

April 9, 2021

## Potsdam Vaccination POD

The SUNY Potsdam state-operated vaccination point of distribution (POD) opened on January 18, 2021, and has since provided over 60,000 doses of the Pfizer vaccine. Two commission staff have logged over 250 hours staffing the Potsdam POD. On April 6, vaccination eligibility expanded to all adults 16 years old and older. If you or someone you know would like to schedule an appointment, please visit the state's appointment site [New York | Covid-19 Vaccine \(ny.gov\)](https://www.ny.gov/covid-19-vaccine) or call 1-833-697-4829.

There are four easy instructions for getting your vaccine.

- Step 1: Determine eligibility and schedule an appointment. As of April 6, all people ages 16+ who reside, work, or study in New York State can receive a vaccine. Go to the link above or call to schedule your appointment.
- Step 2: Complete the Vaccine Form online or over the phone. Once you have a confirmed appointment, you must complete the [New York State COVID-19 Vaccine Form](https://www.ny.gov/covid-19-vaccine-form). This form should be filled out online and you will receive a submission ID indicating completion. If you cannot submit the form online, it will be available at the vaccination sites.
- Step 3: Bring proof of eligibility to your appointment.
- Step 4: If you received the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, your second dose appointment will be scheduled automatically when you receive your first vaccine dose.

You can see special coverage of the SUNY Potsdam POD vaccination efforts in [USA Today](https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2021/04/08/suny-potsdam-covid-19-vaccine/7000000001/).

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## Tug Hill Commission Meeting April 19, Central Square

The Tug Hill Commission will meet Monday, April 19, 2021 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Village of Central Square Municipal Building, 3125 East Avenue, Central Square, NY 13036. In-person meeting attendance will be limited per COVID-19 safety precautions. Please contact Gwen Decker at [gwen@tughill.org](mailto:gwen@tughill.org) for in-person RSVP. The public is welcome to join remotely at [us02web.zoom.us/j/88426390017](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88426390017) or by calling 929-205-6099, meeting ID 884 2639 0017.

## Social Cohesion Leadership Team Created

The commission opened a nomination form in February 2021 for a regional social and cultural task force aimed at increasing civic engagement and connectedness within and between communities. There are currently 18 people on the task force representing all four Tug Hill counties. Since the task force was formed, there have been two meetings, one introducing members to one another and another introducing the members to the University at Albany, SUNY, professors—[Dr. Dina Refki](https://www.albany.edu/faculty/dina-refki/), [Dr. Jeanette Altarriba](https://www.albany.edu/faculty/jeanette-altarriba/), and [Dr. Rukhsana Ahmed](https://www.albany.edu/faculty/rukhsana-ahmed/)—who are collaborating with the commission to open a baseline survey on civic engagement, social connectedness, and other social and cultural indicators in the region.

The regional survey will be available online and paper copies will be made available in libraries and public spaces. Paper surveys will be submitted via mail, drop-off locations, and dropboxes. The commission is looking for gatekeepers who can help spread the word about the survey and encourage their communities to respond to the survey. These gatekeepers might be church leaders, educators and administrators in schools, town and village boards, and social clubs. If you are interested in being a gatekeeper for this survey and/or would like to learn more about the survey or the initiative, please reach out to Alaina at [alaina@tughill.org](mailto:alaina@tughill.org) or by phone 315-785-2387.

# Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act to Legalize, Tax, and Regulate Adult-Use Cannabis

The Marijuana Regulation & Taxation Act (MRTA) was passed and signed by the governor on March 31, 2021. Legal sales will not begin until approximately September 2022 as the state works to establish licensing and regulatory frameworks. This bill removes marijuana and marijuana products from New York's Controlled Substances Act and allows for the regulation of marijuana under the supervision of the Liquor Authority of New York State. This legislation will regulate the distribution and use of marijuana and marijuana products similar to the way alcohol and tobacco are regulated.

The legislation creates a new framework to regulate the production and sale of cannabis and creates a new adult-use cannabis program and expands the existing medical cannabis and cannabinoid (CBD) hemp programs. The MRTA will place the three programs under the control of the Office of Cannabis Management (OCM), within the Division of Alcohol Beverage Control. The OCM will be led by an executive director, assisted by a chief equity officer, and governed by a five-member Cannabis Control Board.

## Local Control, Taxes and Social Equity Fund

The MRTA provides cities, towns, and villages with an option to opt out from having adult-use dispensaries and/or adult-use social consumption sites located in their communities and will require the appropriate governing body to pass a local law in order to opt out. Any opt-out laws will need to be passed by Dec. 31, 2021. In addition, any local law opting out of adult-use retail or consumption sites can be overturned by a local referendum process. **For a model opt-out local law, call the commission at (315)785-2380.**

The MRTA imposes a requirement that adult-use distributors remit taxes based on the per milligram amount of THC (0.5 cents for cannabis flower, 0.8 cents for cannabis concentrate, 3.0 cents for edibles). In addition, a 13% tax is imposed upon retail sale (4% of the tax is allocated to localities (1% goes to the county, and 3% is divided at the local level based on retail sales).

All revenue raised from the sale of adult-use and medical cannabis would go into a new Cannabis Revenue Fund. Administration of the medical, adult-use, and CBD hemp programs would be paid out of the Cannabis Revenue Fund. Remaining revenue would flow into three funds:

- 40% to the State Lottery Fund for Education
- 20% to the Drug Treatment and Public Education Fund
- 40% to the Community Grants Reinvestment Fund

The Community Grants Reinvestment Fund will be administered by the advisory board. The money in this fund will be used for grants for qualified community-based organizations and approved local government entities to reinvest in communities disproportionately affected by past federal and state drug policies.

For more information about the Office of Cannabis Management [cannabis.ny.gov/](https://cannabis.ny.gov/).

## NY State's Community Development Block Grant CARES Act Funding and Application

The 2020 Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), allows Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to be used to prepare, prevent, and/or respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 has presented hardships all over the state. Unlike other CDBG funding rounds, CDBG-CV funds are open to both non-entitlement and entitlement communities. Entitlement communities are units of local government that receive an annual allocation of funds directly from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

NYS Office of Community Renewal is now accepting applications for the currently available \$60 million. \$30 million of the total \$60 million is to be awarded specifically to non-entitlement communities. The remaining \$30 million is available to units of local government statewide. The current CDBG-CV grant funding round is \$60 million, but additional funding through the CARES Act will be made available in future rounds for municipalities. The CDBG grant has Federal program guidelines and requirements that must be met by grantees.

For more information about this program, see the NYS CDBG CARES Act presentation with talking points from Monday, March 29 here: [hcr.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/04/cdbg-cares-act-presentation-with-faqs.pdf](https://hcr.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/04/cdbg-cares-act-presentation-with-faqs.pdf). Application forms and other documents related to this program can be found here: [hcr.ny.gov/community-development-block-grant#cdbg-cares-funding](https://hcr.ny.gov/community-development-block-grant#cdbg-cares-funding).

## Local Regulation: Enactment Procedure

Thursday April 15, 2021 at 12:00 p.m.

This session, by Chris Eastman and Patricia Burke of the New York State Department of State, addresses the process a municipality must go through in order to adopt a resolution, ordinance or local law, as well as the merits of using each procedure. Topics will include notice provisions and posting; aging of legislation prior to action; required hearings; and required referrals. Compliance with SEQRA and post-adoption procedures will round out the discussion.

To register: [us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_Mcmcho1\\_Qg2bf8-mYNibBQ](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Mcmcho1_Qg2bf8-mYNibBQ)

## Five Steps to Jump Start Your Cybersecurity Program

Tuesday April 27, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time



The risks are real, so why is it so challenging for small to medium-sized organizations to get a cybersecurity program off the ground? In this session, Steven Gravel, Cybersecurity Support Liaison at the NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, will explore a few of the cyber risks faced by the local government, healthcare and education sectors. He'll also tackle some of the roadblocks organizations can encounter when trying to make headway in mitigating these risks, and how to get around them. While cybersecurity can be complex and technical, this webinar will stay (mostly) out of the weeds, instead focusing on strategy and guiding principles.

To register: [us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_1A2PXJB4R3O57DBHzgTUTA](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_1A2PXJB4R3O57DBHzgTUTA)

## Open Government Issues in Planning and Zoning Decisions

Thursday April 29, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time

“Open Government” is widely accepted as a desirable goal, but there are complexities and intricacies in implementing its principles. This session, by attorney Mark Schachner, focuses on planning and zoning decision-making at public meetings, communications outside of public meetings, site inspections and “FOIL-ability” of various planning and zoning documents. Other topics to be discussed include quorum considerations and recusal; informal gatherings with quorum present; executive sessions; and attorney/client privileged communications and discussions. There will be time for questions and answers.



To register: [us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_Wu1Ba5j0RYqHTYV8dEHdUA](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Wu1Ba5j0RYqHTYV8dEHdUA)

## Model Local Laws to Increase Resilience Webinar April 20

This webinar, delivered by staff from DEC and DOS, will go over **Model Local Laws to Increase Resilience**, which can assist municipalities in making changes necessary for adaptation to climate change, including flooding, stream bank erosion, storm surge and sea level rise. The webinar will also cover how the model local laws were developed, how to use the 400+ page resource document, and give examples of model laws that emphasize use of green infrastructure, incorporate natural and nature-based measures, and/or preserve natural features.

Presenters will be Mark Lowery, Assistant Director, DEC Office of Climate Change and Barbara Kendall, Coastal Resources Specialist, DOS Office of Planning, Development and Community Infrastructure.

The webinar is on Tuesday, April 20 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. For more information and to register, visit [www.dec.ny.gov/lands/120539.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/120539.html). Contact [hrep@dec.ny.gov](mailto:hrep@dec.ny.gov) with questions.

# Lewis County Presents Broadband Market Study and Inventory Results

In the final presentation on April 6 of a broadband market study and inventory commissioned by Lewis County in 2020, the Development Authority of the North Country (DANC) presented findings to the public. The market study included a test to assess internet access speeds and a citizen survey to help identify precise locations where broadband deficiencies exist and consumer willingness to pay for service. The infrastructure inventory located fiber optic and coaxial cabling, central office and remote terminals, wireline boundaries and wireless tower and water tower sites in the county. The inventory results have been integrated into a GIS model and this mapping tool will be available for use by county staff. Lewis County and DANC shared the cost to hire Penfield, NY-based consultants ECC Technologies to assist with both market study and inventory.

The citizen's survey received 1,352 responses, for a response rate of over 10%. Of those respondents, 23% reported no access to broadband or DSL/ dial up. A reported 49% had either no access or access only via satellite or cellular hot spot.



The inventory gathered real-time information about where broadband infrastructure exists today and where various broadband infrastructure grants have been awarded throughout the county. Mapping this data provides a visual picture of broadband needs and current conditions for prioritizing community investment and grant writing efforts meant to lay groundwork and incentivize broadband provider extension of services and improve consumer affordability.

Lewis county lawmakers, set aside \$1 million from the county's \$5 million in federal stimulus funds, to improve the county's broadband access, a decision made at the Board of Legislators meeting that occurred after the broadband presentation on Tuesday evening. A special ad hoc committee will be formed to address the broadband initiative.

Lewis county is the first of a nine-county project area to complete this work in a collaboration among regional organizations, each touching the Tug Hill region, that includes the Tug Hill Commission, Mohawk Valley Economic Development District, DANC, and Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board—each contracting separately with ECC Technologies to complete survey and infrastructure inventories. The other counties -- Jefferson, St. Lawrence, Oneida, Oswego, Herkimer, Onondaga, Cortland and Cayuga—are scheduled to complete this work later this spring and early summer and are all in varying stages.

Roads with no broadband infrastructure (DANC)

## Oneida and Herkimer Counties Launch Broadband Studies

Oneida and Herkimer counties, Mohawk Valley Economic Development District, and the Tug Hill Commission met with ECC Technologies on March 30 and officially launched their broadband studies. Over the coming months, the counties and ECC Technologies will begin collecting data and conducting field surveys of broadband infrastructure, similar to what was recently presented in Lewis County. The first phase of the project will be to perform a field inventory of existing telecommunications infrastructure in the counties. ECC Technologies will accomplish this phase by conducting both primary and secondary research.

ECC Technologies and the counties will also prepare a broadband availability and adoption survey that will go live in the coming months. According to the company,

*“Residents and businesses will log-on to a... website using any number of electronic devices such as iPad, laptop, or even mobile devices. Respondents enter their address and answer questions including information about their current Internet service or lack thereof.*

*ECC's BAAT program can also analyze the obstacles to adoption for residents who already have access to broadband services but choose not to subscribe. It will help determine paths to address those issues—holding classes on computer usage at the library, for instance.*

*The BAAT allows for the transparent collection of user data and further, uncovers areas that will be profitable to serve and areas requiring future work or potential subsidy. The information gathered and documented during a campaign is invaluable in the support of further funding/investment/grant applications for advancing broadband projects.”*

ECC will evaluate each county and produce maps that indicate served, underserved, and unserved areas. In the maps, ECC will identify census blocks that have been funded by grant programs including FCC Connect America Funds (CAF), USDA Reconnect and New York State Broadband Grants. Upon completion of these studies, ECC will provide each county with reports summarizing the information gathered and key results as well as the final analysis of broadband availability and affordability.



## “Wastewater Options for Small Communities”

Online workshop for municipal and community leaders, boards, residents, and planners:

- Is your small community in need of an effective, reliable, and affordable wastewater collection and treatment strategy?
- Would you like to learn about how other small communities have solved this challenge?

Join us for a virtual tour of several small systems installed in recent years in eastern New York:

- ✓ Meet system designers and maintainers
- ✓ Explore the features of different collection and treatment systems
  - Small-diameter collection
  - Sand filter
  - Packed bed filter media
  - Microfilter
  - Sequencing batch reactor (SBR)
  - Community septic system
  - Management districts
- ✓ Learn about maintenance benefits and cost considerations

Presentations by experienced planners and designers from Dutchess County Water and Wastewater Authority, Lamont Engineers, Tighe & Bond, and RCAP Solutions

**Training Completion Certificate provided**

Location: Online (for the best experience, please attend using a personal computer)  
 Date: Thursday evening, April 22, 2021  
 Time: 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM (sign-in begins at 5:30 PM)

**No Charge!** This course is provided through funding from US Dept. of Health and Human Services.

**REGISTER at**

Registration URL: <https://tinyurl.com/WWApril22>

**Space is limited so register early!**

Coordinated and hosted by RCAP Solutions, a 501c3 not-for-profit organization. Our technical assistance providers work individually with community leaders and residents to help them explore and achieve sustainable water and wastewater solutions.

Questions? Contact Candace Balmer [cbalmer@rcapsolutions.org](mailto:cbalmer@rcapsolutions.org) / 845-332-0257



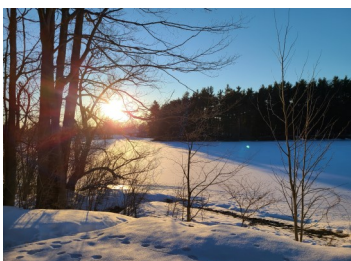
# NYS Historic Tax Credit Increased for Small Project Improvement

The NYS Historic Tax Credit has been increased from 20% to 30% for small projects under \$2.5 million in the fiscal year 2021-22 state budget. This improvement will help small business and Main Street building owners rehabilitate their historic buildings, while ensuring that the NYS Historic Tax Credit serves as an incentive throughout upstate urban centers. NYS tax credit combines with the Federal Historic Tax Credit to offer a powerful incentive for investment in our historic communities. For more information, please visit the [Preservation League of NYS](#) webpage on the topic.

## NY's Great Lakes Small Grants Request for Proposals Announced

NY Sea Grant, in partnership with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, is soliciting proposals (up to \$25,000 in total costs) for projects that implement actions outlined in the goals of [NY's Great Lakes Action Agenda](#) (GLAA). For this RFP, there is a focus on projects that engage youth (under 21) in either formal or informal educational experiences. It is anticipated that a total of \$200,000 will be awarded to 8-10 proposal requests. Proposals are due April 30 at 4:30pm. For more information and to apply, visit [NY Sea Grant's website](#).

## Show Tug Hill Region State Parks Some Love This May



View of the Black River from the Black River Trail, Winter 2021.

I Love My Park Day, held the first Saturday in May, attracts thousands of volunteers from across the state to participate in cleanup, improvement, and beautification events at New York State parks and historic sites. This year's event will be held on May 1 and 2, and will require masks and social distancing. Events in the Tug Hill region will be held at the Black River Trail, Pixley Falls, and Delta Lakes State Parks. Join Parks and Trails NY and the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation in celebrating New York's park system by cleaning up park lands and beaches, planting trees and gardens, restoring trails and wildlife habitat, removing invasive species, and working on various site improvement projects. To sign up at a site near you, visit: [www.ptny.org/events/i-love-my-park-day](http://www.ptny.org/events/i-love-my-park-day)

## Affordable Housing Webinar, April 22

The Onondaga County Planning Federation in partnership with the NYS Department of State (DOS) will host a free Affordable Housing Webinar, Thursday, April 22, 11:00 a.m. - 1:15 p.m. presented by staff of the DOS Local Government Training Program.

Registration link: [meetny.webex.com/meetny/k2/j.php?MTID=t5ab53ef721432cf7888aef80b5c7257](https://meetny.webex.com/meetny/k2/j.php?MTID=t5ab53ef721432cf7888aef80b5c7257)

Public interest and case law require municipalities to address the affordable housing needs of their regions. This course examines the history and evolution of laws, policies and programs pertaining to affordable housing. Exclusionary zoning case law is highlighted, as well as the benefits of using land use tools such as inclusionary zoning regulations and accessory apartments to provide affordable housing. Strategies to preserve existing affordable housing, the process of developing affordable housing, and affordable housing design are also discussed.

For more information contact Ilana Cantrell, Syracuse—Onondaga County Planning Agency at 315-435-8573..

\*This webinar can be used to credit annual training required by NYS for planning and zoning board members, if approved by the municipality. For more information see *Annual Training for Planning and Zoning Board of Appeals Members* at the Department of State's website: [www.dos.ny.gov/lg/lut/mandatory\\_training.html](http://www.dos.ny.gov/lg/lut/mandatory_training.html)

## Contact Us

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To request our newsletter electronically please email [gwen@tughill.org](mailto:gwen@tughill.org) or call

1-888-785-2380.

For upcoming trainings, grant deadlines, and meetings, view our [calendar](#).