

Bethel Local Development Corporation

c/o Supervisor Town of Bethel, PO Box 300, White Lake, NY 12786 / 845-583-4350 x12

2016 BLDC Measurement Report

Performance Goals:

- **To identify, apply for and secure foundation, county, state and federal grants beneficial to the economic vitality of the Town of Bethel.**

The BLDC was part of an overall town effort to compete for a \$100,000 grant from Sullivan Renaissance, a local non-profit focused on community beautification and health. This effort was successful. Going forward the BLDC will work with the Town on the use of these funds to increase community health and the economic vitality of the Town of Bethel. It is anticipated that a significant portion of these funds will be invested in the development of the Forest Reserve at Smallwood, owned by the BLDC.

Remaining funds from a \$5000 grant from Sullivan Renaissance for a second Corridor Beautification Program designed to assist businesses in enhancing their appearance in the 17B corridor were disbursed in 2016.

The BLDC administered a re-grant program using grant funds from Sullivan Renaissance as part of the 2016 Municipal Partnership Grant Program. This program, known as the Gateway Beautification Program was modeled on previous such programs for the 17B corridor. A total of 8 applicants were included in this program that provided matching grants of up to \$1000 for façade upgrades and beautification projects for businesses along the gateway corridors of SR 55 and SR 17B.

A \$5000.00 matching grant was obtained thru the Sullivan County Department of Planning and Environmental Management for signage in the Reserve at Smallwood in 2015. Over the course of 2016 specifications and procurement was completed on this project. It is anticipated that these funds will be expended in the spring of 2017.

- **To provide grant funds to assist individuals, businesses, not-for-profit organizations and government agencies that are able to contribute to the vitality of the Town of Bethel.**

2008 NYS Main Street Grant (KLMS II) – 2016 Annual Inspections were conducted for all six projects under this grant. These inspections will continue through December of 2019. 2005 Main Street Grant (KLMS I) Streetscape portion only, was also inspected and will conclude during the 2017 cycle.

The Citizens Energy Assistance (CEAP) Program was again activated to assist needy Bethel citizens in paying heating costs in the fall of 2016. Donations were accepted and several applications were received and approved. This program is on-going.

- **To sponsor fundraising efforts to fund local activities that contribute to the economic vitality of the Town of Bethel.**

A total of _____ was raised for the various local entities that the BLDC supports.

Literacy Center began the year with _____ available and ended 2016 with _____ available.

Smallwood-Mongaup Valley Fire Department began the year with _____ available and ended with _____ available.

2ManyCats Program started and ended 2016 with _____ available.

CEAP Program started the year with _____ and ended the year with _____ available.

- **To undertake projects and conduct on-going activities which contribute to economic vitality of the Town of Bethel**

Smallwood Property Acquisition – The Smallwood Golf Course property totaling 196 acres was purchased by the BLDC from Sullivan County in 2011 using funds borrowed from the Town of Bethel. In March of 2013 the BLDC Board authorized the Chairman to finalize a conservation easement with the Delaware Highlands Conservancy for this property, to permanently protect the portion of the property designated as a public park.

During 2016, the access road and parking lot for this facility was completed by Town of Bethel personnel along with an approximately quarter mile loop trail. A stream-crossing permit was secured for a bridge over the Lybolt Brook to provide access to other portions of the property. This bridge will be completed in 2017. Areas of the park were cleared with the help of volunteers and benches installed. Outdoor exercise equipment was secured for the park through a grant program administered by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Sullivan County. This equipment will be installed early in 2017.

In 2015, the BLDC formed a strategic partnership with the Bethel Business Association (BBA), with the BBA becoming a committee of the BLDC. This partnership has enhanced the BLDC's mission to create programs, secure funding and in other ways work to enhance the economic vitality of the Town of Bethel. As a first step, a marketing arrangement was secured with the Bethel Woods Center for Arts whereby businesses in the Town of Bethel have access to the advertising materials of Bethel Woods during the 2016 season. This was a positive first step in what is anticipated to be a long-running relationship that will benefit all involved.

The Town of Bethel is beginning a process leading to the creation of a Cultural District within a specific geographic area of the town. Such a district would enhance the business climate by attracting arts related businesses and investment. This effort is part of an overall plan to focus on arts and cultural activities as a driver of economic development and the long-term enhancement of the quality of life in Bethel. Planning for this effort was on-going in 2016 and will continue in 2017.

During 2016 the BLDC was instrumental in the formation and on-going efforts of the Bethel Council of the Arts. This volunteer organization is committed to promoting the arts as a catalyst for community health and economic development.

The BLDC was a sponsor of the Kauneonga Lake Block Party. This event was held for the first time in June of 2016 and attracted several thousand visitors to the Town of Bethel. Finally, in 2016, the BLDC actively supported and helped to coordinate the re-established Kauneonga Lake Farmer's Market.

- **To provide educational and advertising services which encourage residents and visitors to participate actively in the economy of the Town of Bethel.**

As discussed in the previous sections, the BLDC and the Town of Bethel have embarked on strategic alliances with the local business community and the major arts and cultural institution in the town to create a focus on the arts and to enhance the quality of life in the town and provide opportunities for both residents and visitors to participate in these activities.

The BLDC Manager is actively working with a volunteer group created by the Town of Bethel known as the Bethel Healthy Community Task Force. This group is working on several initiatives aimed at creating a more healthy and wholesome community in the Town of Bethel. Of particular note is the re-creation of a farmer's market in Kauneonga Lake, with the goal of building a true community market that brings people and organizations together.

Approved by the BLDC Board on at its meeting on July 19th, 2017