



## Choose Columbia

Columbia Economic Development Corporation

### **New Year, New Beginnings**

**January 19, 2016 – F. Michael Tucker, Interim President & CEO**

There are many reasons for Columbia County residents to be optimistic about its economic future. Among the county's strengths are thriving precision manufacturing and agribusiness sectors, one of the nation's highest concentrations of creative economy workers, and a prime location in an emerging regional high-tech ecosystem.

Columbia County also boasts the lowest unemployment rate of any county in the state, according to the most recent report from the NYS Department of Labor, providing another positive signal for the local economy.

Columbia County supports incredible arts, culture, history, and tourism resources, along with a wide range of educational opportunities and high quality health care.

At the same time, a rapidly changing global economy is challenging communities across the country to adapt and find new solutions to promoting economic growth and job creation, while building an enhanced and sustainable quality of life.

In order to ensure that Columbia County continues to be well positioned, it is important that the county's economic development strategy is innovative, focused, and stronger than ever. That is why the Columbia Economic Development Corporation (CEDC) Board of Directors has launched a strategic planning process that will focus the organization and its members on developing a strategic vision and implementation plan to accelerate economic prosperity for all Columbia County residents.

As Columbia County's lead economic development organization, CEDC is well prepared to drive a dynamic and collaborative planning process with targeted outreach to CEDC members and county residents, along with partners in business, government, education, and the not-for-profit sector.

CEDC seeks to address four essential economic development questions:

- Where are we?
- Where are we headed?
- Where do we want to be?
- How do we get there?

By first conducting a comprehensive evaluation of existing resources, CEDC will be able to quantitatively analyze Columbia County's strengths and weaknesses in order to devise a strategy to raise the quality of life for its residents.

The goal of this process is to develop an actionable and measurable plan that will guide economic development decision making. A thoughtful strategy will enable resources to be allocated in a way that maximizes returns on investment.

Some of the clear objectives that will be central to developing and implementing the plan to expand the local economy will include creating jobs and aiding the growth of existing business and startups, including leveraging the county's creative economy sector. CEDC will also work to develop a strategy to attract new business, align local priorities with those of the Capital Region Economic Development Council, and be well positioned to take advantage of state and federal funding programs. The plan will also address critical infrastructure improvements, including much needed broadband resources, while promoting clean energy and sustainable growth opportunities.

Using a data-driven approach and input from the community, the plan will identify specific economic development goals that can be tracked and regularly evaluated in order to maintain a consistent approach that will deliver long-term benefits to Columbia County. CEDC will also review previous studies and reports to incorporate economic development best practices within the plan.

Four pillars will drive the conversation: workforce & education, entrepreneurship & innovation, infrastructure, and quality of life and sustainability. Building on strengths and creating new opportunities in each of these areas will lay the foundation for sustained prosperity in the future.

Columbia County's landscape has inspired many to achieve greatness throughout its history and provided a welcoming home to families for generations. As the 21<sup>st</sup> century continues to charge ahead, CEDC's strategic plan will aim to preserve those traditions while keeping in step with a competitive global economy increasingly driven by technological innovation.

Input from Columbia County residents is a vital part of determining the best path forward. CEDC is working hard to have the Strategic Plan completed by April, and invites members of the community to join CEDC members and leaders in business, government, education, and the not for profit sector on February 26<sup>th</sup> to lend their valuable perspectives to this important process.

**We invite you to join the economic development conversation.**

**Friday, February 26, 2016**

**(\*snow date: 2/29/16)**

**1:30 – 4:00 PM**

**Room 206, Columbia-Greene Community College**

**RSVP by Feb. 24**

**Email: [cwilber@columbiaedc.com](mailto:cwilber@columbiaedc.com)**

# 2016 Strategic Planning

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## Context

Columbia Economic Development Corporation is the lead economic development organization for Columbia County, New York. Its mission is to strengthen the area’s tax base through economic development and job creation, to assist business to locate and expand within the County, and to promote Columbia County as a premier spot for both business investment and personal opportunity.

CEDC is undertaking a planning process that seeks to address four essential economic development questions: 1) Where are we now? 2) Where are we headed? 3) Where do we want to be? 4) How do we get there?

It is recognized that the County’s key areas of economic activity are Agribusiness; Arts, Culture, Tourism & Recreation; Hospitality; Creative Economy; Manufacturing & Technology; Small Business; and Not-for-Profits.

It has been determined that the four pillars of the plan will be entrepreneurship & innovation; infrastructure; quality of life & sustainability; and workforce & education.

## Planning Process

This abbreviated planning process will consist of a staff session, a session with the board of directors, and a public session to gather input for the strategy. Working in close collaboration with the board, Mike Tucker will then translate the outcomes of these sessions into a concise and prioritized strategy that will guide the work of CEDC in the coming year.

## **Staff Session**

The staff session will allow for CEDC’s professionals to leverage their experience in implementing economic development initiatives in Columbia County, as well as their understanding of CEDC’s existing and potential roles, to offer input into the strategy. The agenda will be as follows:

- Review project objectives
- Discussion of “Where are we and where are we headed,” informed by data from the URI process
- Reflection on current mission
- Discussion: What is the vision for Columbia County’s economic development future?  
(The organization does not currently have a vision statement; this will answer the question of  
“Where do we want to be?”)
- Discussion of each pillar area: For each, what are key areas of opportunity or threats that need to be addressed? Should CEDC lead, partner, or support on efforts to address them?
  - Entrepreneurship and innovation
  - Infrastructure
  - Quality of life and sustainability
  - Workforce and education
- Discussion of existing activities/initiatives: What is their “fit” with CEDC’s priorities and role? What needs to be continued, modified, begun, or dropped?

## **Board Session (February 12, 2016)**

The board session agenda will largely mirror that for the staff session:

- Review project objectives
- Discussion of “Where are we and where are we headed,” informed by data from the URI process
- Reflection on current mission
- Jointly draft a vision statement
- Discussion of each pillar area: For each, what are key areas of opportunity or threats that need to be addressed? Should CEDC lead, partner, or support on efforts to address them?
  - Entrepreneurship and innovation
  - Infrastructure
  - Quality of life and sustainability
  - Workforce and education
- Discussion of existing activities/initiatives: What is their “fit” with CEDC’s priorities and role? What needs to be continued, modified, begun, or dropped?

### **Public Session (February 26, 2016)**

Prior to this session, we will finalize any adjustments to the mission and/or vision statement and have drafted 3-5 high-level objectives and a limited number of strategies and tactics for achieving them. The objectives are expected to align with the four “pillar” areas unless this process uncovers significant unexpected outcomes/findings.

Mike Tucker will be assisted by a second facilitator in anticipation of an attendance of perhaps 200 people. Participants will be invited to give input orally during the meeting and/or to leave comments on handouts that allow for feedback space next to each objective area. Tucker Strategies will provide a “scribe” to record the key components of the session.

The agenda will be as follows:

- Present project objectives
- Share the mission and vision, invite reaction
- Present the objectives and strategies
- Invite public reaction/input on each of the objective areas in turn. Which of these are the top priorities? What do you think needs reformulating? What is missing?

### **Public Survey**

A public survey will be conducted to gather further community input into the plan. The survey, conducted through SurveyMonkey or Google Forms, will again present the strategy framework and seek stakeholders’ reactions and their input as to revisions or re-prioritization.

## **Strategy Document**

The outcomes of these meetings will be translated into a concise strategy document that will guide the work of CEDC’s staff and board over the coming year. It will outline the three to five high-level finalized objectives and a limited number of strategies and tactics for achieving them (answering the question, “How do we get there?”). It will describe CEDC’s role vis-à-vis other critical economic development partners and will include metrics and other performance measures will be assigned to the objectives, strategies, and tactics. It will also include a “parking lot” of objectives, strategies, initiatives, or opportunities for CEDC to consider re-prioritizing after one year of operating under this strategy.

## Project Background

### Local Development Corporation

A local development corporation (LDC) is a private, not-for-profit corporation which often is created by, or for the benefit of, local governments for economic development or other public purposes. Although created by, or for the benefit of a local government, an LDC is a separate private corporation, distinct from the local government, having its own set of powers under the governing statutes.

In exercising these powers, LDCs generally are not subject to the same requirements and procedures as local governments with respect to borrowing, procurements, and certain other matters that relate to implementing a capital project. These requirements and procedures applicable to local governments are intended for the protection of taxpayers. As a result, LDCs can be used to avoid constitutional or statutory provisions that would apply to projects undertaken directly by a local government.

### Mission Statement

The mission of the Columbia Economic Development Corporation (CEDC) is to strengthen the area's tax base through economic development and job creation, to assist businesses to locate and expand within the County, and to promote Columbia County as a premier spot for both business investment and personal opportunity.

**2016 Performance Goals** Educate local business owners, elected officials and other community representatives regarding the resources the CEDC has available to new and existing businesses in Columbia County.

- Continue to market and administer a revolving loan program including completion of required reporting, loan administration, assist businesses interested in securing financing, post loan closing reporting, financial and investment reporting).
- Continue to work with all municipalities in Columbia County to assist with municipal infrastructure projects which will have an economic impact on local businesses including researching grant funding available, applications for grant funding and administration of grants secured.
- Continue to work with all Columbia County organizations and departments to ensure all business issues are addressed (workforce training, business development, etc.).
- Continue marketing to entrepreneurs and businesses looking to start, expand and/or relocate to Columbia County.
- Continue to improve CEDC office efficiency including reducing overhead expenses, improving monthly and annual reporting.

- Continue to work with State and Federal elected officials to develop business incentive programs designed for small businesses.

## **2016 Board Officers**

### **Chairman**

Tony Jones, Roe Jan Publishing

### **Vice Chairman**

David Fingar, Mid-Hudson Cable

### **Secretary**

Sarah Sterling, Halstead Property

### **Treasurer**

Robert Sherwood, Kinderhook Bank

### **Interim President & CEO**

F. Michael Tucker, Tucker Strategies, Inc.

## **Board Members**

Russell Bartolotta Jr., Klein's Kill Fruit Farms

Richard Bianchi, Shallo Galluscio Bianchi CPAs PC

\*James Campion, Columbia-Greene Community College

Greg Fingar, Fingar Insurance

Patricia Finnegan, Columbia Memorial Health

Triona Fritsch, Etsy

Kim Keil, Valley Energy

James Lapenn, Retired Municipal Finance Attorney

John Lee, Saturn Industries

\*James Mackerer, IDA Chairman

\*Ed Nabozny, Supervisor, Town of Greenport

Michael Polemis, Columbia Land Conservancy

Colin Stair, Stair Galleries

M. Scott Wood, MetzWood Insurance

\*Ex Officio Member

## **CEDC Committees**

Executive Committee

Audit & Finance Committee

Governance & Nominating Committee

Loan Committee

## **CEDC Membership**

CEDC has launched its new Membership Program, with four investment levels and specific tangible benefits for each level of investment. Over the past month, the members of the Chamber and CEDC Board of Directors have worked together to develop a joint membership which provides Columbia County businesses with the greatest range of business information

and access to economic development programs and tools. Chamber members will be offered a \$100 rate reduction when investing in CEDC's Full or Associate Memberships. CEDC encourages local businesses to consider membership in both organizations. It's a way to amplify your voice – not just in presenting your business, but in speaking for the interests of business in general, and in making clear that our best future is the one we can make achievable starting right now.

## **CEDC Programs**

### **SBA MicroLoans\***

The SBA MicroLoan Program provides loans of \$2,000 to \$50,000 at reasonable interest rates and repayment terms. Funds may be used for working capital and/or the purchase of equipment, inventory, or supplies. Any business or prospective business in Columbia or Greene County with under \$3.5 million in annual sales and fewer than 500 employees is eligible. There are specific Small Business Administration (SBA) industry standards that are applied to each applicant and a business plan is required for start-up businesses. The Partnership staff can assist applicants in determining whether the MicroLoan Program is right for them.

### **Revolving Loan Fund**

Low-interest loans are offered to businesses that will create jobs in Columbia County. The majority of these loan funds are Community Development Block Grants funds, which means that 51% of the jobs created with these loan funds must be available to be filled by individuals currently at a low to moderate income level. In addition, there is no specific talent needed to fill the basic requirements for these jobs and the employer is willing to provide any necessary training.

### **Capital Funding: Columbia County IDA Revenue Bonds**

CEDC provided administrative services under contract to The Columbia County Industrial Development Agency (IDA). The IDA issues tax-exempt Industrial Revenue Bonds on behalf of companies that are acquiring or improving facilities. These bonds make it possible for smaller companies to get financing at the lower interest rates that FORTUNE 500 companies pay. A wide range of companies and projects are eligible for IDA financing, from factories to day care centers. However, IDA financing is appropriate for amounts from \$1 million to \$10 million, and our policy favors industrial enterprises.

### **MicroBusiness Seminar Series\***

Generally offered twice a year, this 8-week series covers topics ranging from bookkeeping basics to marketing strategies to writing a business plan.

Any Columbia County resident who owns a business employing five people or less, including the owner, or who is thinking about starting a business, is eligible for this seminar.

### **One-On-One Technical Assistance**

CEDC works with business consultants who have expertise in accounting, marketing, computer systems, employee management and other areas of concern to small business



owners. The consultants act as mentors to the entrepreneur, providing individualized assistance in one or more of these areas. This technical assistance is available to all MicroBusiness graduates at no charge.

### **Gerald R. Simons Commerce Park**

CEDC provides property management services for the Columbia County's Gerald R. Simons Commerce Park. The Commerce Park offers sites for sale or lease in a variety of configurations. The Park is fully serviced with municipal infrastructure and public utilities including underground electric and telephone cable. A UPS facility is close by, providing morning deliveries to businesses in the Commerce Park as early as 8 AM. An expedited approval process has been established to facilitate new construction. All land in the Commerce Park falls into one of three types on zoning: Business Commercial, Business Industrial Commercial; or Limited Commercial Business. At this time, there is no availability in the park.

*\* Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.*

### **CEDC Projects**

See attached - Dropbox

### **Strategic Plan Process**

- Where are we?
- Where are we going?
- Where do we want to be?
- How do we get there?

### **Plan Focus**

- Entrepreneurship & Innovation
- Infrastructure
- Quality of Life & Sustainability
- Workforce & Education

### **Industry Segments**

- Agribusiness
- Arts, Culture, Tourism & Hospitality
- Education
- Financial Services
- Government
- Health Care
- Creative Economy
- Manufacturing & Technology
- Professional Services
- Recreation

- Second Home Real Estate
- Small Business
- Not for Profits
- Other

### **Economic Development Issues**

- Broadband
- Business Attraction
- Business Climate
- Business Retention & Growth
- Clean Energy & Climate Change
- Economy
- Education
- Environment
- Goat Initiative
- Health & Human Services
- Housing
- Infrastructure
- Investment
- Jobs
- Land Use
- Public Safety
- Shovel Ready Sites
- Transportation
- Gas & Electric
- Water & Sewer
- Other

### **CEDC STAKEHOLDERS**

#### **Local Government**

- Columbia County
- City of Hudson
- Town of Ancram
- Town of Austerlitz
- Town of Canaan
- Town of Chatham
- Town of Claverack
- Town of Clermont
- Town of Copake
- Town of Gallatin
- Town of Germantown
- Town of Ghent

- Town of Greenport
- Town of Hillsdale
- Town of Kinderhook
- Town of Livingston
- Town of New Lebanon
- Town of Stockport
- Town of Stuyvesant
- Town of Taghkanic
- Village of Chatham
- Village of Kinderhook
- Village of Philmont
- Village of Valatie

### **School Districts and Education Resources**

- Chatham Central School District
  - Germantown School District
  - Hudson City School District
  - Ichabod Crane Central School District
  - New Lebanon School District
  - Taconic Hills School District
- 
- Tech Valley High School
  - Queststar III BOCE

### **Colleges**

Columbia Greene Community College

### **Workforce Investment Board**

Columbia Greene Workforce Investment Board

### **Health Care**

Columbia Memorial Hospital

### **Utilities**

National Grid

NYSEG

Central Hudson Gas and Electric

### **Telecommunications**

Charter Communications

Fairpoint Communications

GTEL

Mid Hudson Cablevision

Time Warner Cable  
Verizon

### **CEDC Partners**

- Capital Region Economic Development Council
- Center for Economic Growth
- Columbia County Planning and Economic Development
- Columbia County Tourism
- Columbia County Chamber of Commerce
- Columbia Greene Cornell Cooperative Extension
- Columbia Greene County Board of Realtors, Inc.
- Columbia Land Conservancy
- Empire State Development
- GLOBAL NY
- Hudson Valley Agribusiness Development Corporation
- Hudson Valley Bounty
- New York State Authorities Budget Office
- New York State Controller's Office
- New York Business Development Corporation
- New York State Economic Development Council
- New York State Energy Research and Development Authority
- New York State Small Business Development Center
- Prime EB – 5 Regional Center
- START UP NY
- Upstate Revitalization Initiative
- USDA Rural Development
- U.S. Small Business Administration

### **Organization Functions**

- General Administration
- Loans & Grants
- Economic Development
- Accounting & Finance
- Compliance & Reporting
- Marketing & Communications

### **Organization Chart**

See attached - Dropbox

### **Financial**

2014 Financial Reports attached - Dropbox

### **Metrics: Evaluation, Monitoring & Benchmarks**

*To Be Determined*

**CEDC Documents and Reports – Available at [www.columbiaedc.com](http://www.columbiaedc.com)**

**General**

CEDC Amended and Restated ByLaws  
CEDC Certificate of Incorporation  
CEDC Org Chart  
CEDC Mission Statement

**Audits**

CEDC 2014 Audited Financials & Associated Correspondence

**Policies**

CEDC Financial Disclosure Policy  
CEDC Code of Ethics  
CEDC Investment Policy  
CEDC Conflict of Interest Policy  
CEDC Whistleblower Policy  
CEDC MWBE Policy  
CEDC EEO Policy  
CEDC Procurement Policy  
CEDC Defense and Indemnification Policy  
CEDC Board Reimbursement and Attendance Policy

**Reports**

CEDC 2014 Budget Report  
CEDC 2014 Owned Property  
CEDC 2014 Annual Report  
CEDC 2014 Assessment of Internal Controls  
CEDC 2014 Operations and Accomplishments Report  
CEDC 2014 Personal Property Disposal Statement  
CEDC 2014 Procurement Report  
CEDC 2014 Real Property Acquisition/Disposal Statement  
CEDC 2014 Schedule of Debt  
CEDC 2014 Statement of Subsidiaries  
CEDC 2015 Budget Report  
CEDC 2015 Earnings Over \$100,000