ABOUT THIS PLAN

More than 500 people, including partners, funders, and those we serve, informed this plan. About 10 percent of the people we approached responded to our survey — a very high response rate and an indicator that many people care about what we do. We are grateful to everyone who contributed ideas and feedback. Their comments are scattered throughout this plan.

WHY WE’RE EXCITED ABOUT THE FUTURE

Imagine a region filled with young farmers and food entrepreneurs ... a thriving community of local arts and artisans ... a renewable energy economy that is a national model ... visitors who return year after year ... downtown streets filled with profitable businesses and engaged customers.

In many Adirondack North Country communities, this is today’s reality.

It already exists, and ANCA helped to build it.

Over the next five years, we will work to expand this vision to encompass the entire geography in which we work.

ANCA is the leading organization looking at new economies in the region.
## HOW OUR BELIEFS SHAPE THIS PLAN

As we travel through the small towns and mid-size cities, across the splendid mountains and fertile valleys, through large and small farms, into cultural and historic places, and even through our struggling and often run-down villages, we find an extraordinary place populated by resilient, independent, imaginative and resourceful people. That is what really makes ANCA tick.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPPORTUNITIES</th>
<th>We believe young people need options about where to live and raise families without having to sacrifice good careers and family-sustaining wages. Our programs have a particular focus on growing the community of young workers and families.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EQUITY</td>
<td>We believe in equity — local economies should meet the needs of the underemployed, unemployed, and otherwise disadvantaged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNITY</td>
<td>We believe that by building community we can better attract, nurture and retain the next generation of entrepreneurs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RENEWABLES</td>
<td>We believe that a renewable energy economy based on regional resources is at the foundation of a stronger local economy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENSE OF PLACE</td>
<td>We believe that sustaining the integrity of our natural landscapes and ecosystems is the foundation for a strong local economy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCAL ASSETS</td>
<td>We believe that our region is an important global model for rebuilding local economies based on local assets, and needs a powerful voice and a solid place at the policy table.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASSION</td>
<td>We love this place!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Adirondack North Country covers the 14 northernmost counties of New York’s upstate region, comprising 38 percent of the State’s geography, and 6.4 percent of its population.

ABOUT THE REGION

- 38 percent of the geography of New York State
- Home to 1.26 million people
- A renewable energy exporter — over 97 percent of the electricity generated in the region is from renewable sources
- A major food producer — agricultural products account for close to $1 billion in market value annually
- One of New York’s most rural and dramatically beautiful landscapes
- Long-term globally recognized success in sustaining wild places and rural quality of life in an increasingly urbanized world

“ANCA does a lot of reframing. They take environmental or economic or community issues, and reframe them so they are more balanced and more palatable to policy makers.”
Aging infrastructure and loss of downtown businesses.

Energy costs are high due to long winters, over-reliance on oil for heat, and deteriorating buildings.

Unemployment is higher than much of the rest of the State.

Population is aging.

It’s often difficult for young families to find careers and jobs that sustain them.

Young farmers are moving in, buying small farms and rebuilding communities around local food production.

Some communities are finding the resources to revitalize their downtowns.

Many are experiencing a renaissance built on a thriving arts scene, locally owned businesses, new visitors, and new investment.

The region’s artists and arts groups are working together to make the dynamic creative economy much more visible.

Renewable energy resources are at the heart of a rapidly growing clean energy economy.

Attitudes are changing.

We are witnessing a resurgence of a culture of innovation, tapping into the innate entrepreneurial and independent character of our North Country residents.
ANCA is at the center of Northern New York’s renaissance.

As a collaborative, credible, long-standing, independent non-profit organization with a demonstrated ability to deliver, we are already working across the region to effect these changes. The region needs a results-driven organization that reaches across county and regional boundaries with networks of partnerships on the ground. ANCA is that organization. We engage and listen to our constituents, analyze the challenges, develop strategies to address those problems, and get to work.

“ANCA is uniquely suited to reach those groups that government agencies are not.”

“ANCA is a hub for collective problem solving, bringing together people, partners, and resources to get practical things done.”
INCLUSIVENESS
Working with a diverse set of partners

INTEGRITY
Candor and openness characterize the way we work

INNOVATION & CREATIVITY
We embrace a broad range of approaches

BELIEF IN DIALOGUE
We work to facilitate shared strategies

NON-PARTISAN
We work across political and ideological spectrums

ABOUT ANCA: STRATEGIC GOALS

We focus our strategic goals in areas that drive local economic development yet are underserved by the private sector and by local and state government, and that require coordination across multiple jurisdictions.

HOW WE WORK

1. CONVENE AND CONNECT
Convene and connect partners to identify and leverage common resources to do our work efficiently and effectively

2. DELIVER
Deliver programs in partnership with New York State, the private sector, local governments, and nonprofits

3. ADVOCATE
Advocate for investments and programs that support sustainable development

4. SUSTAIN
Sustain our work for the long haul by building a strong, resilient organization
ANCA’s highly visible role as an advocate for the region has already generated significant investment through State programs and private sector investment, particularly through our involvement with the Regional Economic Development Council. ANCA’s work on driving the Clean Energy Economy has catapulted the perception of the Adirondack North Country as a state and national leader in clean energy.

OBJECTIVES

1. ATTRACTION AT LEAST $25M IN DIRECT INVESTMENT IN THE REGION THROUGH HIGH IMPACT PARTNERSHIPS

   — by leveraging our active role with the North Country Regional Economic Development Council to advance State investment into at least 10 regional projects a year related to agriculture, community resiliency and/or clean energy

   — by coordinating and/or securing funding for at least five partner entities a year that measurably improve local economies, build community vitality, and advance clean energy

   — by establishing and managing a regional crowdfunding infrastructure that assists small businesses and supports iconic community assets.

They are efficient, effective and visionary, as evidenced by the return on investment of public and private dollars. Their work is essential.
ANCA is the only organization in the region that spans the political and geographical lines of the Adirondack North Country. ANCA plays a unique facilitator and convener role that brings communities and constituencies together for action on a broad scale.

While each community within the Adirondack North Country is unique, they have similar challenges, resources, and needs. In order to address these challenges, capitalize on the exceptional resources and attributes, and meet community needs, localities must coordinate and communicate with one another. They also must connect with areas outside of the Adirondack North Country in order to attract visitors, capital and financial investment, markets for local producers, new residents, and new ideas. ANCA facilitates these connections.

**OBJECTIVES**

2. **CREATE OR RETAIN AT LEAST 50 PERMANENT FULL-TIME JOBS AS A DIRECT RESULT OF ANCA ACTIVITIES**
   - through growth in Clean Energy and local food projects
   - by securing funding for partner entities and/or supporting growth in the Clean Energy and agriculture sectors
   - through campaign projects such as Solarize or the Go Digital or Go Dark campaign that saved main street theaters

3. **GROW THE VISIBILITY OF THE ADIRONDACK NORTH COUNTRY AS A DESIRABLE PLACE TO WORK, LIVE, OR VISIT**
   - by increasing the number of visitors to the North Guide by 25 percent a year
   - by performing and publishing a bi-annual assessment of community needs in the Adirondack North Country to serve as guidance for aggregated grant applications and other investment strategies
   - by translating ANCA’s websites into at least three languages

4. **ENGAGE REGIONAL CONSTITUENTS, ELECTED OFFICIALS, MEDIA, LOCAL BUSINESSES, AND NEXT-GENERATION VISITORS THROUGH EVENTS, COLLABORATIONS, AND SOCIAL MEDIA**
ANCA connects communities, local economies and sustainability.
No one else does this.

Local economies that focus on self-reliance for goods and services through locally owned, import substituting (LOIS) businesses are important in at least five ways: higher multipliers, more reliable, higher standards, more dynamic, and better social impacts.

Research has shown that regional economic growth is highly correlated with the presence of many small, entrepreneurial employers. In our largely rural region, our local economies rely on locally owned small businesses that are often sole proprietors and home-based businesses with less than 10 employees. ANCA is uniquely positioned to provide direct support for small-scale local businesses that create jobs, create benefits for local communities, and increase wages, all of which drive the region to greater self-reliance.

OBJECTIVES

1. Increase the number of buyers who attend our wholesale shows by 10 percent each year
2. Create access to business resources and marketing skill development for 300 small businesses
3. Play a role in starting up five new community food projects
4. Increase local food procurement in schools, hospitals, institutions, and/or food pantries by 15 percent

SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE:

- Increased financial resources and support services for micro and start-up businesses
- Strong consumer demand for local products
- Strong and visible local food economy
- Measurable increase in young people relocating here
- The Adirondack North Country is recognized globally for its high-quality products
Strategic Goal 3

Drive the North Country to a more resilient and localized energy economy

Climate change and national security concerns are driving rapid investment in clean energy research, development, and deployment. The Adirondack North Country is already a major supplier of renewable energy for the state. Building a more energy efficient and renewable energy powered economy has a significant economic benefit to the region. Winters in the North Country are cold, and oil is a dominant and expensive source of residential heating. Municipalities that use less expensive clean energy reduce taxpayer costs. Clean energy is a strong source of mid-level jobs, as new businesses are created to harness and deliver the energy, and clean energy improves residents’ quality of life.

“ANCA is the first organization addressing local issues on a regional scale.”

Objectives:

1. Increase regional renewable energy generation and/or distribution capacity by at least 10 MW
2. Increase energy efficiency and resiliency in at least 500,000 square feet of regional buildings
3. Facilitate access to $5M in energy project financing
4. Catalyze the regional clean energy economy through facilitating collaborative opportunities

Success Looks Like:

- Double-digit growth in the number of installed renewable energy systems across the region
- Measurable increases in job creation/retention throughout the biomass supply chain related to sustainable use of biomass resources
- Broad alignment on sustainable wood supply management and growth
- Measurably reduced energy bills for regional municipal governments
- Adirondack North Country is a national and global model for renewable energy tied to local economic development
ANCA has demonstrated the ability to successfully administer a varied set of core programs. This reflects very well on the skills and dedication of ANCA staff.

ANCA is only as strong as our ability to attract investment dollars, maintain and grow committed and engaged funders, and attract and retain committed and talented board and staff. We also need to better demonstrate the social, economic, and environmental benefits of our programs. In order to continue to build on the growth and impact of the last five years, we have established the following objectives.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. Increase individual, corporate and regional membership by 40 percent to ensure flexibility in addressing regional needs as they arise
2. Refine ANCA’s compelling narrative to demonstrate and communicate our economic, social, and environmental value to the region
3. Attract and retain talented and innovative staff
4. Attract committed and talented board members
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As of October 2016

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VICE PRESIDENT
Kelly Chezum — Vice President for External Relations, Clarkson University

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Katie Malinowski — Executive Director, Tug Hill Commission
Patrick McDonald — CEO, Carbon Natural Gas Company
Brendan Owens — Attorney, Stafford, Owens, Piller, Murnane, Kelleher, & Trombley
Stephanie Ratcliffe — Executive Director, The Wild Center
Alice Recore — Former President & CEO, Mountain Lake PBS
Jay Recore — Regional President, Adirondack Bank
Brian Ruder — Founder & CEO, Skylight Partners Inc.
Nick Russell — Senior Vice President, Community Bank, N.A.
Stephen Stofelano, Jr. — Business Teacher, Wells Central School
Arnie Talgo — Tug Hill Commission, former Senior Policy Analyst, NYPA

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Richard R. Bird — Owner, Bird’s Marine and Adirondack Real Estate
Kelly Blazosky — President, Oneida County Tourism
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James T. Ellis — Former Principal, Tupper Lake High School
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Jerry Loch

REGIONAL ADVOCACY COORDINATOR
Jacob Vennie-Vollrath

REGIONAL ADVOCACY FELLOW
Danielle Delaini

STAFF ACCOUNTANT
Nancy Labombard

STAFF ASSISTANT
Hannah Gibbons-Arthur
ANCA’S SUCCESS MEANS THE ADIRONDACK NORTH COUNTRY:

- Is thriving as a global model for small sustainable communities based on local resources and local talent
- Is a model for clean, locally generated energy
- Has low unemployment and low poverty
- Is a worldwide tourist destination known for both its spectacular landscapes AND its thriving small businesses that have a healthy impact on natural resources and communities
- Is a place where young people, families, and residents have access to abundant, diverse, and well-paid employment
- Has downtowns fully occupied with successful businesses
- Has easy access to fresh local foods year round
- Continues to support ANCA’s work through membership, volunteer work and significant investment in ANCA’s endowment

Our 50-year vision for the region is ambitious but very possible and plausible given the commitment of ANCA, our partners, and the area’s business, political and citizen leadership.
YOU TALKED, WE LISTENED

From Canton to Utica, across the Adirondacks and beyond, the ideas, thoughts and feedback from the 500 people who answered our survey helped shape this plan.

Here are a few findings from the survey:

TOP FIVE REASONS PEOPLE SUPPORT ANCA:
- Support for artisans & farmers
- Believe in building resilient local economies
- Driving a cleaner, greener energy economy
- Strengthening ties between communities
- ANCA provides a strong voice for the region

DIRECTION GOING FORWARD:
- Foster successful businesses and sustainable communities 62%
- Expand the market for local agriculture, artisans and forest products 60%
- Regional approach: advocate for the 14 counties of the region 56%

SIX MOST IMPORTANT CONSTITUENCIES:
(in percent agreement)

- Small businesses of any kind
- Agriculture & local food producers
- Local residents
- Local government
- Clean energy industry
- Artisans