

***St. Lawrence County Planning Office***  
***STAFF WORK REPORT***  
***DECEMBER 2025***



**ADVISORY BOARD SUPPORT**

***Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board (AFPB).*** The AFPB met on December 4<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. in second floor conference room of Human Service Center (HSC). The Board had a guest presentation from CCE regarding the Fresh-cut Farm to School Program. The Board also discussed an update to the St. Lawrence County Agriculture Development Plan from 2016.

***County Planning Board (CPB).*** The CPB met on December 11<sup>th</sup> in the Conference room on the second floor of the Public Safety Building. One full review project was discussed, a site plan review for an animal kennel in the Town of Oswegatchie (to be reviewed at the next CPB meeting due to the absence of quorum).

***Environmental Management Council (EMC).*** The EMC did not meet in December. The next meeting will be January 21 at 6 p.m. 19<sup>th</sup> in the One Stop Career Center Classroom A on the first floor of the HSC Building. The executive board met with APIP PRISM executive director on December 9<sup>th</sup> to discuss potential participation in the forest pest hunters citizen science monitoring and general ways to collaborate. Staff is working on Hemlock Woolly Adelgid monitoring citizen science workshop, and the EMC annual report for 2025.

***Fair Housing Task Force.*** Preston reached out to the county's population centers to schedule municipalities for training on the Exclusionary Zoning in St. Lawrence County Story Map. Preston also attended a public information meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> regarding Vecino Group's Congdon Hall redevelopment project in Potsdam.

**BOARD OF LEGISLATORS**

***Countywide Broadband Assessment.*** One committee meeting was held in December. Staff continue to manage ARPA-funded infrastructure projects, which are well underway. To date, \$2,668,896 of \$2,955,145 has been expended, and 56% of the addresses proposed for service have broadband access; five of 16 funded "lots" are complete.

***OCF Repurpose Committee.*** Staff have been assigned to the County's Ogdensburg Correctional Facility Repurpose Committee. The group last met in March.

***SLC Water/Waste Water Infrastructure American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding Initiative.*** The BOL allocated \$3 million for municipal water and wastewater projects. Twelve municipalities were awarded a total of \$2,969,563. All projects are complete and funds have been disbursed, totaling \$2,967,410 (one project came in under budget).

***County Snowmobile Grant.*** 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. Staff worked on the state voucher, TME contracts, and TME payments.

**Multi-Use Trails Steering Committee.** Staff have participated in two meetings of this committee.

**Medication Assisted Treatment Discussion.** On the 16<sup>th</sup>, Matilda helped the County Administrator facilitate a discussion between the County Sheriff, Corrections staff and Community Services staff on the delivery of the Medication Assisted Treatment program to persons held in the County Correctional Facility.

## **COMMUNITY / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Community Development Block Grants (CDBG).** Countywide Housing Rehabilitation Program #5 (CHRP 5) is complete. The Development Authority of North Country (DANC), the subrecipient, and the Planning Office have been meeting regularly to discuss progress. Phases I, II, III, and IV consisting of fourteen projects for low- to moderate-income households, have been completed. The final APR will be submitted next month. The County was awarded \$675,000 to continue with its housing rehabilitation program (CHRP 6) and staff is beginning start up paperwork. The Planning Office submitted a Community Planning Grant for a Countywide Mobile and Manufactured Housing Needs Assessment to develop a plan to expand the County's housing rehabilitation program to include mobile and manufactured homes.

**EDF Critical Home Repair Funds.** On the 10<sup>th</sup>, Matilda participated in a virtual meeting with Cornell Cooperative Extension staff Nick Hamilton Honey and ANCA staff Erin Griffin to discuss EDF's planned financial commitment of funds to assist with the repair of homes in the Canton area.

## **GRANTS**

**County Department Outreach.** The Grants Manager has met with a number of departments to discuss current and future needs related to obtaining and managing grant awards. Currently reviewing two potential funding sources with County Highway.

**Septic Repair Program.** The County was notified that a 5<sup>th</sup> funding round is forthcoming; details are not yet available. To date, 114 systems have been repaired/replaced; \$828,790.73 has been expended; and \$771,209.27 in program funds remain available. Staff from Planning and Public Health are working together to manage program delivery and administration.

**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.** The solar development mapping tool is undergoing an update. The County signed a renewal contract with DANC to continue with the Internet Mapping Application (IMA) hosting. Planning staff met with DANC on December 23 to discuss IMA logistics.

**Town of Colton Comprehensive Plan.** The Planning Office signed an MOU with the Town of Colton to serve on the Plan's Oversight Committee. The Steering Committee will next meet in January.

**New York State County Planning Directors Association.** Jason has been elected 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.

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

**County Transit System.** During the first week of December, Matilda attended the National Transit Institute's Transit Academy hosted by Valley Metro in Phoenix, Arizona. While attending the academy, Matilda participated in field tours of operating and maintenance facilities for bus and light rail operations; learned about Valley Metro's planned service expansions over the next decade; recent reforms to procurement standards; network design analysis and revision; and had the opportunity to learn from colleagues of other transit systems and the Federal Transit Administration. On the 9<sup>th</sup>, Matilda met with Mobility Manager Sonja Jensen to develop a 2026 scope of work. On the 11<sup>th</sup>, Matilda and Public Transit Operations Supervisor Mark Ladison participated in a virtual meeting with Passio and Vestige staff to schedule an on-site visit for camera installation, and to troubleshoot Passio equipment. The visit was originally scheduled for the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> but was cancelled due to weather. On the 15<sup>th</sup>, Matilda participated in a virtual meeting with DOT staff to finalize the County's 2025 ATC application for signature and submission. This year's funding award totals \$126,315 and will be used to: Help pay the local share of future bus purchases; purchase three replacement bus engines; and purchase a new set of floor lifts.

Also on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Matilda and members of the transit team participated in a virtual meeting with Clarkson University representatives to discuss the 2026-2027 budget for the next service contract. On the 30<sup>th</sup>, Matilda, Jason and Lisa met with the County Treasurer, Deputy Treasurer, and newly appointed Assistant Accounting Supervisor Kristen Austin to review her new role with the administration of Public Transit funds.