

Bethel Local Development Corporation

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

2017 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 completed the expenditure of the \$100,000 grant from Sullivan Renaissance that we were awarded in 2016. This program is known as the Municipal Partnership Grant. These funds were invested in 2017 in upgrades to our Town of Bethel parks. A significant portion of these funds was invested in the development of the Forest Reserve at Smallwood, owned by the BLDC.

A \$5000.00 matching grant was obtained thru the Sullivan County Department of Planning and Environmental Management for signage in the Forest Reserve at Smallwood in 2015. Over the course of 2016 specifications and procurement was completed on this project. These funds were expended in the spring of 2017 on directional and welcome signs for the Forest Reserve at Smallwood.

- **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) – 2017 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 was concluded 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 2017. Donations were accepted and several applications were received and approved. This program is on-going.

Planning began in the winter of 2017 on a program to assist citizens in the installation of Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors. This program will be funded through donations from local citizens and will operate in conjunction with the local Red Cross. Implementation will begin in 2018.

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

The BLDC over the course of 2017 provided support and fundraising assistance to various local activities ranging from the Bethel Council of the Arts, Kauneonga Lake Farmer's Market, Bethel Lakeside Music, Yoga-in-the-Park, Kauneonga Lake Block Party, and the Bethel Business Association, as well as, many other smaller organizations and charities that have worked with the BLDC for several years.

At the end of 2017 a total of \$5,561.00 was in various accounts reflecting local organizations that the BLDC supports. A detailed list of these organizations is available as part of the 2017 BLDC Audit.

- **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 was 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 was installed 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. Although the original marketing campaign has been discontinued we anticipate a continued relationship between the BBA and Bethel Woods going forward. Overall, the BLDC has continued to support the mission of the BBA as a committee of the BLDC in working to support and enhance the economy of the Town of Bethel.

The Town of Bethel/BLDC has a long-term goal to create 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. Discussions on this initiative continued in 2017.

The Town of Bethel and the BLDC began planning for the 50th Anniversary of the 1969 Woodstock Festival in the fall of 2017. Several projects are being planned for this anniversary and it is anticipated that the BLDC will be actively involved.

- **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. These efforts continued in 2017.

The BLDC Manager continues to actively work 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 note is the re-creation of a farmer's market in Kauneonga Lake, Bethel Lakeside Music and our Yoga program.

Approved by the BLDC Board on at its meeting on August 22, 2018