

STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025

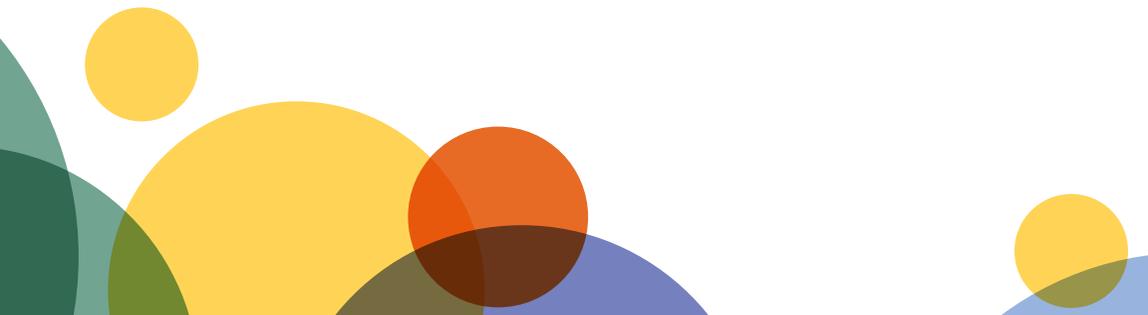


Growing The New Economy



“Real prosperity includes material progress but also encompasses community, health and happiness.”

- Anthony Flaccavento



GROWING A NEW ECONOMY IN A POST-PANDEMIC WORLD

Dear friends,

This five-year strategic plan was completed and is being published in the midst of the global COVID-19 pandemic and worldwide protests against racism. It is an oddly and deeply appropriate time to launch this plan.

The fissures in the global economic system have cracked wide open, revealing three deep fault lines — economic inequity, ecological havoc and systemic racism. The vision and goals in this plan will transform the regional economy in ways that address these three central flaws. While the plan was written before the pandemic broke the economy and exposed how vulnerable we are under our current systems, and before widespread anti-racism protests engaged urban and rural communities, it outlines a path forward to change those systems and grow a New Economy that really works for all.

As science fiction writer Kim Stanley Robinson said in May 2020, “The virus is rewriting our imaginations. What felt impossible has become thinkable. We realize that what we do now, well or badly, will be remembered later on. This sense of enacting history matters.”

It is in that spirit that we launch and implement this plan.



Kate Fish, Executive Director

WHO WE ARE

VISION:

A New Economy that Works for All

MISSION:

Build prosperity across northern New York

THE BIG IDEA:

Create and sustain wealth and value in local communities

ANCA is an independent, nonprofit corporation with a transformational approach to building prosperity across northern New York. With community-informed, boots-on-the-ground strategies, we seek to create and sustain wealth and value in local communities.

Our work is distinguished by its results-driven focus, creating an inflow of resources, high-impact ideas, investments in infrastructure and greater diversity. We measure results and adapt as we scale up programs. We find and leverage the resources to implement broad system changes that will result in long-term impact. We explore, build, learn, adapt and expand our proven programming throughout the region.

Advocating for our region is central to the success of our work. Over the past five years, ANCA has been able to secure and leverage over \$65M in financial resources for local businesses and communities, creating over 150 jobs, supporting 3,400 jobs, impacting 195 communities and engaging 25 school districts. Our programs have influenced New York State's clean energy and farm to school policies. We seek to continue this critical work and change the narrative about our local communities by advocating for policies and resources that support food systems, clean energy and the entrepreneurial economy.

WHY NOW?

The Adirondack North Country economy is nearing an inflection point: flourish — or fail. Our collective actions over the next five years will help determine the outcome.

ANCA's 2020-2025 strategic plan maps out three key focus areas that keep wealth local and build prosperity:



Food Systems: Robust local food systems drive economic growth, reduce food insecurity and contribute to positive community and health outcomes.

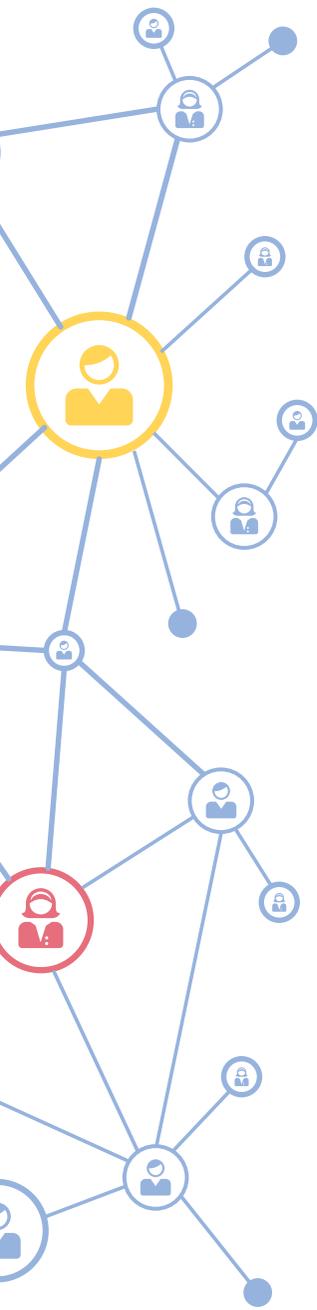


Energy Economy: Investments in resilient energy systems, including grid and transportation infrastructure, build on rural traditions of self-reliance while providing significant environmental and social benefits.



Entrepreneurial Economy: A vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem creates jobs and reduces inequality, keeping and attracting new and more diverse generations.

Affordable quality housing, health care, good schools, transportation, child care, and broadband are also critically important parts of the economic system in the region, and we recognize that. We are closely allied with organizations that are leading the way in addressing those needs. Where leadership has not yet emerged, we consider tackling new issues.



HOW DO WE DO THIS?

Get people talking: We convene wide and diverse interests, develop partnerships and work with broad groups of stakeholders to drive systems change in the communities and sectors in which we work.

Jumpstart new ideas: We develop effective strategies for rural places, pressure test, course correct and then create tools for scale. We replicate and adapt high-impact ideas from other rural areas.

Measure everything: We constantly test and measure the impacts of our programs.

Spread skills: We work with emerging leaders in communities across the region to build capacity, set up centers of innovation and create the tools to share resources.

Find and leverage resources: We bring together partners and secure private and public resources to drive results.

WHY WE BELIEVE THIS IS POSSIBLE:

There are higher rates of success for entrepreneurs in very rural counties than elsewhere. Rural startups have the highest five-year survival rates — 10 percentage points higher than their urban counterparts.

This region ranks near the top in the country for political tolerance. As stated in a recent Atlantic article, “the North Country, in far upstate New York, just east of Lake Ontario, seems to be more accepting of political differences.”

This region offers a quality of life, strong community life, access to recreation and natural beauty that is unparalleled. The quality of the environment, natural resources and landscapes in this region has not been subject to the kinds of degradation and pressures that other regions have suffered.

FOOD SYSTEMS

We have identified the following key needs that help local food entrepreneurs establish profitable and scalable businesses:

- Access to capital and flexible financing
- Business development training
- Market access and value chain development
- Efficient distribution systems
- Partnerships to build critical mass, facilitate shared resources and drive demand

Impact:

- Help 50 farmers and food entrepreneurs address financing gaps
- Research training needs and facilitate (access to) training for 25 food entrepreneurs
- Increase access to local food by 10% for 6 hospitals, 10 schools, 3 prisons and 2 nursing homes
- Demonstrate improved access to local food in three low-income neighborhoods
- Supply 10 regional school districts with increased access to local food through New York's "No Student Goes Hungry" program, building on our three-year track record with the "Drive for 25" Farm to School grant program

Advocacy:

- Work with local, regional and state partners to identify and address gaps and barriers along the value chain
- Collaborate with NYS Farm to School incentive programs to build supply chain capacity and demand for local food
- Collaborate with healthcare networks to connect local food availability to improved hunger and health outcomes
- Participate with coalitions and policy advocacy groups to inform policymakers of rural food systems needs



ENERGY ECONOMY

Import of fossil fuels represents a major economic outflow from the region. We have identified the following key areas where Clean Energy provides economic, environmental and social benefits to our communities:

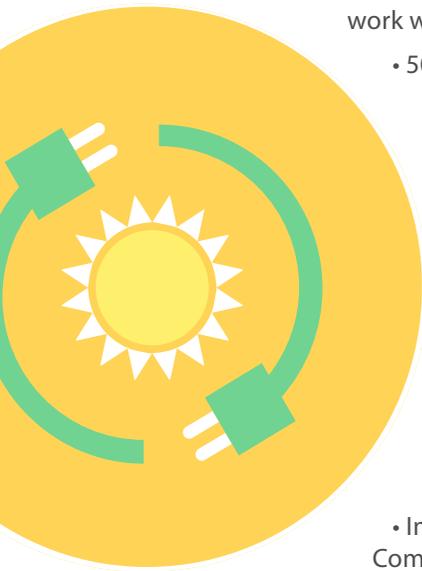
- Resilient, low-carbon, high-efficiency buildings and sustainable infrastructure
- Decarbonized transportation and mobility systems
- Increased consumption of regionally sourced renewable energy
- Equitable access to clean energy benefits
- Support for clean energy workforce development and entrepreneurs

Impact:

- 10% reduction in energy use for 25 municipalities through work with municipal leaders
 - 50 communities able to access funding for implementation of clean public transportation systems and EV infrastructure
 - 50 communities able to access renewable energy benefits through State initiatives
 - Double the number of qualified clean energy contractors

Advocacy:

- Work with the State to ensure increased access to renewable energy for residents, businesses and municipalities
 - Implement the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) for the benefit of northern New York communities
 - Ensure that disadvantaged communities receive no less than 35 percent of the overall benefits from the State's clean energy programs
- Continue to demonstrate the Energy Circuit Rider program as an effective model for New York State



ENTREPRENEURIAL ECONOMY

To support a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem rooted in local communities, we have identified the following needs:

- Increased access to capital and services for micro and startup businesses
- Catalyzing the transition of baby boomer owned businesses to new ownership
- Growth in demand for local products
- Greater diversity, equity and inclusion in our local communities
- Workforce and entrepreneurial training and access for people of all income levels

Impact:

- Facilitate the establishment of 50 new business enterprises
- Transition 75 baby boomer owned businesses to new ownership
- Establish a \$1M cash collateral loan program in partnership with local banking entities for low-interest loans to locally owned businesses
- Increase market access by 10% for crafted manufacturers and regional producers
- Help entrepreneurs access capital through our regional online crowdfunding platform

Advocacy:

- Advocate for more State investment in workforce training, affordable and quality housing, and support for small businesses
- Establish a regional coalition of support for shared business ownership models
- Advocate for the inclusion of historically disadvantaged and disenfranchised people in order to reduce barriers to their participation in the local economy
- Grow online and face-to-face opportunities for makers and retailers



ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Staffing:

New hires including:

- Staff to coordinate with food entrepreneurs, institutions and support organizations to address value chain gaps
- Staff to support and grow a possible ANCA financing program
- Staff to support inclusion of low- to moderate-income (LMI) individuals across ANCA's program areas

Provide professional training for staff including:

- Fundraising, finance management, communication, measurement and reporting tools, event planning, clean energy technologies, etc.

Board

- Approve revised strategic plan
- Continue to attract committed and talented board members, as measured by their participation on committees, ANCA events, advocacy and fundraising
- Achieve 100% board participation in financial support to ANCA
- Establish dynamic ad hoc board committees that coalesce around opportunities and needs
- Set up an advisory process so our board can hear directly from those our programs seek to support

Revenue

- Build fundraising capacity and systems to fund the impact and advocacy goals
- Create a self-supporting cash collateral program for low-interest loan funds
- Raise \$600,000 to facilitate food systems outcomes
- Build \$50,000 a year into operational budget to grow staff communication, measurement and reporting capacity
- Raise \$2M in grants and funds to facilitate Clean Energy outcomes
- Raise \$500,000 to extend the Center for Businesses in Transition program into the year 2025
- Raise an additional \$2M over the course of this strategic plan

Communications

- Continue to generate high-volume earned media on ANCA programs and impacts
- Refine social media strategy for increased audience and fundraising engagement
- Incorporate stories demonstrating program impacts to increase philanthropic support

Scale

- Build strategic partnership structure that will increase ANCA's capacity to establish high-impact collaborations in the region
- Ensure that projects are developed to be prototypes that can be replicated in other rural regions

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Establish a monitoring and evaluation framework for robust measurement and reporting across all impact and advocacy goals
- Develop an evaluation strategy of local food systems needs through a farm listening tour
- Conduct an analysis of gaps in access to financing across multiple sectors



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