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ANCA Announces Five-year Goals Amid Multiple Crises

New strategic plan promotes a more equitable and sustainable economy for the region

SARANAC LAKE, N.Y. — The Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA) was not expecting the current convergence of economic, social and public health crises when the nonprofit completed its five-year strategic plan earlier this year. Citing its relevance to new and urgent needs across the North Country, the regional economic development organization’s executive director, Kate Fish, wrote, “It is an oddly and deeply appropriate time to launch this plan.”

As communities and businesses across the Adirondack North Country face economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and shutdown, as well as challenges and opportunities related to the current racial justice movement and ongoing climate crisis, ANCA asserts it is well positioned to advance a more equitable and sustainable economy for the region. It details how in its 2020-2025 strategic plan, which was published and released in July.

“COVID-19 and the current racial justice movement have exposed how vulnerable our businesses and communities are under conventional systems that place efficiency and profit over diversity and sustainability,” said Fish. “If our rural economies are to thrive in the challenging times ahead, we must re-imagine and re-create the systems in which we live and work.

“ANCA has mobilized over the last several months to address our region’s urgent needs, building on goals and impacts we established well before the pandemic and race protests arrived in the North Country.”

The plan outlines ANCA’s mission to build regional prosperity by focusing on three key areas: food systems, the energy economy and the entrepreneurial economy. ANCA sets specific five-year goals within each of these sectors with attention to access, equity and inclusion:

- Support a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem with access to services and capital for micro and startup businesses
- Assist 75 retirement-age entrepreneurs in transitioning their businesses to new ownership
- Increase demand by 10% for locally made products

- Establish a regional coalition to support innovative shared ownership models
- Increase profits/scalability for farmers and food entrepreneurs through business planning, market access, value chain development and increased efficiencies in distribution systems
- Improve access to energy efficiency measures and federal/state incentives for home and business owners and municipalities

So far in 2020, ANCA staff have adapted their work in order to focus on the unique challenges of the time and the most urgent needs of their constituents. These responsive efforts include:

- Awarded \$100,000 in Local Food System Security Grants to eight farms and food producers who are increasing food security in the region during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Created a Local Food Access Map which will continue to connect consumers with local farms and food producers through the COVID-19 pandemic and into the future
- Based on urgent needs expressed in a focus group of local businesses, coordinated an e-commerce development program with Clarkson University's Shipley Center for Innovation and the St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce to develop and enhance websites and e-commerce skills for nearly 30 North Country small businesses
- Created and promoted e-commerce opportunities to support local artisans during the economic shutdown including an online shopping catalog for wholesale buyers
- Promoted programs and incentives for clean energy technologies and energy efficiency measures that reduce costs for homeowners, businesses and municipalities
- Developed a Clean Transportation Summit, scheduled for Fall 2020, that will convene experts, stakeholders and planners to develop a regional low-carbon transportation system in time for the 2023 World University Games in Lake Placid
- Worked closely with the Adirondack Diversity Initiative to provide programming, outreach and education around issues of racial justice, equity and diversity

To view the entire strategic plan, visit ANCA's website at www.adirondack.org or follow the direct link at bit.ly/ANCAStratPlan2020.

[ANCA](#) is an independent, nonprofit corporation with a transformational approach to building prosperity across northern New York. ANCA's community-informed, results-driven strategies for local food producers, small business owners, would-be entrepreneurs and municipal innovators offer targeted interventions that are designed to keep wealth and value in local communities.

Attached: one (1) PDF document

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