will also vary based on funding, capacity, and the needs of a region. To help inform organizational leaders of these typical functions and to allow them to assess how Chautauqua County compares, the following list was developed by Camoin based on the core functions inherent in most (EDOs).



Business Retention & Expansion (“BR&E”) is one of two most common efforts EDOs undertake to strengthen economies. A BR&E program requires periodic meetings with local businesses to understand their needs, along with any barriers or issues that may impede growth, such as infrastructure, workforce, permitting, financing, etc. Many are utilizing a formal Customer Relationship Management (“CRM”) tool to record data, convert it to business and industry information, analyze it over time and feed intelligence into the organization’s marketing and attraction program.



The pooling of resources to market a region to attract new businesses and investment may be the founding purpose of an EDO. New business attraction entails marketing and promotion of the community and sites to outside business and development interests. These programs are typically targeted to businesses that are within, or a part of, an existing supply chain or industry that has been identified as competitive relative to other regions. Investments in attraction efforts typically involve industry tradeshow attendance and/or conducting familiarization or developing relationships with site selectors.



Based on the research of Michael Porter, EDOs are also determining their competitive advantages and why certain industries and sectors are stronger and performing better within their region relative to others. They are focusing investments and capacity on strengthening those advantages and developing programs and initiatives that support businesses within a targeted cluster. In rare cases, such as New York State and the Albany, NY region, investments in Nano Sciences and research and development facilities were made to foster the manufacturing of computer processors. However, the majority of EDOs focus on strengthening existing industries and have analyzed economic and employment data to identify their targets.



E-SHIP  
&  
Innovation

With small businesses responsible for the majority of new job creation within a region, many EDOs offer financing, training and other technical assistance and services to start-ups and existing entrepreneurs. Supporting start-up and entrepreneurship through programs offering access to capital are also common activities. Many EDOs establish and manage local loan programs designed to participate in higher risk lending with local banks and/or Federal programs.



Workforce

Given that workforce is now the single-greatest barrier to growth for large and small companies, economic development organizations have been working with state and local workforce officials, community colleges, Workforce Investment Boards (“WIBs”) and others to develop training programs and career pathways that address specific gaps in labor skills. These programs typically focus on targeted industries.



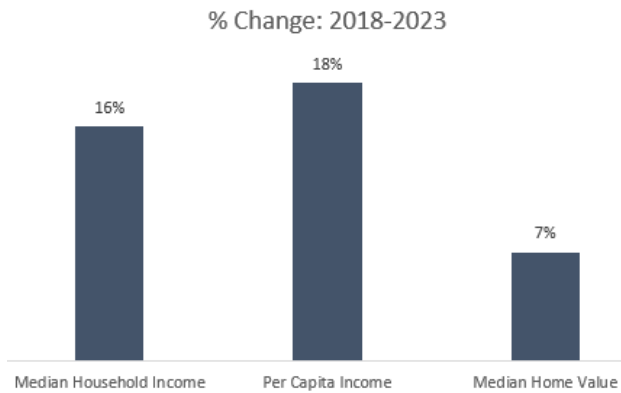
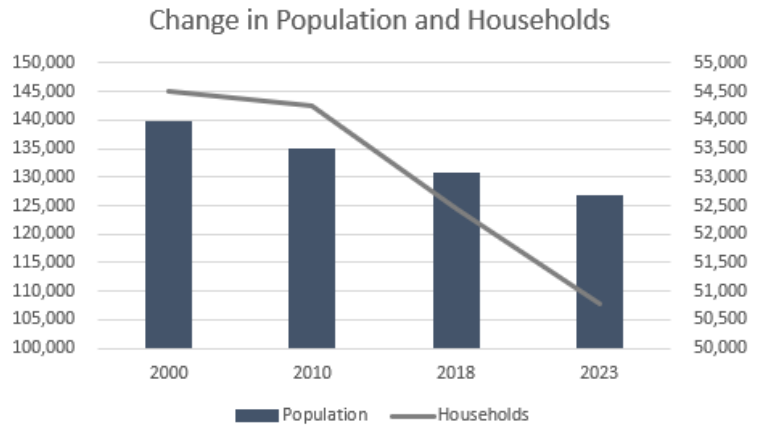
Downtown,  
Infrastructure  
& Sites

Owning and developing property, business parks, or shovel-ready industrial sites, streamlining the permitting process, leading a downtown revitalization effort, completing an economic development strategy, or becoming involved in addressing a workforce housing shortage are also among the types of efforts and roles economic development organizations can serve in an economy.

# Economic Development in Chautauqua County

## Demographics

Since 2010 Chautauqua County has experienced a decline in population and households. This, coupled with the County's aging population, has posed some challenges for the County. These trends are expected to continue through 2023, as population and number of households are both expected to decrease by 3% between 2018 and 2023. Median age is expected to increase from 42.4 to 43.1 over the same time period. This is a large jump from the County's median age of 40.9 in 2010.



Although the population of the county is decreasing, median household income and per capita income are expected to increase by 16% and 18%, respectively, over the same 2018 to 2023 period. Similarly, home values are projected to increase by 7%.

## Stakeholder Input

In August 2018, Camoin Associates collected 386 qualitative responses and 550 quantitative rankings across 17 stakeholder meetings with 25 individuals. These stakeholder meetings focused on three key areas: the Chautauqua County Economic Ecosystem, Chautauqua County's level of economic prosperity, and civic leadership/stakeholder interaction.

Interviews focused on gaining an understanding of where the stakeholder interviewee's organizations fit within the County's economic ecosystem, in terms of influence, product development, negotiation, and marketing. These questions revealed that stakeholders unanimously agree that their organizations should play a role in positioning the County for economic success.

Interviewees were also asked to rank Chautauqua County on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the strongest, in terms of how the County stands on six key indicators of economic prosperity.



From here, we were able to learn that stakeholders believe that Chautauqua County is strongest in interest, intellectual capital and infrastructure. Stakeholders also felt strongly that improving intellectual capital, investment, and infrastructure should be prioritized.

#### Strongest Measures

1. Interest
2. Intellectual Capital
3. Infrastructure

#### Priority for Improvement

1. Intellectual Capital
2. Investment
3. Infrastructure

Stakeholders were also asked to rank 10 features of civic leadership on the same 1 to 5 scale. The resulting overall score of 2.5 revealed that Chautauqua County is at a crossroads of its economic development. For full report of stakeholder findings see Appendix C.

## Key Findings

In October 2018, a diverse group of leaders from Chautauqua County public and private sector organizations came together for an economic workshop to review key data and results of stakeholder interviews, national trends, and the current economic development ecosystem. They agreed that a **collaborative forum is needed** to help move the county in the right direction. Specifically, the participants believed such a group could help change behaviors, coordinate actions, and open-up new possibilities.



Specifically, the behaviors that need changing begin with **improved communication** amongst the stakeholders. This involves structured, respectful dialogue to better understand what is going on amongst the groups and to agree on collective actions they can take to meet challenges facing Chautauqua County. It was agreed that stakeholders could **share data and resources** to get on the same page, gain knowledge and thereby make more informed decisions. This process would help **forge stronger partnerships** and build confidence needed to sustain positive momentum.



Coordinated action begins with creating and pledging to support a **shared vision**. Leaders of public and private groups understood that they needed to speak with one voice that accepts that Chautauqua County is **stronger as a group**, that no one person or organization can take on challenges alone. They accepted that they needed to demonstrate to their clients and the citizenry alike a renewed purpose and commitment to

**focus energies** to yield results. Internally, this means that for Chautauqua County to improve its economic position, the county itself must become the top priority versus the interests of individual jurisdictions and, externally, that the county (all of its institutions) becomes respected for its ability to work together to get things done.

The next step in coordinating action is to establish **priorities and proactive strategies**. Stakeholders need to encourage no wrong door thinking, stress both long-term planning and urgent action, breakdown barriers for more **cross-county collaboration** and to avoid false-starts and duplication of efforts.

If behaviors change and action is coordinated as described above, then new possibilities will follow. A key next step will be to develop an **economic development strategy** to target business growth, workforce, and quality of life opportunities. Once formed, the forum can help: increase public engagement and understanding of key public issues, **leverage power** through collective action, realize better efficiencies & effectiveness with program delivery, optimize financial resources and human resource impact, and better **take advantage of opportunities** when they arise.

# Proposed Recommendations

## Create a Proper Entity with New Identity

Recommendation 1: Determine the proper entity to establish a new identity within the county that brings together public and private interests to address the economic challenges facing Chautauqua County.

During the October/November economic workshop, participants unanimously agreed that a new effort should be established having a defined agenda. This effort has been tentatively referred to as an Alliance. While alliance clearly states the purpose of the initiative, a few people indicated that calling it an alliance might be confused with an existing lake initiative with the same name. That may or may not be the case, but since the name and the corporate entity remains to be decided, for the purposes of this report only, we will refer to it simply as [The Entity].

Names for consideration include:

### Alliance

- Chautauqua County Economic Development Alliance (CCEDA)
- Chautauqua Prosperity Alliance (CPA)
- Economic Alliance of Chautauqua County (EACC)

### Coalition

- Chautauqua County Coalition (CCC)
- Chautauqua County Economic Affairs Coalition (CCEAC)
- Chautauqua County Leadership Coalition (CCLC)

### Partnership

- Chautauqua County Economic Partnership (CCEP)
- Chautauqua County Prosperity Partnership (CCPP)
- Partnership for Economic Growth (PEC)

### Council

- Chautauqua County Council of Economic Advisors (CCCEA)
- Chautauqua Economic Development Council (CEDC)
- Chautauqua Leadership Council (CEC)

### Other Ideas<sup>1</sup>

- Advance Chautauqua (AC)
- Chautauqua County Leadership Forum (CCLF)
- Chautauqua Leadership Network (CLN)
- Team Chautauqua (TC)

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<sup>1</sup> The words Team, Network, or Forum could be substituted for either Alliance, Coalition, Partnership, or Council.

Recommendation 2: Adopt a vision statement that focuses on sustained countywide unity that brings out the best intentions and convictions for a more prosperous future.

Proposed Vision Statement:

*To realize the tremendous potential of Chautauqua County by working harmoniously to advance widespread economic growth and prosperity.*

Recommendation 3: Adopt a mission statement that clearly describes the roles and responsibilities of the new entity.

Proposed Mission Statement:

*[The Entity] brings together public and private leaders to focus on countywide and regional economic development. It serves as the catalyst and broker of resources for advancing economic prosperity efforts and is the central coordinating entity for the formation, retention, development, and attraction of quality jobs and advancements to quality of life in Chautauqua County. [The Entity] fulfills its mission through the following strategic initiatives:*

- *Providing proactive leadership on issues that affect business growth, challenges to job creation and the long-term competitiveness of our economy;*
- *Developing vibrant places with enriching experiences for citizens and visitors alike with dynamic communities in which to live;*
- *Synthesizing workforce, entrepreneurial and small business development with business development objectives;*
- *Facilitating entrepreneurial growth and the retention and expansion of primary employers and key industries;*
- *Driving development, marketing, and attraction of targeted businesses to our greater community.*

Recommendation 4: As a condition for serving on the board and/or committee(s) of [The Entity], each member must pledge to support its organizing principles and operating protocols.

Participants in the economic workshop developed organizing principles that should guide the formation and work of [The Entity.] These principals and protocols are designed to avoid mistakes of the past and to center the actions of [The Entity] on the positive characteristics required for bringing together diverse interests.

It was accepted by participants that economic development is not simply about financial transactions, but rather it is a process with many inputs and players integral to advancing economic prosperity. Accepting principles that rise above self-interests and thinking of the county first will be critical to success. This requires breaking down silos and leaving personal and organizational agendas at the door. They believed that members' individual identities and perspectives can be respected while also building trust in the new group and supporting consensus-based decision making. Related to this is that priorities and activities considered by [The Entity] need to be evaluated with overall big-picture—countywide and regional—impact to minimize shotgun approaches and maximize impact. Further, the group understood the importance of speaking and bringing together not only all jurisdictions within the county but working to further the economic well-being of all people as well.

Proposed Principles

1. **Balance:** the best decisions are influenced by experience and grounded by solid data
2. **Big picture thinking:** the key to moving the needle is to focus on system and process solutions
3. **Inclusiveness:** embracing social equity is essential for realizing broad-based prosperity
4. **Integration:** economic development is an integrated process involving many interests and disciplines
5. **"One voice":** bridging divides within Chautauqua County is possible and all-important



6. **Regional Thinking:** leveraging assets beyond borders is a modern-day imperative for economic competitiveness

Workshop participants also developed key operating protocols for how its board and committee members should conduct the business of [The Entity.] Central to the discussions was the need for its members to understand their roles with the new entity and to work with, not against, each other. The participants were aware of existing turf issues that stymie progress and felt that the new entity should insist that its members embrace and be governed by common protocols.

#### Proposed Protocols

1. Achieve **consensus** with each member having equal share vote
2. Attend meetings, actively participate, and **speak-up**—no proxies
3. Be **positive**, avoid negativity and lectures on past failures
4. Be **honest**, objective and transparent
5. Be open to new ideas and **proactive** in addressing concerns
6. Build new relationships to break patterns and creatively **seek solutions**
7. **Celebrate!**
8. Embrace continuous improvement: be **adaptable and flexible**
9. Insist on mutual **accountability** through metrics
10. **Share resources**, information and data: do not weaponize it, agree that data is going to drive our strategies and tactics
11. Share viewpoints with respect and engage in **civil discourse**
12. **Trust** each other, keep confidentiality, and credit the group

## Corporate Structure

Recommendation 5: [The Entity] should operate as a nonprofit organization dedicated to carrying out its mission.

As currently envisioned, its primary roles are entirely public purpose in nature. It is being formed to advise and develop policy, with some ability to execute programs, policies, and special initiatives. It is not envisioned to engage more than ten percent of its effort or resources in activities considered lobbying in nature. It should therefore be either established as a separate 501(c)(3) organization or operate under an existing nonprofit that can be restructured to comport with a new direction for [The Entity.] As such, it can receive charitable contributions and public monies to support its operations and activities.

An expedient path for establishing a proper corporate structure could, and almost certainly should, be a nonprofit that is currently housed under the County of Chautauqua Industrial Development Agency (CCIDA). The CCIDA has a separately affiliated organization for carrying out special economic development-related activities, the Chautauqua Region Economic Development Corporation (CREDC). Over the past several years, CREDC has been managing the annual PGA web.com LECOM Golf Tournament; it has stepped in to assist the County by being the Fixed-Based Operator of the two County Airports; and it has undertaken other special events and projects that involve charitable contributions as they pertain to economic development. These are each operated under the umbrella of CREDC with separate boards, missions, and cost centers. For clarification purposes, the nonprofit was originally incorporated under the name Chautauqua Region Industrial Development Corporation and was renamed in 2015 as the Chautauqua Regional Economic Development Corporation.

It makes a great deal of sense to create a separate subsidiary for this purpose under CREDC that has its own board with its own mission and purpose. The advantage of this arrangement is that costs associated with overhead, legal, auditing, insurance, etc. would be provided for under the CREDC umbrella, and it would be able to act independently on substantive matters. CREDC is also an established entity with a demonstrated track record in the economic development arena and is well-respected within the community. At the same time, the purpose and mission of CREDC is generally consistent (broad economic development goals) with the mission that is foreseen for [The Entity]; however, the subsidiary's vision and mission would need to stress broad-based, collaborative purposes that the County Executive first envisioned in an "Alliance."

In summary, a vehicle already exists organizationally for [The Entity] provided some revisions and/or additions are made to it to comport with the overarching need for a more diverse initiative and to ensure complete acceptance of stakeholders throughout the county. Camoin Associates believes this is a sound approach for the formative years of [The Entity] with the recommendation that the board of [The Entity] periodically evaluate the arrangement for optimal effectiveness.

**Recommendation 6: An Ad Hoc Planning Committee should be established by the County Executive's Office and overseen by the Deputy County Executive for Economic Development to manage and organize [The Entity] in the formative stages.**

This committee would work with the County Executive to decide on the proper corporate structure and to implement the steps outlined in the Action Matrix included in this report until a board is constituted.

**Recommendation 7: One of its first tasks will be to develop a Communications Plan to provide continuous, transparent information to stakeholders and interested third parties on its progress.**

This is called out as a separate recommendation to stress the importance of sharing developments from the very outset which will help build momentum for change. The Communications Plan will also provide the foundation for [The Entity]'s board of directors to build on to brand and market its agenda to constituents inside the county and external audiences. This Plan will also help build alliances with other regions and provide an investor prospectus for securing resources.

## **Governance/Leadership**

**Recommendation 8: [The Entity]'s Board of Directors should be comprised of business and civic leaders, philanthropic, academic and nonprofit executives, along with public sector officials.**

The Board of Directors should consist of somewhere in the range of 20, but no more than 27 members. The board size must be large enough to accommodate the breadth of interests engaged in economic development related issues, and to ensure balanced geographic representation.

It is recommended that approximately one-third of the board positions be two-year terms, one-third three-year terms, and one-third four-year terms. A majority of seats should be held by business and non-governmental representatives and every effort should be made to ensure diverse gender and racial representation in each of the termed positions.

**Recommendation 9: The board should be led by two equal co-chairs that include the County Executive and either a CEO of a county-based business or a chief executive of a local philanthropic foundation. The second co-chair position is intended to be a person who is not involved in**

providing day-to-day programmatic services but rather represents business or broader civic leadership.

Recommendation 10: The board should form standing committees as follows: Nominations, Finance, Policy and Programs, Public Advisory. An Executive Committee of 7 individuals should be selected to include the 2 co-chairs, chairs of the 4 standing committees, and one at-large member. At least 4 of the executive committee members should represent the business community.

Recommendation 11: A Public Advisory Committee of the Board of Directors should be formed to be comprised of local elected and appointed officials who will provide input to [The Entity] on issues of concern to municipal jurisdictions.

## Management/Staffing

Recommendation 12: Initially, a full-time staff person should be employed to coordinate the activities of the Board and to facilitate the activities of the organization. In addition, a recognized leader in economic development should serve as Executive Director to be the public facing executive to represent the interests of the [The Entity]. The organization should seek to ultimately have several full-time employees (apart from the Executive Director): a Program Director; an Operations Manager; and a Program and Policy Assistant.

At present, the County has budgeted for a full-time staff position to work with the Deputy County Executive for Economic Development to help administer the program through the County's Department of Planning & Development - Division of Economic Development. In the formative stages, it is recommended that the County utilize this vehicle to get the organization up and functioning, and as more funding becomes available, look to employ more staff and evaluate the organizational structure and leadership.

## Funding

Based on similar organizations operating in other counties around the nation, and given the mission of [The Entity], it is projected that the new organization would require an annual budget of \$120,000 - \$150,000 in its first year with just one staff hire and modest growth to cover rising expenditures in each of the subsequent two years of a three-year start-up. However, the cost using the existing CREDC organization and employing County-provided staff will result in nominal overhead and administrative costs. That said, perhaps an additional \$25,000 - \$50,000, above and beyond the costs of staffing and housing [The Entity], would be needed in year 1 for marketing, consulting and other costs that fall outside of overhead and administration. As the organization grows and matures, the costs will grow accordingly.

Thinking long-term, (3-5 years out), a working capital balance equaling \$250,000 should be established as the [The Entity] reaches maturity (this would include the County's contributions). It is estimated that during the early years of operation, [The Entity] will require such resources as a bridge for personnel, administrative, legal, marketing and promotion costs and other activities. Again, CREDC should be expected to cover some of these costs if and as long as it is housed there, certainly in the initial years of development. This does not include funding for other positions envisioned, nor to initiate any special programs or services that the Board of Directors might implement.

Contributions from the County, and participation fees from board member organizations and municipalities, should account for the first year's annual expenses of \$120,000 - \$150,000.

One-time contributions to seed a working fund for the first three years of operation should be raised from corporate and philanthropic sources.

The Finance Committee should discuss and propose a dedicated funding stream for the out-years for future expenses and to help finance the new activity.

### Recommendation 13: Secure commitments to fund the first three years as follows:

**County Appropriation:** Partial funding for a full-time staff person with benefits should be provided by Chautauqua County government vis-à-vis allocation to the County of Chautauqua Industrial Development Authority. As a strong demonstration of support for the concept, the County Executive included an amount of \$32,000 in the Fiscal Year 19 Budget which was approved by County Council. These resources only partially fund staffing for one person and must be leveraged to produce additional commitments and financial resources to help fully fund operations.

**Member Contributions:** Each organization having a member serving on the Board of Directors should contribute \$2,000 annually to support [The Entity]. A board consisting of 25 members would account for \$48,000 in revenue, exclusive of the County's contribution. Each municipal member of the Public Advisory Committee should contribute between \$250 and \$750 annually, based on per capita formula. If twelve villages and small cities participate, this would yield approximately \$5,000. Thus, total member contributions would, at a minimum, equal \$53,000.

**In-Kind Contributions and Services:** Contribution of space and equipment and some professional services such as audit, legal, and marketing, equal to approximately \$10,000. This amount would increase if administrative support is shared with another entity.

**Seed Funding:** A fund raising campaign should be undertaken to establish a working capital fund in the amount of \$250,000 to help support the balance of resources required for the first three years of operations. Potential sources of contributions are local and regional foundations, corporations, utility providers, New York State, and other stakeholders.

Recommendation 14: The Finance Committee should develop recommendations for establishing a dedicated revenue stream as a supplement to member contributions to finance operating expenses after the start-up phase is complete.

## Tentative Goals and Objectives

The Action Plan Matrix included in this report provides action steps with specific tasks, responsible point people and organizations, timeframe and accountability metrics for establishing [The Entity]. What follows is a general description of expectations for outputs and outcomes in the short-term, mid-term, and long-term.

### Short-Term

Short-term refers to years one through two. In the first quarter of 2019, under the leadership of the County Executive's Office, the name of [The Entity] will be determined and the creation of the non-for-profit, ideally, as a subsidiary of CREDC will be completed. Board and Committee members will be selected, an organizing meeting will be held, and fund raising shall commence. The County will hire an administrator for [The Entity] under the direction of the Division of Economic Development, and a Communications Plan will be developed and implemented. The Board will also work collaboratively to identify the scope of work for Phase II of the County-wide Economic Development Strategy and get a firm under contract to assist with developing it.

In the second and third quarters of 2019, the Board and its Committees will actively participate in the development of Phase II of the County-wide Economic Development Strategy, which will identify core sectors of emphasis, as well as develop a targeted marketing strategy. During this time, action will be taken to share data and information amongst members.

Assuming swift progress with the above, by the close of the fourth quarter 2019, the Board will be close to adopting an Economic Development Strategic direction and be in position to begin developing its initial set of priority initiatives and programs for 2020.

Also, by the close of the fourth quarter of 2019, trust and working relationships among the stakeholders will have improved such that [The Entity] can engage in discussions regarding priorities and public funding of initiatives to advise public and private officials and to advance the goals of the Strategic Plan. Performance metrics will be adopted. An Economic Development Marketing Plan will be developed based on the Strategic Plan to introduce a new brand for Chautauqua County to internal and external audiences.

### Mid-Term

Mid-term refers to years two through five. During this period, [The Entity] will evaluate the organizational structure and staffing and define the tactics to mark its modus operandi and begin to implement priority initiatives. A sustainable funding model will be in place to assure the continued viability of the organization. Two key activities will be to develop proactive and targeted marketing campaigns to brand Chautauqua County for business development and private investment, and to establish an effective business formation, expansion, and retention program per recommendations made in the Economic Development Strategic Plan. Additionally, [The Entity] will establish strong partnerships to better synchronize workforce development and economic development programming. It will also broaden its scope and engagement to include advocacy involvement with community development, workforce development, housing, and quality of life as they pertain to economic development.

It is expected that [The Entity] will gradually change the local mindset for what is possible by communicating progress and demonstrating credibility with the way in which it functions and celebrates success.

### Long-Term

Five years out, [The Entity] will have made measurable progress towards achieving its stated vision. It will have firmly established itself as the respected, "go to" economic development-related leadership organization in the county.

[The Entity] will update and reassess its plan on an annual basis and share its wins and losses with the public. There will be notable success with business formation, attraction, retention and expansion. Workforce supply will improve through new partnerships with employers and schools, and due to attractive place making and housing options for young professionals and families. A shovel ready site program will have been developed and [The Entity] will have worked with organizations, investors, and developers to further downtown development and more walkable communities. Strides will have been made in terms of improving transportation within the county, with focus on better linkages with north and south communities. [The Entity] will have established stronger relationships with regional and state organizations, which will have produced new financial resources to advance key community priorities. The brand will be well known and on display to welcome visitors to enjoy Chautauqua County's work, stay and play options.

# Action Matrix

	Timing	Lead	Recommendation
<b>Organize. Structure.</b>			
Choose a name	Year 1	County Executive's Office	1
Determine/initiate legal structure	Year 1	County Executive's Office	5
Adopt a vision statement	Year 1	County Executive's Office	2
Adopt a mission statement	Year 1	County Executive's Office	3
Create a planning committee	Year 1	County Executive's Office	6
Develop a communications plan	Year 1	County Executive's Office	7
<b>Govern.</b>			
Select board members	Year 1	County Executive's Office	8,9
Have each member complete pledge	Year 1	County Executive's Office	4
Establish committees	Year 1	Board of New Entity	10,11
<b>Build Capacity.</b>			
Hire Executive Director	Year 1	County Executive's Office/Board	12
Hire Operations Manager	Year 1	Executive Director	12
Hire Program and Policy Assistant	Year 1	Executive Director	12
<b>Fund. Resource.</b>			
Secure County appropriation	Year 1	County Executive's Office	13
Collect board member contributions	Year 1	Finance Committee	13
Secure in-kind Contributions	Year 1	Finance Committee	13
Secure seed funding	Year 1	Finance Committee	13
Design sustainable funding model	Year 1	Finance Committee	14
<b>Plan. Organize.</b>			
Issue 5-year Strategic Plan RFP	Year 1	County Executive/Staff	
Select and engage strategic planning consultant	Year 1	County Executive/Staff	
Launch planning process	Year 1	Board/Staff	
Adopt strategic plan	Year 1-2	County Executive/Board	
<b>Take Action. Measure.</b>			
Launch targeted marketing campaign	Year 2-5	Staff	
Establish formal BR&E	Year 2-5	Staff	
Strengthen partnerships for workforce development	Year 2-5	Staff	
Implement other priority initiatives	Year 2-5	Staff	
Track performance metrics, report progress annually	Year 2-5	Staff	
Adjust strategy as-needed, annually	Year 2-5	Staff	
<b>Evaluate. Adjust. Plan.</b>			
Conduct an in-dept assessment of 5-year progress	Year 6+	Staff	
Create new 5-year strategic plan	Year 6+	Staff	



## Appendix A: Relevant Case Studies

What follows is a series of case studies of economic development organizational structure, management, and funding from several county economic development organizations (EDOs) employing an alliance-type structures. These case studies are based on online research and telephone interviews with representatives from each EDO.

Throughout the interviews, several themes emerged. A summary of these themes is below.

- **Term limits for board members.** While each alliance approaches this differently, the alliance leaders all emphasized the importance of creating a structure and system that will establish consistency for the organization, but which will allow for the injection of new ideas.
- **Establishing funding sources is integral.** Most alliances are heavily supported by their counties, and by establishing these income sources early on, they were able to reduce the time the alliance spends acting like a fundraiser rather than an economic developer.
- **Create a marketing and communications strategy.** Whether this is run internally by the alliance or contracted to a third party, creating a strategy to engage with the community and make businesses aware of the alliance's mission will not be a wasted effort.
- **Collaboration and relationships are key.** Strong relationships with government counterparts and with neighboring county/regional EDOs can make or break projects. Partnering with these organizations and leaders will lead to greater success for your community.



## Adams Economic Alliance

### *Organizational Structure*

The Adams Economic Alliance (AEA) is a partnership of three individual organizations in Adams County, PA. The Adams County Economic Development Corporation, the Adams County Industrial Development Authority, and the Adams County General Authority all make up this alliance. The AEA was incorporated in 1989 and is a private, nonprofit 501 (c)(6) organization.



There is no single board of the AEA, as each of the three organizations making up the alliance have their own board. Although there are three separate boards, there is some overlap between them as some individuals serve on more than one of the boards. Board members are a mix of private and public individuals. The EDC has 19 board members, the IDA has 7 board members, and the General Authority has 5 board members. Many of the board members have held their positions for 18+ years; however, there has been a desire to add fresh perspectives to these boards. As a result of some bylaw changes last year, there is now more opportunity for board turnover. The AEA is still waiting to see how this plays out.

### *Staffing*

The AEA operates with a small staff of two full time employees (President and Vice President) and two-part time employees (Lending Specialist and Office Manager). The President has held her position for 20 years and the Vice President has held her position for 19 years. The AEA contracts with an outside marketing/communications professional.

### *Funding*

County support is the primary source of funding for the EDC and the IDA. Both organizations receive annual funds from the county, which are requested and granted for specific allocations. The EDC generates additional revenue through membership fees and through small business lending. The IDA receives a small amount of additional revenue from the services fees that are charged to the loan portfolios of tax-exempt bonds through the IDA.

### *Policy Setting and Strategy*

The AEA is generally a part of the county's economic policy conversations, however the municipalities themselves hold most of the control locally. Policy setting is usually dependent on the appetite of these municipalities to enact and to implement. Adams County's office of planning and development often partners with the AEA and uses their higher levels of funding and resources to conduct studies.

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### **Mission Statement:**

*"Adams Economic Alliance's mission is to improve the economy of Adams County while preserving and enhancing the quality of life by formulating, implementing and promoting economic development strategies for sustained investment and employment opportunities in Adams County."*

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### *Initiatives*

Recently, the AEA has been partnering with the County as they update their comprehensive plan, which includes the economic development strategy for the County. Other current large projects include a large revitalization project in downtown Gettysburg, known as Gettysburg Station, and the development of Adams Commerce Center, an office and manufacturing complex.

### *Communication*

The AEA's website newsletter and their monthly column in the local newspaper is what they have found to be most effective in communicating with partners and the community. The AEA also uses Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn to keep people engaged, and issues press releases for their projects. The AEA has found that the marketing/communications professional that they contract with has been immensely helpful in getting the word out about the organization, their services, and projects.

### *Recommendations from AEA*

One of the challenges that the AEA faced was a lack of board turnover. The needs of the community have changed over the years, however, there has not been enough of an opportunity to inject new blood and fresh ideas onto the EDC board. While the AEA recognized this, it was a challenging process to implement changes without offending current members. After a bylaw change last year to implement board terms, the organization is starting to see some turnover with new members joining. It recommends that other organizations be conscious of how large they make their boards and ensure that there is plenty of opportunity for turnover.

As mentioned, the AEA has found contracting with a marketing/communications professional to be hugely beneficial to their organization. Getting the word out about the alliance to the community has been a challenge, as there is a constant need to reiterate the services that are available. This is especially challenging when operating with a small staff that can't necessarily be out in the business community as much as they would like. They noted that hiring an outside marketing person was one of the best things that they did and helped to meet the need of keeping their name in front of people and making sure that peoples know what they do. They did note that if funding and resources are available to an organization, it would be worth it to hire an in-house marketer.

## Think Dutchess Alliance for Business

### Organizational Structure

Think Dutchess Alliance for Business is a business-led organization that presents a unified vision and strategy for the economic development of Dutchess County, New York. This alliance brings together ten agencies, including the Dutchess County IDA and the Dutchess County Local Development Corporation (LDC). The LDC operates under the name Think Dutchess Alliance for Business.

Each of the ten agency partners has its own board. The IDA and LDC's boards are made up of the same members, which they have found to be effective, particularly when working on tax exemption and bond financing projects. The LDC receives guidance from the Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC), which is comprised of 30 individuals. The EDAC members are a mix of public and private community stakeholders, including the board chairs of the ten partner organizations and other local business and education leaders. The EDAC serves at the will of the County Executive; there are no formal term limits for either the EDAC or the IDA and LDC boards.

### Staffing

The alliance operates with five full time staff members- CEO, CFO, Director of Business Attraction, Communications Coordinator, and Office Administrator. The CEO and CFO are the two staff members that focus on the business of the LDC and IDA.

### Funding

Funding is obtained through county allocations, administrative fees from the LDC and IDA, and recurring sponsorship fees for events (private contributions). Allocations of funds from the county are predetermined during the fiscal year budgeting process.

The LDC's 2019 budget is included to the right.

### Policy Setting and Strategy

Think Dutchess acts as an advisory committee to the county. EDAC subcommittees make policy recommendations to the county, which reviews recommendations and sends back to the EDAC for additional information or implementation. The executive director works in close partnership with the assistant county executive. Through this collaboration, they are able to remain closely aligned on the economic development policy that is desired by and good for the county.

### Initiatives

The alliance has been and is planning to continue focusing on the support of targeted industries in the county. This includes data centers, advanced manufacturing, and the county-owned airport.

In addition to these industries, the alliance will be placing a big focus in the coming year on workforce attraction and retention.



### Dutchess County Local Development Corporation 2019 Budget

<b>Operating Revenues:</b>	
Charges for services	300,750
Other Operating Revenue	735,176
	<u>1,035,926</u>
<b>Operating Revenues:</b>	
Investment Earnings	4,500
Other Non-Operating Revenue	0
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<u><b>1,040,426</b></u>
<b>Operating Expenditures:</b>	
Salary and Wages	440,008
Other Employee Benefits	103,500
Professional Services Contracts	230,000
Other	272,653
Supplies	4,000
	<u>1,050,161</u>
<b>Non-Operating Expenditures:</b>	
Other Non-Operating Expenditures	0
<b>Total Expense</b>	<u><b>1,050,161</b></u>
Excess Income /Expense	(9,735)

### Mission Statement:

*"Think Dutchess' mission is to attract, retain and expand for-profit and not-for-profit businesses in Dutchess County."*



### *Communication*

As mentioned, Think Dutchess' staff includes a Communications Coordinator who handles all external marketing and communications for the county's economic development initiatives. She maintains the alliances website, social media accounts, and newsletter.

Internal communication with the EDAC is primarily facilitated by the executive director through e-mail and phone calls. The EDAC structure lends itself well to frequent collaboration, particularly because all of the EDAC and county leaders get along and are on the same page about the direction of development.

### *Recommendations from Think Dutchess*

Right now, the leadership of all ten-member organizations get along well with each other and with county leadership. With everyone on the same page it has made for easy communication and smooth policy setting/implementation. There is a concern that if leadership changes, the team dynamic might be in jeopardy.

To alleviate this challenge, or to avoid this challenge when constructing a new alliance, Think Dutchess would like to set EDAC term limits that coincide with county executive term limits. This would allow for a complete turnover in ideas and partnerships and would reduce the risk of discord in bringing in new leaders on a more scattered basis.

## Martin County Alliance for Economic Growth

### *Organizational Structure*

The Martin County Alliance for Economic Growth is the local economic development organization (LEDO) for Martin County, Indiana. The alliance is a county-wide public-private collaboration and a registered 501(c)(3) organization.



The Martin County Alliance's board is made up of 18 members including local elected officials, representatives from utilities and business, and other community leaders. Board members have staggered term limits. First time board members generally have a limit of three years (unless they request to serve for less time). At any given time, six board members will have three-year term limits, six members will have two-year term limits, and six members will have one-year term limits. For the sake of continuity, they try to keep elected officials in the longer-term limit brackets. This system works well for Martin County as it allows new ideas to come to the table while still maintaining some consistency.

The challenge here for the alliance has been that Martin County has a small population of about 10,000 people, many of whom are federal employees on the local Naval and Army installations. The limited population means that most board members serve on various other organization boards within the community. The challenge has been figuring out how much board members have the capacity to do- do they just come to the meetings and vote to approve items, or do they actively work on initiatives?

### *Staffing*

The Martin County Alliance is staffed with one fulltime employee who holds the executive director role. He has held this position since the alliance was founded in 2009 and has remained the sole staff member.

### *Funding*

The Martin County Alliance's budget is approximately \$120,000. Most of this (\$110,000) is from public sources- the county, town, and city- with the majority coming from the county, which collects an economic development income tax. Approximately \$10,000 of this comes from private sources, including board membership fees and donations from organizations who choose to give money to support the alliance's mission.

### *Policy Setting and Strategy*

Economic development is a relatively new concept for Southern Indiana. The county is home to the world's third largest naval installation and second largest army institution (in terms of land) and as a result, two thirds of the county is occupied by tax exempt entities. Therefore, there are not a lot of resources available to pursue proactive policies.

The alliance has found success in regionalism and specifically in working with other regional EDOs. The Martin County Alliance collaborates almost daily with counterparts in other Indiana counties. Through these partnerships, an understanding has developed that it is important to support projects or initiatives in the region surrounding one's county, as these projects will benefit the county even if they are not directly located within its geographic borders. For example, a project might not be in the county geographically, but it might be part of the same labor-shed and provide jobs to residents of the county. In addition to partnerships between regions, the alliance is starting to see more collaboration between states.

### *Initiatives*

Some of the alliance's main initiatives focus on the development and promotion of the county's STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) related jobs. The county ranks fourth in the nation for STEM related jobs, and the alliance is hoping to improve the marketing of this fact and of the opportunities that are available in the county. Recently, the alliance collaborated with two neighboring counties to negotiate a contract with Purdue University for a new tech park in Martin County.

### *Communication*

Communication is a challenge with only one fulltime staff member. Though the alliance does have a social media presence and prints news articles and press releases, the executive director relies on the board to be ambassadors of the alliance's projects and mission. Since the community is small, most board members have strong networks of people who trust them, so this helps to spread the message.

### *Recommendations from Martin County*

It was extremely beneficial to the alliance's success that they established funding streams at the beginning of their founding. They were the recipient of a three-year state grant, which had a local match, so the alliance was able to use this seed money to get up and running. Without this initial funding stream, they would have spent much of the beginning of their existence fundraising, which would have detracted from working towards their mission.

The alliance recommends that other organizations spend time thinking about how they want to approach the hiring process. Does the board want to groom someone new or do they want to hire an economic development expert? An experienced economic developer will likely need a higher salary and benefits but would come with more knowledge. Alternatively, the board can hire someone with less experience and groom them through conferences, trade association meetings, educational development, etc. EDOs should put thought into the strategy that they want to take.

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## **Mission Statement:**

*"We strive to strengthen the tax base that provides public services to our residents and businesses, employment opportunities and workforce development programs for our citizens, and promoting our assets that make Martin County a great place to live, work, and play."*

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## Walworth County Economic Development Alliance

### *Organizational Structure*

The Walworth County Economic Development Alliance (WCEDA) was formed in late 2005 following several strategic planning sessions by the county's Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC). The EDAC consisted of representatives of each city, village and town, as well as representatives from higher education, public utility and business.



The board of the WCEDA is a mix of public and private representatives. There are 13 board members, 5 executive board members, 5 members of a budget and finance committee, and 4 members of a membership and events committee.

### *Staffing*

The WCEDA has four staff members including an executive director, executive assistant, program manager, and marketing and promotions manager.

### *Funding*

County funds are allocated to support the organization. WCEDA's most recent available financials show a total income of \$240,058, total expenses of \$196,684, and a resulting net income of \$43,376 for calendar year 2014.

### *Policy Setting and Strategy*

Leading up to the creation of the WCEDA, the EDAC adopted the following strategic goals:

- Improve the tax base within the county to relieve homeowners from paying an increasing share of the cost of providing government services.
- Improve wages for workers in Walworth County which are currently the lowest in the 7-county Southeastern Wisconsin region.
- Stem the documented "brain drain" which is occurring among the young people of Walworth County who obtain four-year degrees, but then leave the county because there are insufficient jobs.

In working towards these strategic goals, the WCEDA focuses on providing services around four distinct areas: business retention, business expansion, business attraction, and business startup.

### *Initiatives*

The Connect Communities program is a major initiative of the WCEDA. This program helps local leaders and members of the community leverage the unique assets of their downtowns and commercial districts, providing access to resources and networking opportunities to those interested in starting a district revitalization effort. Connect Communities program participants will have immediate access to experienced staff within the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) and to the leaders within the Connect Communities Network.

To participate in this program, a community must have an organization or group that focuses on downtown/historic commercial district issues, have

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### **Mission Statement:**

*"Walworth County Economic Development Alliance is dedicated to improving the quality of life for Walworth County residents by working with public and private sector partners to advance efforts that create jobs and build private sector investment in our communities."*

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access to a computer with required software, can commit to a majority of training opportunities, and fulfill annual reporting requirements. Communities will be required to sign a participation agreement with the WEDC and pay an annual fee of \$200.

*Communication*

The WCEDA produces a monthly newsletter and has an internal staff member dedicated to marketing and communications.



## Appendix B: Stakeholder Interviews

The following report provides a summary of the findings from the stakeholder interviews conducted over three days in August 2018.

Synopsis of process:

- **17** stakeholder meetings
- **25** individuals, exclusive of meeting(s) with the three of you
- Produced qualitative and quantitative insights on the economic assets of the county as well as perspectives on how well the county works in partnership to address the issues it faces, specifically,
  - **386 qualitative** responses including **84** verbatim comments regarding advantages of forming an Alliance
  - **550 quantitative** rankings of 16 various economic and collaborative indicators.

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

#### 1. Roles and Responsibilities

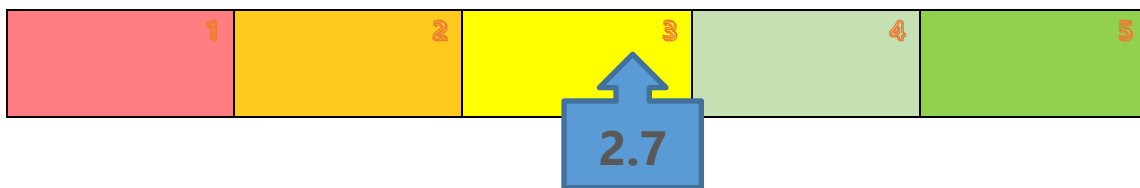
Stakeholders were first asked to discuss the role of their organization as it relates to economic development. It is important to remember that the stakeholders, while representing key organizations and institutions, numbered only 25 people and do not provide any statistically relevant findings of the larger population.

- Sixty-four percent (64%) said that their organization currently had some role in **positioning** the county for economic success, i.e., strategic planning, competitive analyses, forming partnerships, etc. On that measure, however, 100 percent (100%) of stakeholders felt that this was the first or second level of priority for the county when it came to economic development.
  - Implication: There is a strong basis for bringing stakeholders together to focus on the future.
- Eighty-eight percent (88%) self-identified their organization's role as having some role in **preparing** the product, i.e., mitigating weaknesses, developing real estate, educating the workforce, providing technical assistance, etc. Fifty-two percent (52%) believed that this should receive priority attention.
  - Implication: Stakeholders are evenly split when it comes to whether the county has organizations in place currently that can provide the services and programs that are needed for the county to succeed. It is ranked as the second highest area for attention.
- Fifty-two percent (52%) of stakeholders assume some role in marketing and **promoting** the advantages of Chautauqua County and/or cultivating prospects. However, only twenty-eight percent (28%) said that this should be the top priority for economic development at this time.
  - Implication: While most stakeholders believed that awareness of what they do is low and needs to be better understood within the county, there is weaker support overall amongst stakeholders for more external marketing and advertising.

- Roughly one-third of stakeholders (32%) claimed to have any role with **packaging** the product (implementing projects, providing financial assistance and resources) and only one-fifth (20%) thought that this needed to be an area of top priority.
  - Implication: There is strong support among stakeholders for the work that is being done by resource providers such as the IDA, commercial lending institutions, and philanthropic institutions, and this does not appear to be an area that is of too much concern.

## 2. Rankings of Economic Prosperity Indicators

- Stakeholders were then asked to address and rank Chautauqua County on six key measures of economic prosperity, relative to known or perceived competitor counties/regions.
  - **Infrastructure:** Views on the quality of roads, water, sewer, bridges, broadband, telecommunications, airport, business parks, offices and buildings, rail, retail and community facilities, energy, housing, public transportation.

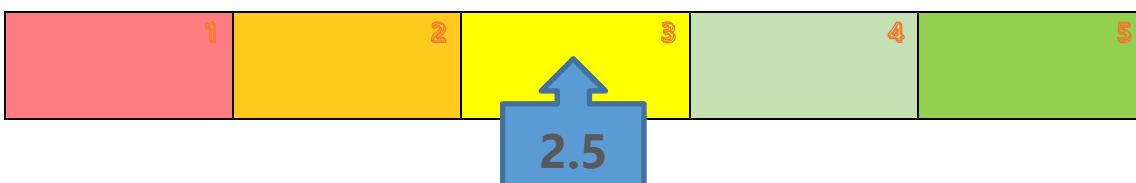


- Stakeholders felt that the overall infrastructure of the county was fair relative to perceived competitors for economic development projects. Lost cost energy was stated as a positive. Route 60 was mentioned often as less than ideal for linking the northern and southern population areas. Business facilities are limited. Workforce housing options and age of stock was considered poor. Public transportation was cited as insufficient.

*“Businesses don’t like it when the site selection is influenced by politics—they will run or not even show up.”*

See attachments for 19 infrastructure comments.

- **Innovation:** Views on birth of industries, new value-add products and services, research labs, commercialization of products, garage inventors, adapting to disruptive technologies, idea generation.



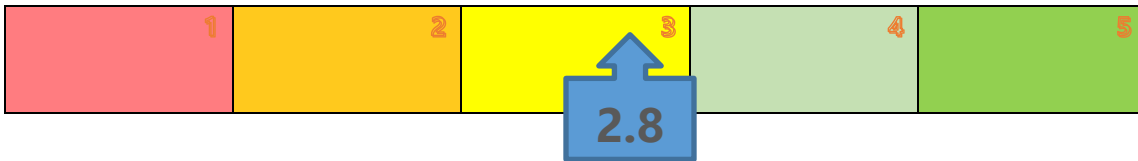
- Stakeholders think that the SUNY Technology Incubator and JCC are positives for the county. They understand that STEM programs are being emphasized in some schools, however, the lack of engineering programs at the college level is a concern. Some believe there needs to be more

linkages established with higher education institutions outside the county. Commercialization of products is not apparent, but stakeholders are optimistic that Athenex will make a difference.

*"We are more of a sustaining community, not an innovating community."*

See attachments for 20 comments regarding innovation.

- **Intellectual Capital:** Pre-school to grade 12, higher education institutions, skills of the workforce, job training programs, life-long learning programs.

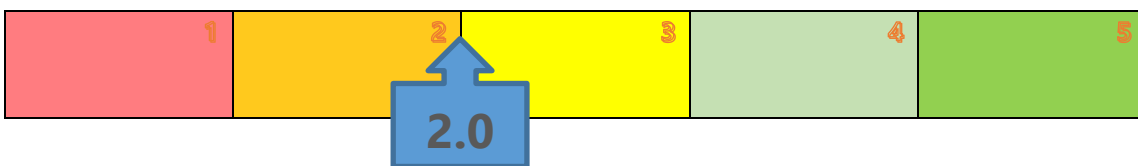


- Stakeholders understand that there are enormous pressures on the schools. They are universally critical of the number of districts in the county but give credit to the efforts teachers make in their classrooms to provide a decent education. Employers want skilled workers and will provide on the job training for those who show interest and promise.

*"I could double the size of my business if I could only find skilled workers."*

See attachments for 36 comments regarding intellectual capital.

- **International:** Global trade and export products and services, direct foreign investment, cultural amenities, ethnic influences, languages spoken, access to world markets, learning opportunities, awareness of county worldwide, ease of travel.

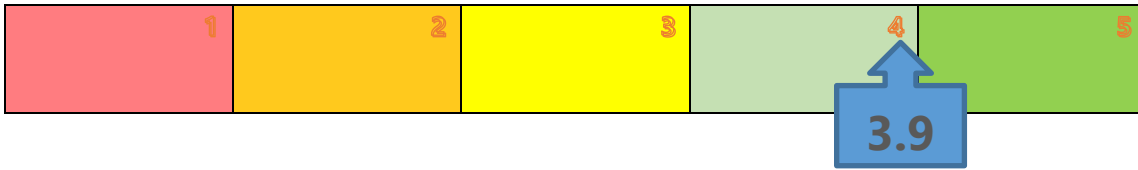


- Stakeholders recognize the benefits of global engagement but acknowledge that the community at large does not reflect diversity or deep understanding of different cultures. Some think efforts need to be made to better integrate the Hispanic community. Business activity in global markets appears to be limited primarily to export of a few products into Mexico and Canada. Stakeholders were unable to provide examples of foreign direct investment.

*"We need a countywide strategy for linking us up with global opportunities."*

See attachments for 30 comments regarding international.

- **Interest:** Appeal of area to residents and tourists, outside interests, tourism, inspiration, intrigue, heritage, vibrant downtowns, place making, creative capital, arts, culture and entertainment, history/heritage, outdoor splendor.

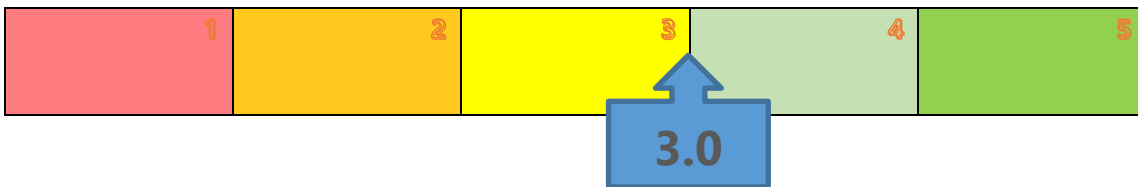


- Stakeholders are very proud of what Chautauqua County has to offer in terms of quality of life, especially outdoor amenities. While tourism is a primary economic driver, many believe it has shown flat growth and that more can be done. The county is widely viewed as a great place to raise a family. To improve, stakeholders think that there must be an action plan for addressing Lake issues, after-five o'clock offerings in the downtowns, and ensuring that the Chautauqua Institute remains a draw for future generations, among other suggestions.

*"I'm proud to live here and when I have visitors, it's hard to know what to do because there is so much."*

See attachments for 41 comments regarding interest in Chautauqua County.

- **Investment:** Public investment in infrastructure, angel and venture capital investment, commercial lending, educational resources, economic development financing, small business support, human capital, social support system, philanthropy, volunteerism.



- Businesses do not report having issues securing funds from banks and strongly praise the Chautauqua County IDA. There is recognition that resources for entrepreneurs and start-ups is limited and that fast-growing businesses must go elsewhere to find venture capital. Philanthropic activities are held in very high regard and there is a healthy spirit of volunteerism throughout the county.

*"I think the environment for investment is getting better."*

See attachments for 34 comments regarding investment.

- b) Stakeholders were asked to rank the **strongest** of the six key measures of economic prosperity for Chautauqua County in first, second, and third position. Stakeholders were then asked to rank in first, second and third position how the six key measures should be **prioritized for improvement**. Specifically, they were asked if you only had a limited amount of resources, in which area would you place most emphasis?

Rank	Strongest
1	Interest
2	Intellectual Capital
3	Infrastructure

Rank	Priority for Improvement
1	Intellectual Capital
2	Investment
3	Infrastructure

- Places and people are considered the strongest attributes that Chautauqua County offers its residents, visitors, and businesses. The clear majority appreciate the role that the natural environment plays for the quality of life and economic well-being of the county. Stakeholders struggled to rank a third slot. When pushed for an answer, most selected infrastructure because of low cost energy, and the presence of I-90 and 1-86, despite less than ideal travel between the northern and southern areas of the county.
- Intellectual capital (education and training) ranked high, along with Investment (the flow of capital to make things happen) as areas for priority efforts. This is consistent with where most economic development organizations and businesses are today in recognizing that investments must be made in people as the greatest asset. It is interesting that Investment was almost a virtual tie with Intellectual Capital. The group gave a slight edge to Investment over Infrastructure for the second versus third position. These three were very closely ranked with Interest receiving the next highest votes. Interest was strong with the view that the county had a good thing going and should be working to gain a competitive edge with tourism, quality of life, and place making.

### 3. Civic Leadership & Stakeholder Interaction

Stakeholders were asked to comment and rank ten characteristics of civic leadership and their experiences interacting with each other as stakeholders (see chart on next page). The purpose of this exercise was to assess areas that will need to be addressed in the organization plan and for consideration when forming an Alliance.

The take-away from this exercise is that the county is at a crossroads. On these ten measures, it ranks precisely at the mid-point. Stakeholders recognize that improvements can only be made with strong leadership, a plan of action, and commitment to collective efforts. They appear ready to support such direction.

### 4. Examples of When It Worked Well

Stakeholders were asked to describe an event that best described when everyone pulled together to successfully address a major challenge and what made it successful. Rallying around the NRG plant to keep it open, although ultimately unsuccessful, was viewed as a positive effort in bringing people together for a common cause. North county water district, a consolidated landfill, the golf tournament, Westfield downtown, were examples cited of collaborative successes. The Athenex plant and National Comedy Center were proud achievements, but it was understood that they were anomalies in that they were the result of

limited vs. broad-based local action. Many felt the Comprehensive Plan was a step in the right direction but could have received more buy-in. Some municipal collaboration efforts were noted, such as with Chadwick Bay, and recreation at Forest Creek/Cherry Creek. Volunteerism was mentioned, with some references made to response efforts when Dunkirk Masonic Temple burned and when there was flooding of the Silver Creek and Walnut Creek areas.

See attachments for 25 comments.

## 5. Examples of When It Did Not Turn Out Well

Similarly, stakeholders were asked to describe a time when the county (residents and leaders) could not seem to get its act together. Many stakeholders mentioned environmental management issues with Chautauqua Lake. When pressed for other examples, stakeholders struggled. A few noted that local municipalities have interfered in economic development deals producing negative results. There was some mention made that selling the County nursing home took a long time.

See attachments for 26 comments.

## 6. Forming an Alliance

Finally, stakeholders were asked their opinions as to advantages of forming an alliance of countywide economic groups. This elicited the most responses, nearly all very positive or cautiously optimistic.

The thinking appeared to be that if organizations started to work together then they would realize synergies and begin to change behaviors that would open-up new possibilities. There was hope too that more could be achieved across municipal boundaries and would “. . .send a powerful message: *What’s good for other communities, is good for ours.*”

The caveat to the above was that individual efforts and initiatives should not be constrained by a top down Alliance and that credible and respected leadership was key. Several stakeholders provided advice and opinions on how to manage such an Alliance. Typical was this comment: *“If it is done, then please set meetings that are fruitful and always ask: How do we keep people engaged? And, how do we make sure each organization derives value from it?”*

See attachments for 84 comments.

### Attachments:

- A. List of Interviewees
- B. Comments Received

## Chautauqua County Civic & Economic Ecosystem

Characteristic	Score (1-5)	Comment
Shared Vision	2.2	<p><i>"As stakeholders, we are not coming together to discuss what's going on. That's what collaboration and shared vision is all about."</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">See attachments for 14 comments</p>
Transparency of Efforts	2.2	<p><i>"It's not that people are covering up efforts, it's just that there is no joint planning where people can share their ideas, initiatives, or even have a place to get input and reconsider and rethink and make things better."</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">See attachments for 16 comments</p>
Business Friendly	2.9	<p><i>"The State of New York is not business friendly. But we are."</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">See attachments for 5 comments</p>
Effective Collaboration	2.8	<p><i>"Intent is there to collaborate, even if people have their own initiatives."</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">See attachments for 14 comments</p>
Taking Bold Initiative	2.6	<p><i>"Collective execution is lacking."</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">See attachments for 18 comments</p>
Leveraging Resources	3.4	<p><i>"Having the Business Incubator, Chamber of Commerce, SBDC, Dream It, Education Coalition, in JCC facilities is a good example of leveraging resources."</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">See attachments for 4 comments</p>
Solving Big Issues	2.6	<p><i>"The water issue in the north is a good example."</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">See attachments for 3 comments</p>

No Silo or Turf Issues	1.7	<p><i>"The north and south divide is the epitome of this."</i></p> <p>See attachments for 6 comments</p>
Unified County Strategy	2.1	<p><i>"There is no county economic strategy. We need this and won't be successful without it."</i></p> <p>See attachments for 7 comments</p>
Moving the Needle	2.3	<p><i>"Athenex."</i></p> <p>See attachments for 5 comments</p>
Overall Theme	2.5	<p><i>"We can't move forward if we are going it alone."</i></p>



## Attachment A

### List of Interviewees

(In order of Interview Slot)

Greg Edwards, Chief Executive Officer, Gebbie Foundation

Tory Irgang, Executive Director, Chautauqua Region Community Foundation

Linda Swanson, Executive Director, Ralph C Sheldon Foundation, Inc.

Jehuu Caulcrick, Coordinator, Dream It Do It WNY, Chautauqua County

Justin Hanft, Director, Chautauqua County Education Coalition

John Sayegh, VP, Continuing Education, External Partnerships & The Cattaraugus County Campus

Grant Umberger, Director, Center for Continuing Education

Todd Trannum, President and CEO, Chautauqua County Chamber of Commerce/ Executive Director, Manufacturers Association of the Southern Tier

Matt Churchill, Founder and President, Water Street Brass

Ron White, President, Dahlstrom Roll Form

Mike Metzger, VP Finance and Administration, State University of NY at Fredonia

Hans Auer, Senior Vice President, UBS and Member of IDA Board

Vince DeJoy, Director of Development, City of Jamestown

Diane Hannum, Executive Director, Northern Chautauqua Community Foundation

Richard Johnson, Retired Partner, Johnson, Mackowiak & Associates

Aaron Resnick, Executive Director, Westfield Development Corporation

Debora Becerra, CFO/In-House Counsel, Bailey Manufacturing Company LLC

Kevin Kearns, VP Engagement and Economic Development, Fredonia State University of New York

Chuck Cornell, Director, Fredonia Technology Incubator

Rebecca Yanus, Director of Planning & Development, City of Dunkirk

Katie Geise, Executive Director, Workforce Investment Board

Andrew Nixon, Executive Director, Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

Joseph Shull, President/Partner, Dunkirk Metal Products of WNY, LLC

Irene Dobies, Director, Small Business Development Center at Jamestown Community College

Tom Kucharski, President/CEO, Invest Buffalo Niagara



## Attachment B

### Interviewee Comments

(Randomly presented to protect confidentiality.)

#### INFRASTRUCTURE

"It would be unfortunate to lose the airport we have. Give it a few years to see if we can make it work."

"Office space is okay, but there is not tons of it."

"I believe we would have success if we encouraged more business parks."

"We are behind with the state of our buildings and shovel ready sites."

"We have the oldest housing stock in the country."

"We need competition when it comes to telephone and cable service in the Dunkirk"

"There is a very long way to go with Lake management and with public transportation"

"We do well with energy; it's cheap here."

"There are no spec buildings that I know of in the county."

"Waterfront break waters are in rough shape."

"The county lacks walking trails."

"Public transportation is a huge, huge problem."

"In the gig economy, more employees could work remotely, but we'd need reliable broadband."

"There's no way to link I-86 and I-90."

"Accessibility to large markets is a challenge for my business."

"The airport is cost prohibitive."

"Housing needs work, it caters to low cost, not young professionals."

"60 is a two-lane problem, especially if you get stuck behind a slow-moving truck."

"Businesses don't like it when the product selection is influenced by politics—they will run or not even show up."

#### INNOVATION

"There is not a lot of new wealth creation in the county."

"Schools don't have engineering programs."

"We are fortunate to have the Freedonia Technology Incubator"

"Compared to our competition, we are much weaker in encouraging innovation."

"We are not cranking out technology that can be commercialized."

"The continued emphasis on bolstering the manufacturing sector is overplayed."

"Focus on job training is a diminution of higher education and sticks a pin in innovation."

"SUNY Tech incubator and the maker space at JCC are positives."

"The research and development with Athenix is going to be huge."

"Athenex will change the landscape."

"You have to think outside the box."



"We don't celebrate our positives very well."

"We need engineering, computer science, and medical programming, not training for older legacy industries."

"I think we have innovative companies here, but we don't promote them."

"We need to link with universities in Erie, PA and Buffalo."

"There are a lot of dollars chasing people with a dream, but it's difficult to access."

"We are more of a sustaining community, not an innovating community."

"Southern Tier Brewing is a good example of innovation."

"The Technology Incubator is not meeting expectations."

"If the focus is on innovation, then we are going to have a better chance of keeping young people from leaving the county."

## INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL

"We've lost a whole generation who were told not to work in technical careers and the skilled trades."

"There is more and more emphasis on STEM and that's good."

"Manufacturing is always looking for higher skills."

"People here have true desire to improve opportunities."

"Our education system has a lot to overcome."

"Only 40% of third graders are reading at level"

"Community college reports that 80% of high school graduates need remedial work."

"If someone shows up with a decent attitude, my company can do the rest."

"I can't imagine being able to recruit someone from out-of-town."

"The family unit is deteriorating; parental structures are getting weaker."

"The skills we get are no where near what we need in our business."

"I'd say 70% of our applicants lack mechanical aptitudes; I hire from the 30% that do."

"What we have coming into our classrooms represents a moral challenge."

"I don't think our students are worse than anywhere else, it's a generational issue."

"Schools should mimic the workforce more."

"We need to help new employees problem solve and provide mentoring during the first six months."

"A skilled workforce is definitely lacking."

"We don't have higher education institutions that are going to spin off new businesses."

"I could double the size of my business if I could only find skilled workers."

"Chautauqua County does well with its K-12 education."

"The two colleges we have are good, but not world-class."

"Maple Grove and Jamestown have good STEM programs."

"Chautauqua County could do a mini-Northland (project in Buffalo)."

"It does not seem that education is a priority, it should be, but it's not happening."

"Fredonia State is a positive."



"There are a lot of good paying jobs in the trades."

"Continuing education programs are rich for such a small county."

"There are too many school districts in Chautauqua County, 18 of them and that's a huge problem."

"Fragmentation of K-12, with districts facing dwindling numbers of students, means that there is a lack of resources for our children."

"P-tech is a bright spot."

"Our schools are spread too thin."

"Students are not getting exposed to opportunities outside of the county."

"It's hard to attract qualified teachers."

"Teachers are just trying to deal with regulations and the basics."

"Our class sizes are small and that's good."

"People here should take advantage of the great programs at the Chautauqua Institute."

## INTERNATIONAL

"We export \$7.1B out of Chautauqua County, I just don't know how much of that is global vs national."

"Truck-lite, Cummings, Welsh's, Nestle/Purina, and SKF are global companies."

"I'd give us very poor scores for cultural and ethnic influences in the county, we are lily white."

"The Hispanic community does not integrate with other communities."

"I can't name five minority-owned businesses in all of Chautauqua County, except for women-owned firms."

"Chautauqua Institution gives us some exposure worldwide and to international issues."

"We are a pretty small blip on the radar for international opportunities."

"Our campuses are a different place than our general public when it comes to diversity."

"In Dunkirk, we have the first and only Hispanic elected mayor in the history of New York State."

"We need a countywide strategy for linking us up with global opportunities."

"We are what we are, a rural, white, spread-out, agricultural county."

"My company ships some parts to Mexico and Canada, but not a whole lot."

"There is not much here by way of understanding the effect of the global economy on our lives."

"We are a very traditional, conservative, white community that is not welcoming to immigrants."

"There are some pockets of cultural diversity, like the culinary in Mayville. These pockets have some great people, but they are not being mined to be engaged [in a broader sense]."

"The Hispanic community has not lost their sense of culture and language. That's a good thing, but I do think it is up to us to help them assimilate into the workforce."

"Westburgh Electric effectively used social media to promote diversity. But they moved out of the state."

"There is not an awareness that our businesses do export."

"We are not influenced by global markets."

"Fifty to sixty percent of students in Dunkirk schools are Hispanic, and 26% of its residents are Hispanic."

"We haven't even come close to tapping our true potential."



"Yes, the SUNY college has some diverse influences, but I think those students and probably some faculty live in Buffalo."

"The majority of my employees have never travelled very far, I wish they could see the rest of the state, let alone the nation and world."

"Ninety five percent of our company's dollars come from outside the county"

"We export our product to Mexico."

"SKF has had issues trying to recruit highly skilled foreign workers."

"Think about it, there is no mosque or synagogue in Chautauqua County."

"We don't have any really authentic ethnic restaurants, just a few sub-par ones."

"Recruiting physicians is really tough when you are not welcoming to non-whites."

"China loves our sweet wines, but our product runs are too small and consumed locally."

## INTEREST

"There are so many opportunities for enjoying what the county has to offer, but they are not visible right away, you have to discover them."

"You have to have discretionary income to take advantage of everything we have to offer."

"Our most valued asset is our natural beauty."

"We have a wonderful lake, if we can take care of it."

"I'm proud to live here and when I have visitors, it's hard to know what to do because there is so much."

"This is a good place to raise kids."

"We have lots of green space."

"Living here has a small town feel and it is great that Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Buffalo and Toronto are close by."

"This place feeds on itself."

"We have it all."

"We attract tourists, but as a community, I question whether we are promoting our quality of life to our own residents and businesses."

"We must have vibrant downtowns."

"Chautauqua Institution has always been generational, attractive to the very young and old, but not the middle. I think that will change with Millennials who want the outdoor experience, but we will need vibrant downtowns to capitalize on this."

"The north end of the county does not have enough going for it with vibrancy."

"We are 5-10 years behind Buffalo."

"In terms of quality of life, we have it pretty good."

"Our downtowns need to be attractive for booking meetings and conferences."

"We can do even better with tourism."

"As a resident of another county, I am really envious of the opportunities that are around with arts, culture, history, outdoor amenities, and the waterfront."

"The ability of everyone to come together for tourism needs to be improved upon."

"Chautauqua can have the vibe that Hamburg has."

"We go to Buffalo for entertainment."



"Mayville and Beamus have it going on."

"It is fulfilling to raise a family here."

"There are no after-5 challenges, we need to focus on that."

"What we need is to develop multi-season attractions that are viable."

"Chautauqua Institution is an older adult experience."

"Social media makes it easier to know what's going on in the county, especially festivals, farmfest, and the boardwalk."

"The cost of living here is good."

"Where we are lacking is in creative arts."

"We need smart, walkable places."

"There are pockets of interesting things going on in the county."

"This is where I choose to live; it is a wonderful place to raise my kids."

"Our main streets are improving."

"Westfield has lots of arts and culture."

"For new people coming in, they don't experience it the way we do."

"We don't immerse our visitors and investors in what we have going for us, like the Yacht Club and the Sportsman Club."

"There is continued room for improvement."

"Twenty-five percent of our property taxes come from just around Chautauqua Lake."

"The health of the Lake is one of the—if not the—most important issue of our time."

"We have lots going for us: there is only one Chautauqua Institution, we border a Great Lake, and we now have the National Comedy Center."

## INVESTMENT

"Ours is a tale of two cities."

"The County IDA does a hell of a job for the resources they have."

"There is tons of capital out there. We have private equity that is looking for opportunities."

"The foundations are well capitalized, but there are huge demands."

"Downtown Jamestown received \$10MM and the Comedy Club got \$20MM."

"I haven't been terribly impressed with bank lending, but then that's been the case around the country."

"The IDA does the best they can with their resources, but we rely on the State."

"When it comes to small business support, we are not in-sync and do not work collaboratively."

"There is strong volunteerism here."

"In the south part of the county, the foundations are strong but they stick to Jamestown."

"Seems like everyone is pulling at the seam."

"Flow of capital for a small business is tough here."

"We could not have kept our business going without the IDA."

"If you know where to look, there are people out there willing to help you put it together."

"There's zero angel and venture capital here."



"There is lots of money out there. It creates a false bottom because it is almost to a point where people don't do anything unless there is a government grant involved."

"Need to use resources to get to help businesses get to the next level of business growth."

"People knowing how to play the game—how much are you going to give me?"

"With public incentives I want to know who is qualified to review the business model and whether they have any business experience."

"Cattaraugus Bank has been great. They focus on more on business growth."

"Chautauqua County is laden with legacy costs."

"There is no start-up or entrepreneurial culture here."

"I don't think there is organized thought given to how to take advantage of human capital."

"Philanthropy here is second to none."

"The IDA goes too quickly to property tax abatement as a way of inducing deals."

"Our philanthropic community tops the charts."

"I think the environment for investment is getting better."

"Public investment in infrastructure has been terrible."

"State grants usually require a local match and that's hard to find."

"We haven't been able to figure out how to get help to make things happen in our community. It's a bit of a mystery."

"We've been able to borrow money to grow our business, that's not a problem."

"I've heard the IDA revolving loan fund is maxed-out."

"Capital is held close to the vest."

"We have a lot of money around here, but having what it takes to get it is not easy."

## SHARED VISION

"We are very proud of what everyone is doing."

"Municipalities don't work in partnership with the IDA!"

"This is hard to do with the north/south issues."

"A shared vision would help us with branding."

"We are looking for a shared vision."

"The north and south are more alike than either end of the county realize."

"Everyone wants to move in the same direction, but can't let go and trust."

"There is a willingness to come together, but not when it comes to strategic plans."

"We are the only county in the state that has two Bar Associations. This influences how contracts are done. If our attorneys can't get together, how is it going to spread out from there?"

"As stakeholders, we are not coming together to discuss what's going on. That's what collaboration and shared vision is all about."

"People are not in it together. They'll sit down and talk, but not do."

"If we had a shared vision then people would work together to see it succeed."

"We've studied ourselves to death."



"The 2020 plan had assignments but not everyone bought into it and quickly lost sight of it."

## TRANSPARENCY OF EFFORTS

"We're all busy in our own areas."

"How much do you really want to know about what others are doing?"

"The Athenex project was not that all transparent."

"Some areas seem to be competing."

"People don't share."

"Usually the ones who accuse people of not sharing, are the worst offenders. The County is in this camp."

"It's better in the north county."

"They don't call on us until they need us, but when that happens, there is good collaboration."

"We are reticent to share."

"It's not that people are covering up efforts, it's just that there is no joint planning where people can share their ideas, initiatives, or even have a place to get input and reconsider and rethink and make things better."

"Transparency happens when you are really in the market to know something for yourself, you find a way to get the information you need."

"Even within the county we are forced to compete with each other. Does that make sense?"

"Here's how our local governments operate: 'If I show all my cards to another community it could diminish my odds for helping my community'."

"Start-up New York is not very transparent."

"Bill Daley tried."

"We don't have a good process to consistently share information. It sort of happens informally."

## BUSINESS FRIENDLY

"The State of New York is not business friendly. But we are."

"South Carolina has 22 colleges producing trained workers. We have a long way to go."

"I will always offer opportunities for businesses to get to know who's who in the community."

"The State is the problem."

"This is hit or miss. You get treated well at the IDA but it falls apart at the local zoning board level."

## EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION

"We don't have a lot of situations where we are working on the same cases, but if we did, we would."

"We're not intense about communicating with others."

"Everyone wants everyone else to succeed and thrive."

"Businesses constantly find ways to help each other out. Why can't this be done on the public side?"

"It depends on who is leading it as to how effective it is."

"Intent is there to collaborate, even if people have their own initiatives."

"There are pockets of this throughout the county."

"Collaboration in rural communities requires a lot of communication as to what the benefits might be."





"We will need to change behaviors to bring about effective collaboration."

"I think we do well with collaborative efforts."

"Until we erase the north/south line, real collaboration of any kind is going to be a struggle."

"Effective collaboration is a stretch."

"When stakeholders each have their own jobs it is hard to assume other responsibilities, but we recognize it is one of the keys to success."

"The problem we have is with the Continental Divide."

## TAKING BOLD INITIATIVE

"The PGA and bike race initiatives show how we shine."

"The foundations can be progressive."

"I would love to see us focus and put our resources into something big."

"The Comedy Center is good, but it isn't going to bring new residents."

"Collective execution is lacking."

"People are pretty stuck in their ways, but it seems like most of us now realize that's not in our best interests."

"Jamestown and Dunkirk are doing it."

"The Comedy Center is a good example."

"Outside of private business, or support from Albany, there are no local strategic projects."

"Sometimes focusing on fundamentals is better than going for the gold."

"Examples include the National Comedy Center, Ice Arena, and the Babe Ruth World Series."

"We can't move forward if we are going it alone."

"George (Borrello) is so important—he wants to do big things."

"The Village of Fredonia and the City of Dunkirk can't work together."

"We have 120 units of government and the difficulty with County government is that they don't have any information on land use."

"You got to have some guts to play in this game."

"The bigger the risk, the bigger the reward."

"A lot of our problems comes down to money and home rule."

## LEVERAGING RESOURCES

CFA. DRI.

"We need to educate ourselves as to where to find resources."

"Having the Business Incubator, Chamber of Commerce, SBDC, Dream It, Education Coalition, in JCC facilities is a good example of leveraging resources."

"The Village of Falconer and county snow plowing."

## SOLVING BIG ISSUES

"The water issue in the north is a good example of this."

"Overcoming the stigma of manufacturing in families is a big issue that we need to address."



"The water district in the north was a big success and we came together for the power plant too even though it didn't go our way."

## SILO/TURF ISSUES

"There are less turf issues in the professional and business areas than in government."

"The north county is different."

"Who's kidding who? There are plenty of turf issues."

"The north and south divide is the epitome of this."

"We have not yet agreed to a countywide approach to work together."

"There are solid silos."

## UNIFIED COUNTYWIDE STRATEGY

"It's not that there are bad intentions, people just don't know what they don't know."

"Geographic priorities at a local level get in the way."

"The Comprehensive Plan did not come with buy-in. You can't make a commitment to somebody else's plan, you have to be part of it."

"There is no county economic strategy. We need this and won't be successful without it."

"At the end of the day we might all be on the same page, but we'll never know if we don't get in the same room together."

"We desperately need one."

"Parochialism and fragmentation of efforts. That's our problem."

## MOVING THE NEEDLE

"The National Comedy Center will be a net positive."

"Tourism here is seeing a 1.4% increase over time; it's not startling, it is incremental."

"Athenex."

"Let's be real: The National Comedy Center happened because of the force of will of the Governor."

"To make things happen in the county we need some focused attention over the long haul, sustained commitment, and investment in economic development and support to fill service gaps."

## TELL ME ABOUT A TIME WHEN THE COUNTY PULLED TOGETHER TO SUCCESSFULLY ADDRESS A MAJOR CHALLENGE. WHAT MADE IT SUCCESSFUL?

"We came together for the repowering of the NRG facility in Dunkirk. That was amazing collaboration, even if it was a no go."

"The National Comedy Center is a win."

"The Athenex project."

"Westfield was once 50% occupancy, now it's 98%. It happened not because of one person. The stars aligned with municipal leaders around vision and partnerships."

"The golf tournament is a good example of coming together."

"The water district in the north county is an example of leveraging resources."

"Forest and Cherry Creek government efficiency."

"The Tourism Bureau brings us together when they promote activities."

"When the Dunkirk Mosanic Temple burned down, people came from everywhere to help deal with the fire."



"I think the opioid epidemic is bringing us together because it hits home and affects people we know."

"The Silver Creek and Walnut Creek flooding brought people together."

"The Comprehensive Plan pulled some people together to think about the future of the county."

"We rallied around the new hotel on the lake."

"With the Comedy Center, people put their differences aside for the benefit of Chautauqua County and Jamestown. The tipping point was DRI bringing it together."

"New Flyer."

"Athenex is basically a gift the governor was willing to give. So was the Comedy Center."

"The Athenex plant in Dunkirk was first envisioned for Jamestown but availability of land and access to highways didn't make sense. It is good that space was available elsewhere in the county."

"Coming together for NRG."

"County Executive, IDA, and City of Dunkirk getting ARC grant for feasibility and next steps for NRG site."

"When NRG was going to close, a ton of energy went into it. People from the south part of the county drove here to stand up for it."

"Downsizing of legislature."

"JCC is the one organization that is truly countywide."

"Athenex."

"Closing of dumps and establishing the consolidated landfill."

"There is no countywide water district."

"Coordination around a CEDs led to the Chadwick Bay Initiative and municipal collaboration."

## TELL ME ABOUT A TIME WHEN THE CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY RESIDENTS COULD NOT SEEM TO GET ITS ACT TOGETHER. WHY WAS THAT?

"NRG"

"That's easy. The Lake."

"Lake issues."

"The stinky mess on the lake, with Chautauqua Institution fighting use of chemicals."

"Selling the County Home took a long time."

"Bridges aren't bold, but the Jamestown one really divided us."

"Lake sewage."

"Lack of guidance with water quality with Chautauqua Lake."

"There is no resolve, no firm leadership on what to do about the lake."

"Selling the County Nursing Home. Eventually it happened."

"We screwed up with sites for a business prospect, trying to force them into a community that did not meet the water requirements. This showed a big-time lack of community coordination."

"Once we were competing for a cheese company with Niagara County. The IDA blew it off and they went to Ashville." ?????

"A manufacturing prospect knew where they wanted to go, but various political entities used zoning issues and thrust sites on them. They ended up going to Ohio."



"There is no happy medium on a lot of issues."

"Lake management strategies."

"Airport. The place has unreliable operations and low usage."

"County approach for dealing with weeds on the lake."

"Niagara Mohawk plant."

"NRG is on a PILOT. When it runs out we are going to be hurting."

"Mothballing of power plant is a big loss."

"Biggest failure of this county is the lack of a countywide economic strategic plan."

"There is no coordinated strategy for assisting start-up companies."

"Marketing our assets through interpretive signage."

"Zero leadership from County on the lake."

"Lake issues are directly related to our tendency to work in silos."

## WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF FORMING AN ALLIANCE OF COUNTYWIDE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUPS?

"It's a good idea."

"It'll take someone with savvy to organize it, facilitate it, and keep it going."

"If we can get organizations to see synergies and work together on projects, then that will begin to change behaviors. We will get used to working in that way."

"You will start to see windows of opportunity open up that you didn't know existed."

"People need to be patient, the benefits of an Alliance are not going to happen overnight."

"An Alliance can bring accountability."

"It will work, but we need to manage expectations, look for low hanging fruit and score some early successes."

"It is needed, but there is some anxiety because people don't know how it is going to work."

"The inherent problem is that people are paid by their organizations to represent those organizations. How do we get them to compromise and go against their job of advancing their own interests?"

"This could make a difference between smart growth and no growth or growth that is not smart."

"It could help educate people that there are things happening outside of Jamestown and Dunkirk."

"We would know more than just what we read in the paper."

"An Alliance would help bring awareness to issues. But then we need to push beyond awareness to find opportunities for collaboration."

"It would send a powerful message: What's good for other communities, is good for ours."

"Knowing what's going on is key"

"It would help answer the nagging question of whether we are all heading in the same direction?"

"I'm struggling with the fact that we will still have communities in the county that will want to protect their own unique identities. How will we work to support each community and still work toward a shared vision and goals?"

"I think it will fail if it is structured top-down or bottom-up. We need to find a way to incorporate both, if that is possible."

"An Alliance might be able to aggregate human, social, economic, and financial capital and synthesize it all."



"We all have a lot to add."

"The more we come together in the same room, the better we are going to be."

"Assuming it is not top down, then I think it is a good idea."

"It would be wonderful if it includes opportunities for diverse input. I think that is long overdue."

"Let's do it and develop a plan. Then the job will be to implement, review, and monitor that plan."

"We could get more things done across municipalities."

"An Alliance would prove to businesses that Chautauqua County is a worthwhile choice."

"In South Carolina, a place with its share of poor communities, they trip over themselves to solve any problem. They find ways to collaborate and work together. Why can't we?"

"The more collaboration, the better."

"Educating ourselves will be key because people are slow to change here."

"The County Executive can get executives to the table. We need that kind of leverage."

"It could help move the needle forward."

"If it is done, then please set meetings that are fruitful and always ask: How do we keep people engaged? And, How do we make sure each organization derives value from it?"

"The problem might be having too many chiefs that impact how things get done."

"Ability to deliver needs to be the focus. We need incentive (a carrot) to work outside municipal interests when needed."

"Watch out, people will agree on the plan, but when it comes to implementing the strategy, they will draw lines in the sand. When it comes time to deliver, we can't retreat to our own turfs."

"It can help us grow the infrastructure of the county."

"We could focus on skilled jobs and the role of schools in preparing the workforce."

"An Alliance can help bring in new businesses."

"We've been pushed, it's about time that we pull."

"The north county's LED group can serve as a model for the Alliance."

"This area has plenty of influence to screw things up."

"We can't do it all. We need to prioritize."

"The Alliance would dispel preconceptions and create opportunities."

"It can't be run like the lemonade stand at the end of the driveway."

"I think we can put a client-driven process in place."

"An Alliance can bring about agreement throughout the county that if a business is not interested in one community, then there could be another that works for that business. This is in our collective best interest and will serve us all better in the long run."

"The biggest benefit would be one voice, one place to go to get things done."

"Businesses work at a fast speed. They want 45-minute decision making compared to our one week think about it pace. The Alliance would help meet expectations and quicken decision making processes."

"My perception is that if the IDA goes on vacation, you are screwed. The Alliance would send a stronger message to the state's economic development and business community."

"It's a fantastic idea."



"The Alliance can help coordinate an approach for pursuing advanced manufacturing, software and digital opportunities, as well as support for small and established businesses."

"Let's try to create an environment with the Alliance that if a business locates elsewhere in the county, there is still a benefit for building an environment that is inviting for all of us."

"The Alliance would help with marketing the county and cultivating prospects."

"We could focus on product development."

"One voice, one message."

"We could begin to break down silos."

"This could help educate our partners and fellow stakeholders on how to strengthen and take advantage of opportunities."

"I think it would help with transparency and trust, we could develop mutual understanding."

"It's important to know what everyone is doing."

"We need to know how to build on projects."

"This could be the place where all the marketing and branding comes together."

"The Alliance can't act as dictator and veto local wishes. I'm afraid of that."

"We could better position some of our sites and begin to prioritize needs, which might entice developers and investors to come here as partners to make things happen."

"It is only a good idea if it does not duplicate efforts of other organizations and boards."

"Let's find a niche for the Alliance to work on."

"Don't redesign the wheel and don't spin wheels."

"I think Dutchess County's Alliance is basically just a one-stop shop."

"The Alliance needs to be action-oriented."

"We need to be on the same road and driving in the same direction. But let's respect those in their own lanes and work together when we need to cross into another lane."

"The Alliance needs LED, and LED need the Alliance."

"We could pull more private sector people into the arena."

"I think it will bridge the north and south county."

"There is a bigger role for the County to play in such a model."

"It would force the silo issue."

"You might get push back from people thinking it is just the 'ol boys network, so to speak."

"Develop a strategy, then publish and promote it. That way, you might just hold the municipals accountable."

"Talk is okay, but getting it done is what really matters."

"If businesses, the State and Invest Buffalo had just one person to work with, things would work out better for Chautauqua County."

"You will need a strong leader like George to overcome the egos in the room."

"Let's just make a decision and stick with it."

"This provides us with an opportunity to work together."

"Leadership is so desperately needed. Maybe the Alliance can help pull us together."



“It has to have a mission that is easy for the community to understand. How it gets communicated is important.”  
“Know your challenges and what you are going to do.”



## Appendix C: Workshop Attendees

Nate Aldrich, Community Economic Development Specialist for Northern Chautauqua County

Chris Anson, Lakeside Precision Inc.

Rindy Barmore, Corporate Secretary, Chautauqua Institution

Martha Bills, Supervisor, Town of Westfield

Kelly Borrello, President, CCVB; Local Business Owner

Vince DeJoy, Director of Development, City of Jamestown

Dan DeMarte, President, Jamestown Community College

Rich Dixon, Chief Financial Officer, County of Chautauqua Industrial Development Agency

Irene Dobies, Director, Small Business Development Center at Jamestown Community College

Greg Edwards, Chief Executive Officer, Gebbie Foundation

Katie Geise, Executive Director, Workforce Investment Board

Mark Geise, Deputy County Executive for Economic Development, and CEO, County of Chautauqua Industrial Development Agency

Dan Gundersen, Principal and Senior Vice President, Camoin Associates (Facilitator)

Justin Hanft, Director, Chautauqua County Education Coalition

Dan Heitzenrater, Executive Assistant to County Executive; Town Councilman, Town of Ellicott

Dave Leathers; General Manager, Board of Public Utilities

Matt Mazgaj, Associate, Phillips Lytle, LLP

Don McCord, Director of Planning and Community Development, County of Chautauqua

Pat McLaughlin, Supervisor, Town of Ellicott

Pete Miraglia, Executive Director, Jamestown Renaissance Corporation

Andrew Nixon, Executive Director, Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

Gina Paradis, Executive Director, Chautauqua County Land Bank Corp.

Aaron Resnick, Executive Director, Westfield Development Corporation

John Sayegh, VP, Continuing Education External Partnerships and The Cattaraugus County Campus

Kris Sellstrom, Jamestown Board of Public Utilities

Rosemarie Strandburg, County of Chautauqua County Industrial Development Agency

Todd Trantum, President & CEO, Chautauqua County Chamber of Commerce and Executive Director, Manufacturers Association of the Southern Tier

Rebecca Yanus, Director of Planning and Development, City of Dunkirk



Camoin Associates, Inc.  
120 West Avenue, Suite 303  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866  
518.899.2608  
[www.camoinassociates.com](http://www.camoinassociates.com)  
[info@camoinassociates](mailto:info@camoinassociates)

