St. Lawrence County Planning Office
STAFF WORK REPORT
September 2026



ADVISORY BOARD SUPPORT

Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board (AFPB). The AFPB did not meet in September.

County Planning Board (CPB). The CPB met on September 10th in the 2nd floor conference room of the Human Services Center and took action on two projects: A special use permit for a solar array in the Town of Potsdam, the project was denied; a special use permit for a solar array in the Town of Waddington, the project was conditionally approved.

Environmental Management Council (EMC). The EMC met on September 16th, at 6 p.m. in the One Stop Career Center Classroom A on the first floor of the HSC Building. The DEC gave an update on the disputed modification to the SPDES permit for North Country Dairy has been resolved with all parties agreeing to the changes, which should address the sewage fungus issue in the Deer River. The Council discussed the APIPP Lake Protectors meeting, the wild parsnip PSA, inactive landfills, and nuclear at Fort Drum. The next EMC meeting will be October 21st at 6 p.m. in the Human Services Center in Canton.

Fair Housing Task Force. At the end of August Matilda and Task Force member Bob Santamoor attended a Cambray Courts Tenants Association meeting with Village of Gouverneur Code Enforcement Officer and heard tenant complaints regarding long delays to repair the air conditioning system on the third floor; emergency lights in common areas not illuminating during power outages; tenant on tenant harassment and retaliatory action by property management staff. Resources to help resolve these concerns were provided to the tenants association, including: a recorded FHTF webinar on remedies for tenants' complaints; contact information for the Attorney General's office in Watertown; and contact information for the Volunteer Lawyers Project. On the 23rd Matilda and Task Force member Mike McQuade added Jefferson County's Fair Housing Forum at the Community Action Center.

BOARD OF LEGISLATORS

Countywide Broadband Assessment. Staff continue to manage ARPA- and NBRC-funded infrastructure projects. All ARPA funds obligated to broadband projects ($2,955,145) have been expended. 64% of the addresses proposed for service have broadband access; five of 16 funded "lots" are complete.

County Snowmobile Grant. The St. Lawrence County Planning Office is the local sponsor for the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Places (OPRHP) Snowmobile Grant. The County was awarded $353,650.00 in snowmobile trail maintenance for the 2025-2026 grant year. Phase II of the grant was submitted September 1st.

Multi-Use Trails Steering Committee. Staff participated in the monthly meeting of this committee and the third of three public outreach meetings, in Parishville on September 24th.

Home Consortium Board. Staff, along with 2 members of the public have a seat on the Home Consortium Administrative Board. The Board meet recently to discuss a major change in how the program would be administered. The group determined that revisions were necessary and agreed to undertake an administrative shift from DANC to Jefferson County, on a trial basis. The intent of the shift is to make the funding more equitable across the three-county consortium service area. This change will begin on October 1st.

New York State Association of Counties. Jason attended the annual fall training seminar of NYSAC held in Syracuse from September 28-30. A presentation on data centers was of particular interest.

COMMUNITY / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). The County was awarded $675,000 to continue with its housing rehabilitation program (CHRP 6). Phase 1 bids were opened and reviewed on September 3rd. Homeowners and contractors signed the necessary paperwork on September 22nd with work to begin soon. Phase 2 applications have been reviewed, income verified, with five projects selected to move forward for home inspections.

NYS HOME Program. Staff submitted an application to NYS HOME for a Mobile and Manufactured Housing Replacement Program. The application is requesting $1.7 million for the replacement of nine units. Planning will work with CDP for program delivery if the grant is awarded.

GRANTS

Mother Cabrini Foundation. Staff worked with Community Services to submit an invited application requesting $1.2 million for the Breaking Barriers to Recovery Program.

Septic Repair Program. This program has repaired/replaced 138 septic systems to date; $1,047,124.45 has been expended, $552,875.55 in program funds remain available, and 48 projects are pending. Staff from Planning and Public Health are working together to manage program delivery and administration. The award letter for $400,000 in Round 5 funds was received in July; a NYS contract is anticipated.

NYS Grant Professionals Consortium. This is an informal monthly meeting of grant-specific professionals employed by counties in NYS. Its purpose is to share information and discuss emerging issues related to State and Federal funding.

Grants Notice Distribution. The Grants Notice is distributed to County Department Heads, Legislators, Superintendents of Schools, local municipal officials and approximately 350 additional individuals representing organizations throughout the North Country.

PLANNING MATTERS

GIS Staff created maps for an Emergency Services grant on hospital and rescued squad locations in the County. Public Health requested some mapping on rabies case locations that required anonymizing the data for privacy.

Village of Norwood Comprehensive Plan. Work continues on the preparation of the Plan. Staff presented survey results, SWOT analysis, and conducted a visioning exercise to public on September 23rd.

New York State County Planning Directors Association. Jason serves as the president of this state-wide association. The group meets the third Friday of the month remotely and at Planning Conferences throughout the year. County comprehensive plans were discussed at the August meeting.

Massena in Motion, the Massena (Village) BOA. Staff is serving on the steering committee for the Massena Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Project.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

County Transit System. On the 14th, Matilda virtually met with DOT staff to review the procurement record for First Mile Last Mile (FMLM) RFP process and concurred with the recommendation to award the next contract to Volunteer Transportation Center, Inc (VTC). Thereafter Matilda submitted a draft resolution to the Board of Legislators to authorize the Chair to sign a FMLM contract with VTC. On the 15th and 16th, Matilda attended a virtual webinar sponsored by the National Transit Institute on Crisis Communications. The Public Transit Task Force met on the 17th and heard of the County's intent to sign a new FMLM contract with VTC; trips and miles accrued to date in 2026; recent driver safety training by Lenzy Williams; the installation of technology in newly delivered buses; the DOT's acceptance of a draft 2027 operating budget for public transportation programs; and the relocation of the Canton Highway refueling station to the Potsdam outpost after 2027. At the end of the month, Matilda met with bus operations staff and the Mobility Manager to discuss service reductions on low performing routes as a way to compensate for unbudgeted fuel increases in 2026.