

Activities and Major Projects

Board and Compliance

COIDA's Board, Audit & Finance Committee, Governance Committee and Project Committee all continued to meet on a monthly basis to address COIDA's governance and projects, its financials and loan portfolio. Staff prepared and submitted COIDA's Procurement, Investment and Annual Report on time to the ABO, and prepared and submitted its 2017 budget to the ABO in October 2016. Staff continued to meet individually with COIDA loan clients, particularly those with delinquent loans, and were successful in obtaining payments from loan clients who had not serviced their loans for several years. COIDA's loan portfolio has become healthier as a result. During 2016, COIDA's Board gained members Richmond Hulse, Jr. and Cheryl Robinson, and saw the retirement of long-serving members Joseph Bernier and James Jordan.

Real Property

COIDA's 40-plus "shovel-ready", developable acres in the Oneonta Business Park is being marketed aggressively by staff through site-selector channels as well as through New York State, with the goal of attracting high-paying jobs to the County. COIDA's vacant spec building, also in the Business Park, which was occupied by Siemens Medical for 20 years, has attracted the attention of two regional, growing companies, and should be leased by early 2017. IOXUS continues to lease from the IDA the building that formerly housed the Soccer Hall of Fame, and the IDA has almost finalized a new five-year use agreement with the Oneonta Soccer Club to provide limitless access to the high-quality soccer fields on the property, for their use for training, tournaments and events. COIDA is in serious discussions with a solar energy developer to lease some of its undeveloped land in both Oneonta and Richfield Springs for solar-array development, which is expected to add an income stream to the agency's finances in 2017. These projects will feed less expensive and "greener" energy to the two principal off-takers, the City of Oneonta and Oneonta City School District.

Downtown Revitalization Initiative

COIDA staff worked closely with the City of Oneonta to craft an application for the MVREDC's competition for \$10 million in downtown revitalization funding, which Oneonta ultimately won, thanks in large part to the investment that both COIDA and the City have made over the past two years paving the path for growth. Highlights in the application included the future Food & Beverage Innovation Center that COIDA and a consultant team, with the benefit of an ESD grant of \$150,000, studied across 2016. As of the end of 2016, COIDA's COO was serving on the Local Planning Committee of the Oneonta DRI, tasked with creating a strategic investment plan for the \$10 million award, including detailed projects with budgets and timelines. The DRI plan is due to the State in March of 2017, and COIDA staff will continue to be actively involved in developing the Innovation Center, revitalizing Market Street, and working with existing businesses to revive and enhance Main Street.

Oneonta Rail Yards

In 2016, COIDA benefitted from a \$47,500 CDBG grant and hired Clark Patterson Lee to conduct an engineering study to identify development potential in the rail yards, environment issues and engineering issues related to traffic, infrastructure and building. As of the end of 2016, COIDA is scheduled to close

shortly on the purchase of the approximately 80 acres of vacant land at the rail yards. The goal is to create multi-modal shovel-ready sites available to market in 2018. COIDA was successful with an Empire State grant at the end of 2015 that will further support rail yards' development, including further engineering, SEQR, draft GEIS preparation, an update to the City's comprehensive plan, and a comprehensive County-wide housing study to support growth.

Workforce Development

In 2015, the Workforce Development Center conducted its first classes to train workers in partnership with local employers. In 2016, the Center shifted its focus to work more directly with existing employers to upskill incumbent workers. The Center sought and won funding for a large local company to receive several weeks of training for existing workers, and worked with the Workforce Development Institute to obtain grant funding for two additional companies to be used towards equipment purchases. The Center continues to work directly with in the County and targeted sectors for attraction to identify workforce development needs, create curricula and enhanced skills to address them. 2017 promises to further enhance partnerships with existing companies, and to lead to partnerships with local educators to prepare students for jobs in industries COIDA expects to attract across the next five years.

Agriculture Microenterprise Grants

COIDA applied for and received a pool of \$200,000 in agricultural microenterprise grant funds in 2015, and following an exhaustive process evaluating more than 20 applications (through a committee comprised of a local bank president, two senior local ag lenders, a local farmer and an intellectual property attorney), awarded grants to nine agribusinesses. All funds have now been disbursed, and expected job creation numbers and financial benefits have been met.

Grants

Through Governor Cuomo's sixth round of the Consolidated Funding Application process, the agency enjoyed great success in garnering funding commitments for its most important initiatives, including

- \$1,000,000 in capital grants to continue to move the Oneonta Rail Yards project forward
- \$3,000,000 in funding to construct the Food & Beverage Innovation Center
- \$500,000 to convert portions of Oneonta's Market Street into a pedestrian-friendly arts and entertainment district
- \$57,000 towards a public wifi "hotspot" initiative for the City of Oneonta and the Village of Cooperstown
- \$49,500 to prepare master redevelopment plans for the two remaining underutilized districts of Cooperstown: Railroad Avenue, and the Doubleday Field corridor

Further, the agency was awarded \$477,000 in RESTORE NY funds to support the demolition and remediation of the blighted building in Oneonta targeted as the site for the Innovation Center.

Cooperstown Plan

By October of 2016, COIDA and its consultant team, working with the Village of Cooperstown, completed the strategic and revitalization plan for Cooperstown, which identifies development nodes, will help to attract new business and revitalize the Main Street and the greater community. The comprehensive plan also identifies opportunities to bring private investment to Cooperstown and will serve as the backbone of economic development opportunities for the Village. Empire State Development had committed \$58,000 in funding towards this plan, which COIDA expects to receive by mid-2017.

Richfield Springs Business Park Development

The agency, using ESD planning funds, has nearly completed a joint Town/Village comprehensive plan for Richfield Springs. Part of the plan will determine the feasibility, archeological and engineering issues, and



possible locations of a business park for future development. Reimbursement of \$150,000 is expected from ESD by the end of 2017.

Schenevus Site

In mid-2016, COIDA was made aware of a 100-plus acre site in the town of Schenevus, proximate to Interstate 88, that –when shovel-ready – will be highly attractive to companies seeking warehouse and distribution sites. Through the latter half of 2016, COIDA staff worked to secure a purchase option on this land, and met with the local community and legislature to discuss future plans. COIDA anticipates spending much of 2017 performing the environmental and archeological analyses that will lead to the site being pre-permitted and “shovel-ready” for interested businesses.

Upstate Revitalization Initiative

Though the Mohawk Valley was ultimately unsuccessful in its bid to win one of three \$500 million URI prizes from the State, the agency’s CEO and COO continued to work with their economic development colleagues from across the region in 2016, in anticipation of the \$50 million in funding that the State promised to the regions who were not awarded the full URI. Applications for the \$50 million are expected to be evaluated in early 2017, with awards distributed soon after.

Education

Staff continued to attend NYS EDC continuing-education conferences, which took place in January, May and October of 2016; further, the COO completed the IEDC’s Workforce Development and Marketing & Attraction courses, both of which are required for eventual Certified Economic Developer certification. All staff further enhanced their skills through economic development- and sector-targeted webinars throughout the year.