

# Niagara County 2021 Economic Development Address



**Legislator Richard L. Andres Jr., Chair**  
**Niagara County Economic Development Committee**

**APRIL 2021**

# COVID-19 Response

## Newsletter, Website, and Social Media



- The Niagara County Center for Economic Development has used its newsletter, website, and social media platforms to provide important information regarding COVID-19 business guidelines, PPE availability, pandemic relief programs, and more.
- Our efforts resulted in over 250,000 email views, web page views, and social media impressions from individuals seeking help and information.
- We will continue to utilize these platforms to keep the business community informed of available resources as we recover from the pandemic.

# COVID-19 Response

## *Business Growth and Retention Program*



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- The Department of Economic Development contacted 99 companies in 2020 representing a 25% increase over the previous year.
- Our outreach efforts resulted in 44 in-person meetings, virtual meetings, and/or conference calls offering assistance to businesses.
- In 2021, we will endeavor to contact 144 companies and meet with as many as possible to help them grow their businesses.

Niagara  County  
Center for Economic Development

# COVID-19 Response

## ***HELP Loans and Payment Deferral Program***



- In an effort to provide relief to the hotel industry, the Niagara County IDA created the Hospitality Emergency Loan Program or HELP.
- Approximately \$2 million in loans was distributed to 23 hotels, providing much-needed assistance during the 2020 economic slowdown.
- The Niagara County IDA also instituted a payment deferral program for existing loans, helping dozens of businesses.

# COVID-19 Response

## Free Business Workshops




**COVID-19 Assistance for Businesses**

Created a new section of our website which serves as a one-stop resource for businesses to use as they navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Areas of focus include:

- NYS Business Reopening Guidelines
- Micro Cluster Zones and their Corresponding Restrictions
- Business Assistance Available
- Important Links to a Variety of Helpful Resources
- [www.niagaracountybusiness.com](http://www.niagaracountybusiness.com)



The screenshot shows the Niagara County website with a COVID-19 update. The update text reads: "The Niagara County Industrial Development Agency is following all emergency public health guidelines... to ensure the health and safety of our employees, clients, board and committee members and the public, the ICDIA offices will be open by appointment only until further notice. The agency's operations will continue during this time, with staff available by phone and email during business hours." A "LEARN MORE" button is visible below the update.

- NCCED conducted two virtual Business Workshops in 2020, which were attended by 63 individuals representing 38 companies.
- Workshops resulted in several follow-up meetings between business owners and economic development partners to discuss business assistance programs.
- In 2021, we will be conducting six virtual Business Workshops; three general workshops and three content-specific workshops.

# Business Assistance Programs

## *Empower Niagara Program*



- Low-cost power agreements were renewed with the Aquarium of Niagara, Edwards Vacuum, and Cornerstone Arena, representing 147 full-time and 24 part-time jobs and \$10.1 million in capital investment over three years.
- An allocation of low-cost power was awarded to Pellicano's Marketplace, which constructed a new \$2.4 million building in the Town of Wheatfield, retaining 29 jobs and creating 24 new jobs.
- In 2021, we will market the Empower Niagara program at virtual business workshops and other business outreach events.

# Business Assistance Programs

## ***Business Community Enhancement Program***



- Sixteen (16) business organizations received over \$30,000 in grants to undertake more than \$64,000 worth of community projects throughout Niagara County.
- Beautification projects were completed in the business districts of Niagara Falls, Lockport, North Tonawanda, Newfane, Olcott, Sanborn, Wilson, Lewiston, Youngstown, and the Town of Niagara.
- The 2021 program will once again leverage grant funds to assist with business district enhancement and community marketing efforts.

# Business Assistance Programs

## Microenterprise Grant Program

**Calhoon's  
Pub**  
Newfane, NY

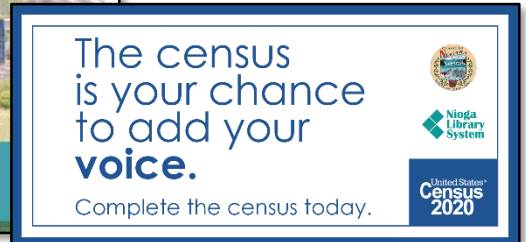


- In 2020, Niagara County instituted a Microenterprise Grant Program to help small businesses with working capital as well as purchasing inventory and equipment.
- Eight (8) businesses received grants totaling nearly \$200,000 as well as free training through the NCCC Small Business Development Center.
- In 2021, the NCCED will apply for \$300,000 in additional funding from New York State to further capitalize the Microenterprise Grant Program.



# 2020 Census Promotion

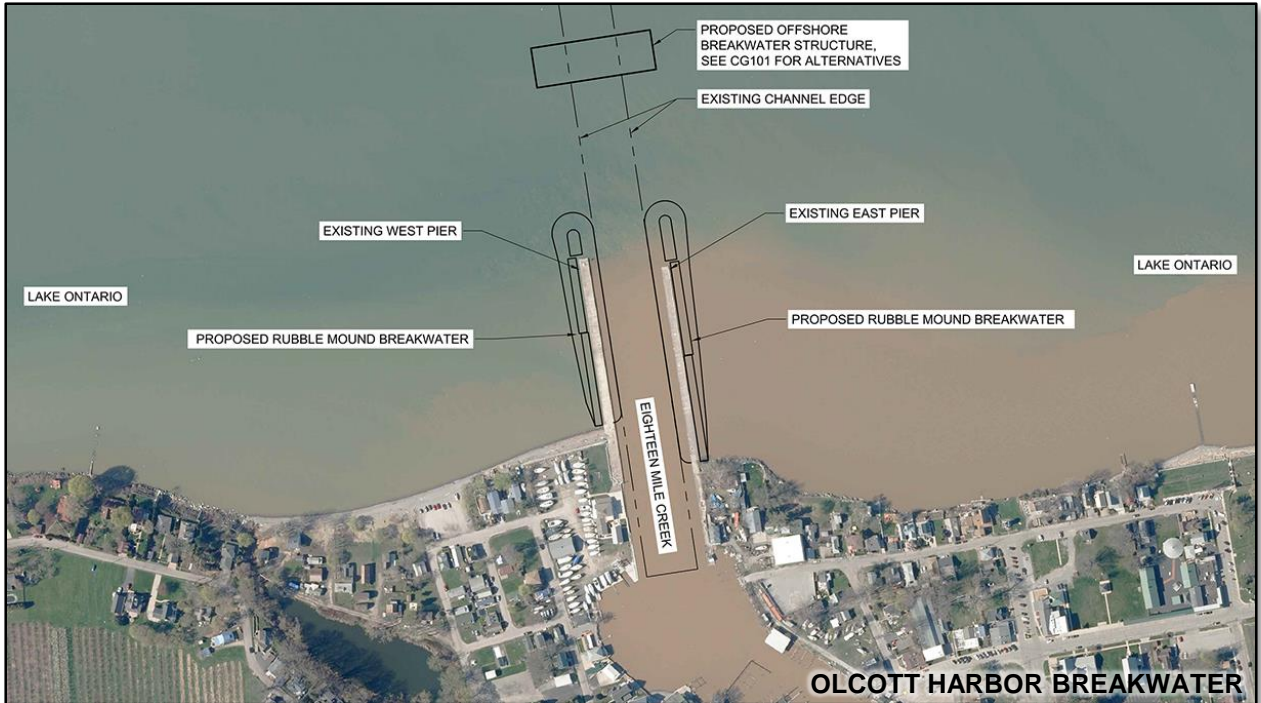
## Census Outreach Efforts



- Niagara County received nearly \$110,000 in state grant funding for 2020 Census outreach efforts, which funded a comprehensive multimedia marketing campaign undertaken with the Nioga Library System.
- Our efforts resulted in millions of views through television, radio, online and streaming video, direct mail, email, social media, and billboard advertising, which blanketed the county.
- Niagara County had the 4<sup>th</sup> highest Census self-response rate of any county in the state, while Pendleton was 1<sup>st</sup> among cities and towns.

# Lake Ontario REDI Projects

## *Municipal Lake Ontario REDI Projects*



- Niagara County provided approximately \$250,000 in support to the Town of Newfane, Town of Wilson, and Village of Wilson help meet the 5% local match required to leverage over \$24 million in Lake Ontario REDI grants.
- The Economic Development Department is provided project management support to the \$14 million Olcott Harbor Breakwater project, which went to bid in April 2021. Construction will be completed by the end of the year.
- We will continue to assist local municipalities as needed with planning and administration of Lake Ontario REDI projects.

# Lake Ontario REDI Projects

## *Lake Ontario Business Resiliency Grants*



- Twelve (12) Niagara County businesses received over \$1 million combined in Lake Ontario Business Resiliency Grants, which will leverage more than \$2 million in projects to stabilize and expand waterfront businesses.
- The Niagara County Industrial Development Agency will provide sales tax abatements to help these companies meet the 5% local government match required by the program.
- In 2021, the NCCED will provide outreach to grantee businesses on sales tax assistance.

# Sportfishing Update

## *Sportfishing Promotional Efforts*



- Niagara County received 687 media mentions in newspapers, magazines, television, and radio resulting in over 364 million media impressions in 2020, a 32% increase in mentions and 9% increase in impressions.
- We supported the 2020 Greater Niagara Fishing & Outdoor Expo, which had record attendance. We supported major fishing tournaments, as well.
- We also worked with the Department of Environmental Conservation and Niagara County Fisheries Development Board to ensure that salmon pen rearing projects were implemented under a new salmon stocking strategy.

# Site Redevelopment

## ***Brownfields Program***



211 Main Street, North Tonawanda



13 West Main Street, Lockport

- Niagara County was awarded a \$375,000 cleanup grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
- In 2020, three Phase I and four Phase II Environmental Site Assessments were completed. Cleanup is ongoing at six sites in the county with funding from the Niagara County Brownfield Development Corporation.
- In 2021, Niagara County will pursue development of solar energy projects on closed landfills in partnership with the Refuse Disposal District.

# Site Redevelopment

## *Niagara Orleans Regional Land Improvement Corp.*



- NORLIC entered into an agreement with the Department of Environmental Conservation enabling its members to acquire potentially contaminated, tax-delinquent properties.
- It also transferred the property tax lien on 3505 Hyde Park Boulevard to a private developer, paving the way for cleanup and redevelopment of this key industrial site.
- NORLIC also provided grant funding to Niagara Falls to assist with demolition of uninhabitable structures located in target neighborhoods.

# Niagara County IDA

## *New NCIDA Projects*



- The NCIDA worked with NORLIC to enable redevelopment of 3501 and 3505 Hyde Park Boulevard in Niagara Falls, leading to renovation of a vacant building and new industrial development opportunities at the site.
- The NCIDA approved an incentive package for Trek Inc., which will expand and renovate additional space in the former Harrison Radiator plant in the City of Lockport, an \$8.2 million investment that will create 60 new jobs.
- In 2021, the NCIDA will implement a new marketing program to attract more businesses and investment to Niagara County.



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