

Economic Development Activity Near the Tug Hill Region

Chobani Announces New Plant in Oneida County

[Chobani](#), recently announced an investment of \$1.2 billion in a new facility in Rome, NY, just south of Tug Hill. The new 1.4 million square-foot dairy production plant will be built on a 150-acre site on the former Griffiss Air Force Base and is expected to create 1,000 full-time jobs. With capacity to produce over one billion pounds of dairy products per year, the new plant will house up to 28 production lines designed to process approximately 12 million pounds of milk per day. Once the new plant reaches full capacity, Chobani will purchase an estimated six billion pounds of milk per year. The Rome plant will be designed to catalyze food innovation across the Mohawk Valley. Chobani plans to partner with local farmers, businesses, colleges, universities, government leaders, entrepreneurs, and community organizations to train the next generation of high-skilled labor and fuel economic opportunity.

Fort Drum 2024 Economic Impact

Located adjacent to the northern boundary of the Tug Hill region [Fort Drum's](#) economic impact – direct, indirect, and induced – is calculated and announced annually. The 2024 Fort Drum Regional Economic Impact Report for the federal fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, was recently released by [Advocate Drum](#). The report shows that Fort Drum directly spent \$1.9 billion, with an overall impact of \$2.55 billion. These numbers are generated through an IMPLAN-based model maintained by the Jefferson County Planning Department and co-funded by the Development Authority of the North Country. Fort Drum is the largest single-site employer in NYS.

Micron Progress

The Oswego County Conference of Mayors hosted Joe Nehme, senior manager of external affairs with [Micron Technology](#), at its quarterly meeting in Hastings last week. He presented several updates on the proposed chip fab to be built in the town of Clay, just over the Oswego County line in Onondaga County. The draft Environmental Impact Statement is expected to be released in June, with a comment period to follow. The goal is to start clearing trees from the site in November.

Commission Board Meeting

Monday, June 16 at 10:00 a.m. at the Town of Champion office, 10 North Broad Street, Carthage, NY 13619.
The public is welcome to attend.

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Welcome Patrick Brady

Patrick Brady joined the Tug Hill Commission this week as the newest staff planner/local government specialist. Patrick is a graduate of the University at Buffalo, SUNY Potsdam, and Walden University. Patrick worked for the U.S. Army as a Geospatial Imagery Analyst and Criminal Investigator for the last nine years, prior to a transition to the NYS Army National Guard. Patrick is originally from Carthage, Jefferson County and is happy to be back in the area. His hobbies include hunting, fishing, and generally spending time outdoors. He is excited about the opportunity to work with and give back to the local communities in the Tug Hill region.



2025 Consolidated Funding Application Open

The Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Initiative was announced earlier this week, including the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA), which combines the application process for multiple state agency grants through one application. The full 2025 list of available resources is available [here](#), which contains information on programs listed below and beyond. The CFA application is available [here](#), and the 2025 CFA application manual is available [here](#). **Applications are due Thursday, July 31, at 4:00 p.m.** Grant opportunities of interest to Tug Hill communities include the following:

[Community Development Block Grant](#): Up to \$25 million to help municipalities with projects that improve communities and benefit residents across the state, including community planning, public infrastructure, and facilities.

[Environmental Protection Fund Grants for Parks, Preservation, and Heritage](#): Up to \$26 million available for the acquisition, planning, development, and improvement of parks, historic properties and heritage areas within the state.

[Recreational Trails Program](#): Federal funds to the state to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both nonmotorized and motorized recreational trail uses. It will fund activities such as maintenance and restoration of existing trails, development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages, purchase and lease of recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment.

[New York Main Street Program](#): Up to \$4.2 million available for municipalities and eligible not-for-profit organizations involving projects that provide economic development and housing opportunities in downtown, mixed-use commercial districts.

[Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning Program](#): Up to \$2 million available for the development or update of comprehensive plans, area plans, or zoning ordinances that incorporate smart growth principles, including promoting efficient and sustainable land development and redevelopment patterns that optimize prior infrastructure investments.

[Climate Smart Communities Grant Program](#): Up to \$22 million for municipalities to address greenhouse gas (GHG) mitigation and climate change adaptation at the local level.

[Water Quality Improvement Project \(WQIP\) Program](#): At least \$75 million for local governments and non-profit organizations to implement projects that directly improve water quality or aquatic habitats, promote flood risk reduction, or protect a drinking water source.

Commission Releases New Grant Assistance Video

Did you know the Tug Hill Commission offers free grant-writing services? The project's team is gearing up to support municipalities for the 2025 grant season and has created a helpful video outlining how they can assist. The video explains the benefits of grants and walks through how to get started, beginning with your regional circuit rider. It emphasizes the importance of understanding your municipality's goals to identify the best grant opportunities. It also highlights key funding sources, including New York State's Consolidated Funding Application and the Northern Border Regional Commission. Municipalities will need an account with the Statewide Financial System (SFS) if applying for a state grant. The video wraps up with contact info for each circuit rider by region. [Check out the video here](#) or [on our website](#) to learn more and get started. Help us help you!



Town of Albion to Launch Comprehensive Plan Survey

The town of Albion is working on updating its comprehensive plan, and as part of this process, the town is conducting a townwide survey from June 1 through June 30, 2025. To encourage public participation, postcards will be mailed to residents and landowners explaining the purpose of the comprehensive plan and providing instructions on how to take the survey. The postcard will contain a QR code and URL to access the postcard online. The survey link will also be available online through the town of Albion's website. Paper copies can be requested by calling the town clerk's office at (315) 298-5545. The survey will close at the end of the day on June 30.

Fire Safety Working Group Webinar Recording Available

NY's Inter-Agency Fire Safety Working Group (FSWG) May 7, 2025, webinar was recorded and is available on [YouTube](#). The webinar discusses critical fire safety considerations, regulatory updates, and best practices in the field, along with specific recommendations for authorities having jurisdiction (AHJs). The FSWG was established in July 2023 in response to fires at battery energy storage system (BESS) sites in the state. Development of these sites has grown over the past several years in conjunction with solar projects, as the ability to store electricity is a critical portion of balancing energy generation and usage on the electrical grid.

The session includes immediate actions that AHJs can take to ensure the safe and responsible development of energy storage in their communities. These measures are especially important during the interim period before the next iteration of the Uniform Code takes effect. Local governments have significant authority and discretion in ensuring that battery energy storage systems are deployed safely, minimizing potential hazards. More guidance for local governments, including a Battery Energy Storage System Model Law and guidance for Siting Battery Energy Storage Systems Under the 2020 Fire Code of New York State, can be found in NYSERDA's [Energy Storage Guidebook for Local Governments](#)

Cornell Local Roads June Webinars

Cornell Local Roads Program is beginning their no cost summer foundational webinar series, focusing on many important principles which are key to local highway agency operations and management. Most online webinars and virtual workshops are worth [Road Master](#) credit based on the length of the session. Click the title of each webinar below to register.



[Erosion, Ditches, & Storm Sewers](#), Tuesday, June 10, 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Erosion is costly to the environment and to the bottom line. In this session Geoffrey Scott, P.E., will discuss erosion issues and ways to mitigate and maintain surfaces prone to erosion.

[Asset Management](#), Tuesday, June 17, 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Highway and public works departments have the most expensive assets owned by municipalities. Managing those assets is key to dealing with today's tight budgets. During this session Geoffrey Scott, P.E., will provide the basics of asset management and help you get started on a journey to developing capital and maintenance plans to keep your highway system in good shape.

[Guiderail](#), Tuesday, June 24, 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. to improve driver safety, many agencies turn to guiderail. During this webinar, David Orr, P.E., will discuss steps that should be reviewed prior to installing rail, how rail works, and the basics of a proper roadside barrier.

2025 North Country Current Issues Survey Released



On April 30, Jefferson Community College's Center for Community Studies released the 2025 Annual North Country Resident Opinion Survey, highlighting views on local, state, and national issues. The survey gathered responses from 1,902 residents across Jefferson, Lewis, Oswego, and St. Lawrence counties. Locally focused questions addressed opinions on blighted and vacant properties, low-income housing, healthcare availability, and more.

When asked about vacant and blighted properties, over half (62%) of the respondents indicated that they are concerned about the impact of these properties on local quality of life, and 82% agreed that local governments should focus more effort on them. One-half of participants (50%)

indicate that they feel that local governments should increase the amount of low-income housing available, while more than one-in-three residents (35%) feel that enough has been done already.

Overwhelmingly, residents of the four counties expressed concern over the overall economy and job opportunities in the region, with 77% of respondents indicating that these were a "major issue". 94% of survey respondents feel that inflation is a major or moderate issue.

Surveys such as this can be helpful to get a better understanding of where the community stands on various issues. To view the full survey results, click [here](#) or visit the Center for Community Studies webpage, which also hosts past surveys.

Introduction to

Using U.S. Census Bureau Data



**WEDNESDAY
JUNE 4, 2025**



**TIME
01:00 PM**



**FREE
WEBINAR**

**DOES YOUR COMMUNITY OR ORGANIZATION USE
CENSUS DATA FOR PLANS, GRANT APPLICATIONS, AND OTHER
PROJECTS?**

**WOULD YOU LIKE A LIVE DEMONSTRATION OF ALL THE INFORMATION
THE U.S. CENSUS BUREAU AVAILABLE AT DATA.CENSUS.GOV?**

**Please join the us for a webinar
with Amy A. Brombos, EdD**

Data Dissemination Specialist
U.S. Census Bureau



Sponsored by the
NYS Tug Hill Commission

Register at tinyurl.com/TugHillCensus

Upstate Upgrade:

Building a smarter, stronger energy future

Join us at an in-person or virtual open house for the

South Oswego-Tar Hill 115kV Transmission Rebuild Project

Virtual Information Session

Wednesday, June 4 | 6 p.m.

Meeting links will be available at

nationalgrid.com/southoswegotarhill



In-Person Open Houses

Wednesday, June 11 | 6-8 p.m.

Oswego City Hall – Council Chambers

13 W. Oneida St., Oswego, NY 13126

Thursday, June 12 | 6-8 p.m.

Altmar-Albion Municipal Building

15 Bridge St., Altmar, NY 13302

Questions? Contact us:

UpstateUpgradeCNY@nationalgrid.com | 844-473-6864

Please visit the project website for updates related to time or venue change.



Upstate Upgrade:

Building a smarter, stronger energy future

Join us at an in-person or virtual open house for the

Black River-Clay 115kV Transmission Rebuild Project

Virtual Information Session

Tuesday, July 15 | 6 p.m.

Meeting links will be available at

natgrid.com/blackriverclay



In-Person Open Houses

Thursday, June 12 | 6-8 p.m.

Altmar-Albion Municipal Building

15 Bridge St., Altmar, NY 13302

Wednesday, July 17 | 4-7 p.m.

Central Square High School

44 School Dr., Central Square, NY 13036

Questions? Contact us:

UpstateUpgradeCNY@nationalgrid.com | 844-243-2592

Please visit the project website for updates related to time or venue change.



Cleveland Plant Wins Award



Village of Cleveland officials Julie Simpson, Jeremy Fuller, David Hinds, Laureen Tackman, Shaun House.

Cleveland's wastewater treatment plant received the 2025 Wastewater System of the Year award by the New York Rural Water Association. This recognition celebrates the plant's outstanding performance, innovative operations, and commitment to protecting public health and the environment. Through proactive planning, modern technology, and sustainable practices, the facility has set a high standard for rural wastewater management across the state.



New RACOG Associate Circuit Rider

Meet the newest RACOG associate circuit rider, Mackenzie Judd. Mackenzie is currently a long-term substitute teacher at Lowville Academy teaching high school government and history classes while pursuing her master's degree in education. She is a 2018 graduate of Lowville Academy and 2022 graduate of Cairn University with a BA in History.



Welcome Mackenzie!

Highway Superintendents Annual School, June 2 - 4

The 78th Annual School for Highway Superintendents, sponsored by the Town and County Officers Training School, the Association of Towns of the State of New York and the NYS LTAP Center - Cornell Local Roads Program, will be held at Ithaca College June 2 - 4.

Some session topics include a legal panel, pavement preservation, grants and funding, right of ways, prioritizing road work, personal protection equipment, preparing bids and specifications, and communicating with the board.

Early registration ends on May 16, after which registration is only done onsite at an increased rate. Check-in and on-site registration will be available Sunday, June 1 from 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Attendees will automatically receive three credits in the highway category of the Association of Town's Certified Town Official program. Attendees enrolled in the NYS LTAP Center - Cornell Local Roads Road Master Program will also receive credit towards Road Master levels III and IV when they earn their five or ten year attendance award.

For more information or to register, visit the NYS LTAP Center - Cornell Local Roads Program Highway School website [here](#).

Contact Us

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YouTube: [YouTube](#)

To request our newsletter electronically please email gwen@tughill.org.

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