

*Town of Ticonderoga*

# State of the Town

*Year in Review - 2024*



January 2025

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# Executive Summary

The Ticonderoga Town Supervisor is pleased to present this State of the Town report from the Supervisor’s office. This is the third State of the Town report issued by the Town of Ticonderoga during this administration. This report is a semi-comprehensive summary of several projects and activities conducted in 2024. The reader may desire to focus on specific sections of interest rather than read the entire report. This State of the Town report documents our successes as well as our shortfalls. It is important to understand that failure is not the opposite of success, it is part of success, and we must always pass through failure on our journey to success.



*New pencil sculpture at the Heritage Museum.*

Ticonderoga continued its aggressive approach in 2024 towards revitalization with the implementation of eight (8) New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) approved projects. The Town also partnered with North Country Rural Development Coalition (NRDC, formerly PRIDE of Ticonderoga) to improve ice skating rink facilities not forwarded as a DRI project but funded through a Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Smart Growth grant and donations.

The Town was challenged in 2024, as was most of the County, in obtaining sufficient labor as staff either retired or moved on to other opportunities. Once again, we understand the extreme workload burden on staff to accomplish day-to-day tasks while increasing our efforts with new endeavors, but the projects in 2024 were important and significant – DRI efforts, Smart Growth projects, airport issues, water system challenges, and much more. Many goals were achieved, some projects remain in progress, others laid the foundation for work which will begin or

continue in 2025. This report identifies the status of each goal. The following nomenclature applies to tasks regarding goal status:

**COMPLETED:** The goal was completed during the year.

**PARTIALLY COMPLETED:** The goal was expected to be across fiscal years.

**NOT COMPLETED:** The goal should have been or was expected to be achieved during the year and was not.

Some of the goals of this administration included (in no order of priority):

#### Second Term (1<sup>st</sup> Year)

- ✓ Continue economic development and revitalization activities.
- ✓ Obtain new home for Ticonderoga Police Department.
- ✓ Begin execution of NYS approved DRI projects.
- ✓ Obligate all ARPA funding.
- ✓ Continue implementing town threat assessment mitigations and building security plan.
- ✓ Complete Town Internal Emergency Response Plan.
- ✓ Continue employee morale improvement/sustainment and delegation efforts.
- ✓ Continue resident access to and communication with the Supervisor's office.
- ✓ Mitigate St. Clair/Grove Street flooding issue.
- ✓ Adopt a Sick Leave Donation policy.
- ✓ Complete Alexandria bridge construction.
- ✓ Improve/maintain coordination and partnership with community organizations.
- ✓ Improve and maintain infrastructure (sidewalk replacement and paving operations).
- ✓ Advance progress on Chilson/Eagle Lake water solution (settle litigation).
- ✓ Scrutinize town budget and reformat for water district consolidation.
- ✓ Establish an Ambulance District.
- ✓ Support Regan Development Corporation housing project.
- ✓ Begin construction of La Chute Trail Extension project.
- ✓ Vigorously enforce litter and nuisance laws.
- ✓ Begin removal of blighted properties.
- ✓ Initiate airport apron expansion project design phase and grant application.

#### Second Term (2<sup>nd</sup> Year)

- Continue DRI project design and planning/construction phase as directed by NYS.
- Begin update to the Town's Comprehensive Plan using grant funding.
- Continue infrastructure improvements.
- Mitigate St. Clair/Grove Street flooding issue.
- Continue advancement of Chilson/Eagle Lake municipal water solution (test wells).

- Monitor Montcalm Street Bridge design planning.
- Continue resident access to and communication with the Supervisor's office.
- Complete airport apron expansion project design phase.
- Support Regan Development Corporation housing project.
- Continued renovation of Police Department structure.
- Initiate and complete Town staff salary review.
- Vigorously enforce litter and nuisance laws.
- Continue removal of blighted properties.
- Develop a paved parking lot at NE corner of Tower Avenue and Burgoyne Road.
- Level and pave Mt. Defiance Public Parking lot.
- Adopt roadway between The Portage and Defiance Street as official town road.
- Secure a K9 officer and training.
- Install radar signs on NY 74.
- Support additional skating rink improvements.

### **Economic Development / Revitalization**

Ticonderoga's economic development remains an active and ongoing mission. The Town continued the efforts of its Economic Development Committee (EDC). This has been a successful effort in 2024, and I am pleased to report that all revitalization and economic development organizations have a better understanding regarding status of all their partner organization's revitalization efforts and where they are going in terms of goals. The Town supported efforts in 2024 to form a partnership between North Country Rural Development Coalition (NRDC) and Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance (TRA) to better serve the interests of Ticonderoga and surrounding area. Ticonderoga continues to build itself as a destination. Americade and fishing tournaments visited us again this year and a new visitor, the Volkswagen Type 3 Invasion graced us in June to exhibit their fantastic club cars. StreetFest, FallFest, Best 4<sup>th</sup> in the North, and other annual activities continue to draw visitors and entertain residents.

### **Access & Communication**

There is a continued noticeable difference in information access and distribution among staff and departments as well as information sharing with the public. The Town continues to ensure projects and roles and responsibilities are more than one level deep whenever possible.

The Town Supervisor continues to be available to residents. Walk-ins are encouraged and phone calls/emails are promptly returned. The Supervisor continues to walk the town and attend events which allow further access for residents.



## Employee Morale

The Town continues in its efforts to maintain and increase staff morale with a goal to lower staff turnover, decrease training costs and associated impacts, increase job satisfaction, and to make municipal jobs sought after once again like they once were many years ago. Even with our attempts to maintain staffing levels, we are subject to attrition, retirement, and post-COVID effects. These claimed several positions this year and it has been challenging to find replacement staff. Despite a more relaxed and less micro-managed work environment, the Town still has a requirement to give a professional 8 hours of work for 8 hours of pay and to be accountable for one's actions.

## Increase Coordination & Partnership

The Town has been heavily engaged working with the Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce (TACC), the Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance (TRA), North Country Rural Development Coalition (NRDC), Essex County Industrial Development Agency (ECIDA), Essex County Office of Community Resources (ECCR), and the Ticonderoga Montcalm Street Partnership (TMSP) during 2024 as part of its goal to increase coordination with community partners for the benefit of economic development/revitalization while avoiding reinventing the wheel and the duplication of effort. The Town Supervisor attended TACC, TRA, and TMSP board meetings in the ex-officio role and the Ticonderoga Fire District Board of Fire Commissioner meetings on a regular basis as that agency continues planning for a new fire department structure. The Town has also coordinated with Sylvamo, the Fort Ticonderoga Association, Silver Bay, National Grid, and other partners.

## Improve Infrastructure

Paving of public streets and replacement of public sidewalks continued in 2024 using budgeted funds. North Country Rural Development Coalition (NRDC) and TMSP, worked with the Town to add ADA compliant facilities for the town beach and playgrounds. The Town worked with private investors to begin initial plans for the construction of an additional and privately funded hangar at the municipal airport. The Town also worked closely with the County in the replacement of the



*PRIDE 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary proclamation.*



*Annual repaving efforts continued.*

Alexandria Bridge. Ticonderoga is slowly and responsibly on a road to repair its infrastructure and lay the groundwork for economic vitality.

### **Budget**

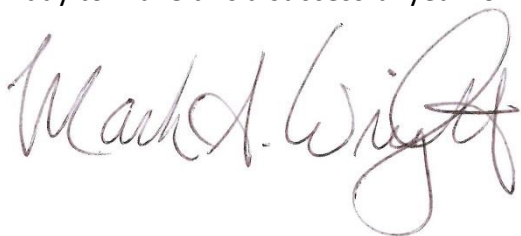
The 2025 town budget was finely scrutinized through a total of seven (7) budget workshops. The Town witnessed an initial low inflation rate rise of 3% and a slight increase of 4.9% on health insurance. The budget was impacted by the addition of approximately \$397,000 for the creation of an ambulance district which pushed the budget over the NYS tax cap. Ticonderoga also completed its reevaluation work with our Assessor in 2024 to establish a 100% equalization rate.

### **Conclusion**

The State of the Town is good and continually moving forward. There is much we still wish to accomplish. Ticonderoga has several projects and improvements in work, some of which are required for the betterment of its residents, and some which are mandated unfortunately without the funding to complete them such as water meters and compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 with amendments associated with Gooseneck Pond.

As stated last year, we remain on a positive trajectory and are constantly improving. Sometimes the associated decisions to accomplish this mission are difficult but they are always in the best interest of Ticonderoga. Ticonderoga is coming back, and many eyes are on Ticonderoga! There is a continued air of positivity, forward movement, and investment by private entities. The DRI effort alone will significantly change the look of the main Montcalm business district and riverfront for decades to come. This revitalization will improve business, encourage new investment, allow walkability, and play a major role in decarbonization. Many goals have been accomplished, but there are always new projects and tasks on the horizon. Even upon achieving all our goals, there is always room for improvement to make a better life for all residents.

I wish to thank all the Ticonderoga Town staff and town partners who worked diligently every day to make this a successful year for Ticonderoga.



Mark A. Wright, Supervisor  
Town of Ticonderoga

# 1.0 Employee Morale

The most valuable resource of any organization is its people. It has been a continuing goal to provide an efficient yet pleasant work environment. Employee morale efforts continued in 2024. Staff are encouraged to express their ideas and personalize their work environment. The new and existing teams (HR, Labor Relations, legal, youth, Assessor, etc.) have continued to make the work environment smooth and efficient. All Town staff must complete their assigned duties, but office life need not be unenjoyable and drab.



*Above & Beyond Award*

## 1.1 Delegation & Eliminating Micromanagement

**GOAL:** Focus on Delegation and Remove Micromanagement

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Delegation of duties continue as a major goal in 2024 to increase productivity and morale and allow staff to become more invested in the mission. Ticonderoga has a wealth of talented and skilled town workers with each having the skill and subject matter expertise which keep the town operating. Employing delegation techniques has been effective when dealing with limited resources and time. Staff continue to accomplish their duties without micromanagement and Department heads carry out their responsibilities without unwarranted Town Supervisor intervention.

A full year with a dedicated Recreation Supervisor has allowed the Town Supervisor to delegate all after school program, summer program, and public beach program responsibilities to a dedicated and knowledgeable individual. This was most effective in removing day-to-day involvement by the Supervisor in these HR-related activities. HR tasks of interviewing and hiring occur without Supervisor intervention was a significant benefit for the town. Inquiries and comments to the Town Supervisor in specific areas continue to be referred to the appropriate Department Head and/or position, usually these were Highway Department, Police Department, or Code Enforcement related actions in 2024. Delegation has successfully placed the right role, responsibility, and task with the right person and department, increasing efficiency and freeing the Town Supervisor to focus on tasks which clearly lie in that role.

## 1.2 Employee Recognition

**GOAL:** Recognize Individuals

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Often, what people want most is simply recognition and a word of thanks. The Town Supervisor instituted an “Above & Beyond” award in 2023. This program recognizes town staff who went above and beyond in the performance of their duties. An individual may be recommended by a co-worker, department head, or the Town Supervisor. The Town Supervisor determines eligibility and provides an award which consists of a unique wooden token and a certificate.



Town gave additional awards this year to 8 employees in multiple

departments. In

addition to these awards, the Town

recognized a 36-year employee of the Highway Department, Mitch Cole, who retired in July. The Town Supervisor also recognized Mitch at the Essex County Board of Supervisors. We thank Mitch for giving 36 years of dedicated and professional service to the Town of Ticonderoga.



*Above & Beyond Award*

This program is totally funded at the Town Supervisor’s personal expense for the design and purchase of the award tokens and certificate stock. This award is very limited and only available to Town staff.

## 2.0 Economic Development

Economic Development is a key mission goal for Ticonderoga. Ticonderoga is coming back after slowly declining economically over many decades for many reasons. The Town now has excellent working relationships with local/regional revitalization and economic development organizations. The Economic Development Committee is doing well and meets monthly. Committee members include the Town of Ticonderoga (two board members) and representatives from North Country Rural Development Coalition (NRDC), the Ticonderoga Montcalm Street Partnership (TMSP), Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance (TRA), Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce (TACC), and Business.



*Artist concept of the DRI Streetscape project for Montcalm St.*

### 2.1 Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI)

**GOAL:** Begin DRI Municipal Projects

**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

New York State announced eight (8) approved projects on April 24 as part of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) awarded to Ticonderoga in 2023. These projects included Streetscape project (\$3,694,000), Branding project (\$330,000), Small Projects (\$600,000), Adirondack Performing Arts Center (\$2,115,000), Adirondack Drive (\$566,000), 108 Montcalm (\$1,265,000), La Chute River Front (\$754,000), and Revitalize Co-Op (\$376,000). The Town Supervisor met with NYS DOS officials on May 9 for an update on upcoming activities and



*Work on 108 Montcalm Street begins.*

expectations. Work on 108 Montcalm began in November and other private projects are in the initial stages. The NYS Department of State will handle all municipal projects.

TACC, North Country Rural Development Coalition (NRDC) and others reached out in 2024 to assist those project sponsors whose projects did not go forward under DRI. The Town and its partners understand that all projects are important to Ticonderoga's economic growth and prosperity.

## 2.2 New & Expanded Business

**GOAL:** Track New Business Development

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Many businesses opened their doors, had ribbon cuttings, and/or expanded in 2024. This is a positive sign for Ticonderoga and the Town will continue to track this topic in ensuing years. These new endeavors included:

- Seymour's Restaurant (re-opened under new management)
- Ticonderoga Bagel & Coffee
- Dolly & the Bean
- Paper & Pencil (restaurant)
- 161 Champlain Avenue – Renovation for retail business
- Agway structure sold
- Former flower shop sold for renovation and retail business
- Convenience store 69 Montcalm Street
- Sunshine Laundry (new management)

## 2.3 Airport Developments

**GOAL:** Airport Fly-In & Open House

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Some may not realize the incredible treasure that we have in our municipal airport. To better share this story and increase awareness of the airport among residents, pilots, and visitors, the Town's Airport Committee initiated a new annual airport event in 2024 with the Fly-In & Open House. This event was held on June 8 and provided a terrific opportunity



*1<sup>st</sup> annual airport Fly-In & Open House.*

for residents and visitors to become familiar with this critical transportation artery while experiencing a day of fun with family and friends.

The event included aircraft exhibits where visitors could sit in aircraft (fixed and rotor) and speak to pilots, tour the airport hangar, see demonstrations, free toy planes for children, have lunch at a food truck (Windchill Factory), and more.

**GOAL:** Airport Hangar Expansion

**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

The airport is an important part of Ticonderoga's economy and future growth. During 2024, individuals approached the Airport Committee with proposals to construct a private hangar and any applicable apron (constructed to FAA standards) using private funding. The Town and its airport consultant worked with these individuals beginning in January. The private individual would own the hangar but lease the land from the Town. Work began in 2024 to develop a lease agreement with the developer and future owner. A draft lease was presented for review to the developer in December.

Hangar expansion at the airport is a part of the Town's airport master plan with the FAA. This is the next critical economic development related project for the airport, and it would base additional aircraft at the airport guaranteeing continued annual FAA funding with no interruption should the airport-based aircraft level fall below 10 aircraft.

## 2.4 Comprehensive Plan

**GOAL:** Form Committee & Hire Consultant

**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

The Town, working with Essex County Office of Community Resources, was awarded a grant through the NYS Environmental Development Smart Growth Community Planning and Zoning Program in December 2023. This would hire a consultant for the revision and update to the Town's Comprehensive Plan. This plan must be completed prior to an extensive examination and revision of zoning laws within the town which have frequently been identified as inadequate and contrary to existing and future economic endeavors. NYS provided the contract for this effort in July and the Town Board approved execution that same month. The Comprehensive Planning Committee members were assembled in mid-November. The Essex County IDA will work with the town in 2025 to issue an RFP for a consultant and begin work.

## 2.5 Regan Development Corporation

**GOAL:** Planning & Zoning Board Approval

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Town Supervisor contacted developer, Larry Regan, in 2022 and invited his company to review a potential development in Ticonderoga. Today, Regan Development Corporation continues in its efforts to develop a 60-unit apartment complex proposed for the Fireman's Field location off NY74. This is a critical project for Ticonderoga to bring drastically needed housing to our community as well as a



*Artist concept for Regan Development apartments.*

potential section of daycare within the facility satisfying a second critical necessity. The project attended Planning & Zoning Board meetings in 2024.

The Supervisor continued to work with the developer, Town Attorney, Code Enforcement Officer, Water/Sewer Department, local business, Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance, Wal-Mart, NRDC, and the Town Planning & Zoning Board during the year. The Town resolved that it had no issues regarding a Combined Sewer Overflow approach. The Planning & Zoning Board reviewed the project in August and on October 17 the Board granted conditional site plan and special use permit approval. The Town Supervisor forwarded this information to New York State Homes & Community Renewal (HCR). The Project provided an escrow in late September to use the Town Engineer, AES, on specified water/sewer tasks. Approved funding is expected in Spring 2025 which would mean construction may not start until Fall of 2025 or 2026.

## 2.6 Housing Initiatives

**GOAL:** Adopt Pro-Housing Community Pledge

**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

The Ticonderoga Town Board applied for the NYS Pro-Housing Community. In May, the Town Board passed a resolution to adopt the Pro-Housing Community Pledge. This was the last action



before approval by NYS. North Country Rural Development Coalition (NRDC) is currently working on the application to supply any remaining documentation for State approval.

**GOAL:** Remove Blighted Properties

**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

The Town worked with the Essex County Board of Supervisors, North Country Rural Development Coalition (NRDC), and the Essex County Land Bank in 2024 to demolish or rehabilitate blighted properties within Ticonderoga.



*The Agway property – future currently unknown.*

The Town (Supervisor, Police Chief, Code Enforcement) and NRDC coordinated to aid the property owner at 8 Johns Street

(a burned-out structure) to sell the property to the Essex County Land Bank. Demolition is scheduled for early 2025. The Town Supervisor also supported Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) meetings between NRDC and those interested in the Agway property. A new CDBG funding opportunity would fund demolition with strict conditions on the future use of the property. The Agway demolition through CDBG fell apart when the seller chose to not pursue the opportunity. The Agway property has since been sold – future unknown.

## 2.7 Solar Projects

**GOAL:** Support Solar Projects

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Ticonderoga continues to facilitate solar projects through Town staff and partners with Essex County Office of Community Resources to execute a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) schedule that has become attractive and affordable for solar companies, while also generating revenue for the town and property owners. Agreements include provisions for eventual removal of equipment and returning the land to its former state when the project ends its life cycle. Ticonderoga has an abundance of level ground and proximity to high-voltage transmission lines which are two conditions essential for solar farms.

Six (6) solar farms have been approved to date through the Planning & Zoning Board for construction. Pivot solar 1 (Commerce Park), Pivot solar 6 (Old Chilson Road), Pivot solar 9 (Huestis on NYS 9N), and Ticon Solar (Charboneau Road) have been completed and are supplying power to the grid. Pivot solar 5 (Delano Road) has been completed and is waiting for National Grid to perform a witness test sometime in late December or January before the system can supply power to the grid. Permits have been issued for Doering (49 Veterans Road), but there is no construction to date. One project is in year one of the PILOT payment schedule beginning in 2025.

## 2.8 Lowe's Property Development

**GOAL:** Support in Finding a Tenant

**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

The Town continues to respond to requests for information and provide points of contact by those agencies and organizations seeking an inroad into securing the Lowe's property for commercial development. All rumors regarding supermarket use, etc. are unfounded. The property is private property, owned by a publicly traded real estate investment trust, which leases the property to Lowes. This lease expires in February 2029. Lowes has a renewal option to extend the lease until 2090, but this option is not expected to occur. The current owner has stated that it has no interest in leasing or selling as it recently acquired the property pursuant to a merger with the previous owner and therefore, the property is a tax benefit.

It is important for residents to realize that although the Town seeks to make this private property commercially viable once again, it has no authority to influence or direct the future of the property. The Town coordinated with the Ticonderoga Fire District, the Essex County Industrial Development Agency (ECIDA), and others during the last two years to aid those organizations in their attempts to purchase or discuss use of the facility. To date, no efforts to obtain the property have been successful.

## 2.9 Eclipse 2024

**GOAL:** Develop & Implement an Economic Strategy

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Town partnered with the Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism (ROOST), Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce (TACC), Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance (TRA), North Country Rural Development Coalition (PRIDE), Essex County Office of Emergency Services, and others to develop an economic strategy to maximize the potential economic impact to Ticonderoga and the region as well as ensure the safety and security of residents and visitors during the event. Efforts included identifying viewing areas in the Ticonderoga area and securing use of facility



*The 2024 solar eclipse.*

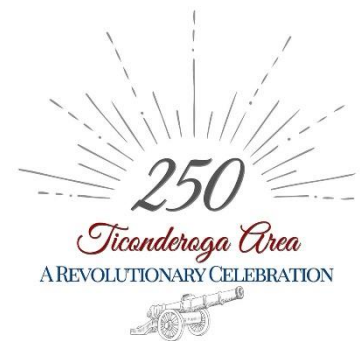
arrangements, working with local businesses for special promotions, and marketing. The Town hosted one meeting of the Economic Development Committee for ROOST to address the Town and associated organizations, as well as attended virtual meetings on January 26 to discuss emergency services and February 26 to coordinate with regional partners.

## 2.10 Commemoration of American Revolution

**GOAL:** Participate in 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee

**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

The Town partnered with the Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism (ROOST), Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce (TACC), Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance (TRA), North Country Rural Development Coalition (NRDC), Ticonderoga Heritage Museum, Fort Ticonderoga Association, Lower Adirondack Regional Center for History (LARCH), and others in planning for the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the American Revolution. This celebration will take place in multiple years beginning in 2025 through 2027.



Ticonderoga and other entities have been working to identify points of interest along a yet unnamed historical trail that highlights areas and stories associated with our Nation's struggle for independence.

## 3.0 Infrastructure Improvement

The improvement of our infrastructure is not only important from the standpoint of safety, but also ties directly to the economic development of Ticonderoga and how our town appears to not only our residents, but also to our visitors. Why would anyone invest in a town which is unwilling to invest in itself? This is the rationale for continuing efforts to improve our infrastructure. Failure to continually improve our infrastructure results in higher costs in the future.

### 3.1 Sidewalk/Paving Replacement

**GOAL:** Continue Sidewalk Replacement

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Ticonderoga's sidewalks have been a prime example of crumbling infrastructure for many decades. Sidewalk replacement was a critical goal for the new Supervisor in 2022 and continued in 2023 and 2024 with an approximate 3,200 lineal feet (16,200 square feet) of existing sidewalk replaced in the town in 2024. This included areas along Lake George Avenue. Sidewalks were replaced in the following areas:

- Lake George Avenue (east side) just south of Father Jogues Place and Lake George Avenue intersection.
- Montcalm Street (north side) from the intersection of North Wayne Avenue to the west.
- Montcalm Street (south side) from the intersection of South Wayne Avenue to the west.
- Champlain Avenue and Alexandria Avenue on the southeast corner.
- Amherst Avenue from the southeast corner of Calkins Place and to the north.
- Burgoyne Road near Tower Avenue.



*Sidewalk replacement on Lake George Avenue.*



*Paving Iroquois and Holcomb Ave.*

**GOAL:** Continue Annual Paving Operations**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Ticonderoga’s Highway Department kicked off the summer with paving operations on Iroquois Avenue and Holcomb Avenue. Peckham conducted the work under Highway oversight. These two roads were in very degraded condition. The following roads were paved in 2024:

- Iroquois Street.
- Hinds Street.
- Holcomb Avenue.
- Hayford Road.
- Morhouse Drive.
- Sections of Hall Road.
- North Champlain Avenue.
- Sections of Warner Hill Road were repaired.

The Town Highway Department assisted the Essex County Department of Public Works in the milling and paving of Baldwin Road and Black Point Road in April and May this year. These are County roads, but our Highway Department assisted County efforts when available. This was successfully completed in time to support the annual Ticonderoga Triathlon in June.

### 3.2 Downtown Improvements

**GOAL:** Rehabilitate Newberry’s Building**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

The Town submitted a RESTORE NY application for 108 Montcalm Street in May, but it was not approved because the Phase II Environmental was not completed. The Town will reapply and once approved, this will help fund phase II of the project to rehabilitate 108 Montcalm Street (aka Newberry’s aka Hacker Boat). Phase I of the project is via NYS DRI to remediate the structure, replace the roof, and complete basic interior work and electrical. Phase II through RESTORE NY and other funding opportunities will create two (2) commercial units on Montcalm Street (with vacant space for others in the back) and four (4) housing units on the upper



*Remediation begins at 108 Montcalm.*

story in the rear of the building. A mixed residential/commercial project makes the RESTORE NY application more competitive and is another small step to provide housing to alleviate the serious housing shortage in Ticonderoga.

North Country Rural Development Coalition (NRDC) and Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance (TRA) partnered to facilitate the DRI project. AAC Contracting began asbestos removal and mold remediation in early November. Luck Builders was contracted to begin work on the roof and following structural shoring efforts and hazardous material removal. The building was classified as clear of asbestos in early December and roofing operations began.

### 3.3 St. Clair/Grove Flooding

**GOAL:** Mitigate St. Clair Flooding

**STATUS:** PARTIALLY COMPLETED

As reported in the 2022 State of the Town report, the pooling of excessive storm water during heavy, consistent rain events has caused large buildup of water at the intersection of St. Clair Street and Grove Street for many years due to several factors. The Town's efforts to correct this have also occurred for many years but significant progress was made in 2023 and again in 2024 to alleviate the issue. Correcting this deficiency remains a high priority project for the Town and current administration.

Efforts to correct the issue have been obstructed by a select few residents who were critical to the solution and a successful effort could have been funded and completed if better cooperation with the Town was achieved. One solution required the enactment of needed easements with the Town which would have allowed the town to install a new drainage pipe through private property and return the property to its original condition. Town efforts were impeded from refusal to sign easements, to harassment during site inspections, to threats of



*Lowes Cleanup: Before & after photos of inflow #1.*

violence upon town contracted surveyors. Despite these impediments, the Town continued to move forward towards a solution.

Lowe's retention pond upstream of the flooding area received greater attention this year. The Town Code Enforcement office worked again with Lowes property management, following up on initial work in 2023, to clean and provide regular maintenance to the storm water retention system. Waters from that area have contributed to flooding areas downstream on St. Clair and Grove Streets. Lowes contracted with Artemis to complete repairs on the storm water retention system from May 6 to May 14. Work included removal of sediment and vegetation from the intake flow, forebay, channel, and micro pool; increased the depth of the micro pool; achieved positive drainage in the channel from the forebay to the micro pool; sealed pipe joints; and seeded/blanketed disturbed areas.

The Town continues to make advances in this project and will continue in these efforts until solved. The Town will also monitor and ensure Lowe's property management properly maintains the retention pond area.

### 3.4 Bridge Infrastructure

**GOAL:** Alexandria Bridge Replacement

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The project to replace the Alexandria Avenue bridge is a NYS DOT project which is funded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), State, and County offices. Utility work agreements were completed and approved in July.

The Town Supervisor worked with the Essex County Board of Supervisors and the County DPW Superintendent on the bridge replacement project. This is an approximate \$3,131,328.00 project

funded by the federal government (80%), NYS (\$15%) and Essex County (5%). Bids were due on May 24 and ING Civil, Inc. was awarded the construction project. CPL Engineers was the design consultant.



*Alexandria bridge under construction.*



Road closure and work began on August 19, 2024. The Town's Water/Sewer Department did an amazing job working with the contractor to minimize water/sewer interruption during the temporary water line work. Construction ended in December and the bridge was opened to vehicular traffic but closed to pedestrian traffic until spring.

### 3.5 New Police Station

**GOAL:** Obtain New Home for Police Department

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Town continued to work on a proper solution for a permanent home for the Ticonderoga Police Department. The current facility is deteriorated and insufficient for law enforcement operations. The Municipal Facility Evaluation Committee (MFEC) looked at multiple options including leasing and new construction. The Town Board decided against an offer to lease a portion of the Hudson Headwaters Health Network structure on Racetrack Road after months of review and analysis. The cost to the taxpayer for this option was untenable. Plans continued for new construction when an opportunity presented itself for a new option.



*Former Hudson Headwaters Health Network property.*

Opportunities presented themselves and the timing happened to be opportune for the Town Board to pursue an option to purchase the HHHN property. This became the most effective and affordable option for the taxpayer. Discussions began with HHHN on April 23 and continued into May with discussions resulting in an agreement. This option provided:

- An improved and more appropriate work environment for police with the necessary and appropriate facility space for department operations including a future sally-port.
- A potential new and more appropriate location for the municipal court. There is a clear public safety and building security issue with the court in the Community Building.
- A potential to move the Town Board meeting location to vacant court space which is a safer area for that body to meet and provides more space for the community to attend open meetings.
- Office space for Town Board Council members in the vacated court space.
- Opens the Community Building auditorium space for the building's original purpose, which is to serve the community, on a less restricted basis.

- Adequate conference and meeting space for municipal activities and community events.
- Provides offsite municipal record storage for applicable files.
- Provides more appropriate storage for seasonal decorations and other items and reduces the risk of damage and replacement costs associated with current storage methods in the Armory and other locations.

The Town made an offer on the property in May for the sum of \$350,000.00 using unreserved/unappropriated fund balance. The property closed on September 27, 2024. Remaining ARPA funding was used to conduct minor repairs (roof, inspect water lines, etc.) and purchase equipment. This project will continue as the Town examines refurbishment costs for police and other entities in phases.

### 3.6 Airport Lighting

**GOAL:** Replace/Improve Lighting

**STATUS:** PARTIALLY COMPLETED

The Town began working with the FAA and the Town’s Airport consultant for a lighting upgrade at the airport. The Town Board approved the submission of a categorical exclusion (CATEX) in June. The project includes trenching and replacement of 2 REILS, 12 runway threshold lights, 45 runway edge lights, 55 taxiway edge lights, 13,700 feet of conduit, 15,500 feet of type C #8 cable, 12,100 feet of bare copper counterpoise cable, and one constant current regulator in the electrical vault. The existing lighting system at the airport is approximately 15 years old and needs replacement. Additionally, the new lighting system will consist of Light Emitting Diodes (LED) replacing the incandescent lighting system. Construction would start in Summer 2026.



*The new municipal airport sign.*

### 3.7 Airport Improvement

**GOAL:** Replace Airport Sign

**STATUS:** COMPLETED

The Ticonderoga Municipal Airport is a critical transportation artery and economic asset for the town.



*Beacon tower historic sign.*

In a continuing effort to ensure our infrastructure is maintained, a new sign was developed and erected at the Ticonderoga Municipal Airport. The original wooden sign crumbled apart upon its replacement. The NYS Historic sign was moved to the other side of the airport access road during the process, so it has a place of prominence and is not lost in a sea of signs.

In addition to the new airport sign, a sign commemorating the history of the Ticonderoga Intermediate Airfield and beacon tower, erected in 2023, was added to the property in May.

### 3.8 Other Improvements

**GOAL:** Replace Evergreen Tree

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Town removed the diseased tree from the front lawn of the Community Building on April 16. The pine tree had been slowly dying. A replacement tree was planted on May 21 and funded using ARPA funding. The new blue spruce is used as a holiday tree in the community's annual Christmas celebration sponsored by TACC and in coordination with the Town. Maintaining infrastructure as expediently as possible reduces the cost of doing so later.



*The new evergreen tree.*

**GOAL:** Improve Recreational Field

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Buildings and Grounds Committee approved the installation of a new batting cage at the Ticonderoga Recreational Field in May. This park and its amenities are vital to our community for our youth and must be maintained. This action followed the 2023 project to replace two ballfield bleachers which were funded in 2023 and installed this year. The batting cage project was partially funded with town ARPA funds and Little League funds.

**GOAL:** Support Broadband Service Map

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Supervisor continued to support weekly broadband meetings in 2024 which work towards improving broadband service in the North Country. A major effort during 2024 involved a fabric study identifying those residents who are unserved or underserved and map these areas. This effort had the potential to allow broadband availability data filers, the FCC, and other stakeholders to work a single, standardized list of locations for the Broadband Data Collection project. This included those who had 1) no internet capability, 2) use a satellite-based system like HughesNet or Starlink for internet capability, 3) use a cellular provider like Verizon for internet

capability. The names and addresses of residents who fell into these categories were gathered and then compared on a map. Response to this request was light, but all those who responded were verified on the map to ensure they were addressed for a hopefully, future resolution through obtaining a portion of State money to correct the problem.

**GOAL: Repair Gazebo**

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

To improve safety and address resident comments, the Town added railings and addressed the steps leading to the gazebo in Percy Thompson Bicentennial Park. The structure was also addressed last year when National Grid offered services to the community to make repairs and paint the structure. We continue to ensure the park is well maintained for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.

**GOAL: Install Pencil Sculpture**

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The creation and installation of a Dixon Ticonderoga Pencil sculpture was a project of the Ticonderoga Heritage Museum which leases the “1888” Building, former main offices of the Ticonderoga Pulp & Paper Company, from the Town of Ticonderoga. The sculpture was the gift of Denise Huestis to the Museum and the Town. Town officials coordinated the approval and location of this project.

State Senator, Dan Stec, Assemblyman Matt Simpson, and other dignitaries attended the July 25<sup>th</sup> dedication.



*Pencil sculpture dedication.*

## 4.0 Coordination Efforts

Coordination is critical to the successful implementation of any activity and frequent, inclusive communication remains a major core value for this administration. The Town Supervisor continued to ensure email and phone communication was frequent on issues that required coordination among all relevant organizations in 2024. The Supervisor supported all organizational meetings with town partners when they did not conflict with town obligations. These included coordination with emergency services, ex-officio obligations, and other internal and external requirements. Specific partnership communication metrics may be found in section 5.0.

### 4.1 Ex-Officio Responsibilities

**GOAL:** Participate as Ex-Officio

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Ticonderoga Town Supervisor is an ex-officio member of the Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce (TACC) Board, the Ticonderoga Montcalm Street Partnership (TMSP) Board, and the Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance (TRA) Board. Prior town support to these organizations was not provided or provided in a limited capacity. The current administration continues to consider these partnerships as critical and vital links to Ticonderoga's successful revitalization and economic development efforts. As was accomplished in 2022 and 2023, the Town Supervisor continued to attend these organizational meetings and events, shared information, and coordinated with their annual activities in 2024.

The TRA Board Chairman approached the Town and TRA Board members regarding a potential affiliation concept between TRA and NRDC in late December 2023. Discussions continued into 2024 and throughout the year with the Town as a partner for economic reasons and because TRA is an Economic Development Corporation associated with the Town of Ticonderoga. A meeting of the two organization's principals with the Town Supervisor in attendance occurred on May 30. Discussions changed and TRA decided to put any coalition or affiliation on hold for one year. This decision significantly impacted the 108 Montcalm Street DRI project already in significant progress with NRDC leading the effort (assigned to do so by TRA). This, in turn, endangered the success of the DRI Streetscape project. Discussions to obtain some kind of agreement between the TRA and NRDC to continue working on the project failed despite attempts by the Town of Ticonderoga, as the Sole Member of TRA, to convey its concerns. The TRA Chairman of the Board requested action from the Town on August 16, 2024, to dismiss seven (7) TRA board members. On September 12, 2024, the Ticonderoga Town Board ended the appointment of seven (7)

members of the TRA board in accordance with TRA By-Laws, Article III, Section 3(a). This was a difficult, but a necessary decision for the town's economic development.

TRA Board of Directors whose appointments were discontinued filed suit against the Town Board and Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance on October 3, 2024. A judge immediately denied the request for a temporary restraining order. The dismissed TRA board members withdrew their litigation claim on October 8, 2024.

## 4.2 Ticonderoga Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners

**GOAL:** Attend Fire District Meetings

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Ticonderoga Fire District, as a separate taxing district, provides a budget to the Town of Ticonderoga each fiscal year in accordance with its charter and the Town collects this levy on behalf of the fire district. The Supervisor recognizes the importance of cooperating and partnering with the Fire District if for nothing else, situational awareness. The Town Supervisor coordinated with the Fire District, including Fire District and Fire Commissioner meetings and District budget hearings as a member of the public and occasionally provided input when requested by the Board of Fire Commissioners meeting, on more than 40 occasions during 2024. The Supervisor also provided monthly statistics to the Volunteer Fire Company (Fire Chief) compiled by Essex County Emergency Services.

During 2024, the Town Supervisor began attending Fire District workshops which were implemented to discuss and plan a new fire station structure to house valuable fire apparatus and properly treat and store gear to protect firefighters from toxic conditions. The Town Supervisor also opened the Community Building to support Fire District meetings while the fire facility was undergoing a mold remediation project.

## 4.3 Silver Bay Association

**GOAL:** Continue Coordination

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Supervisor continued cooperative efforts with Silver Bay Association in 2024. The Town Supervisor coordinated with Silver Bay and the Town's Recreational Supervisor on additional space in the Armory for Silver Bay use. Unfortunately, no additional space was available. The Town appreciates all that Silver Bay does for our area, but the Town also requires a certain amount of Armory space for town programs and operations. Additional discussions occurred between Silver Bay and the Town on September 24, 2024, about partnership opportunities

regarding youth activities. Silver Bay attended the Youth Commission meeting to further discuss future options.

#### 4.4 External Communication

**GOAL:** New York State Coordination

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

It is critical to relate our challenges to representatives of the Governor's office. On March 14, the Town Supervisor joined representatives from the Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce, North Country Rural Development Coalition (NRDC), and the Essex County Industrial Development Agency (ECIDA) to speak to Alison Webbinaro, the Governor's Regional Representative for the North Country Region. The Town shared its concerns regarding the Chilson/Eagle Lake water issue and funding, the Water Pollution Control Plant upgrade funding, housing and hamlet expansion challenges, APA and DEC issues including the closure of the Eagle Lake boat launch. The Supervisor attended the NYS Governor's budget meeting in Lake Placid in January.

#### 4.5 Recognizing Partners

**GOAL:** Recognize Significant Partner Milestones

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Town of Ticonderoga appreciates all our partners be they economic organizations, businesses, or individuals. This year, the town recognized the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ticonderoga Emergency Squad, the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the TrailNorth Federal Credit Union, the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of PRIDE of Ticonderoga, the LARCH 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the dedication of the Joseph Cook Heroes of Ticonderoga boulder in Artillery (formerly Academy) Park, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Elks 1494, and the LARCH 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Liberty Monument. The Town issued proclamations for these important milestones.



*TFCU 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary*

## 4.6 Holiday Train Communication

**GOAL:** Support Food Bank & Reestablish a Stop

**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

Through conversations with a representative of the local food pantry, it became apparent that continued contributions from the Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC) Holiday Train could aid the food pantry's efforts and goals. These contributions ceased when the train no longer stopped in Ticonderoga because of a continued lack of support and participation from the community. The Town Supervisor contacted CPKC in February to obtain contact for



*Holiday train.*

the Holiday Train. This led to a discussion on March 27 with the Director of Heritage Operations & Service at Canadian Pacific Kansas City Railroad. As the train only makes donations to those communities where the train stops, the Supervisor began to make inquiries among local organizations about once again petitioning the railroad to add Ticonderoga again as a stop. Any renewed effort, if approved by the railroad, required a solid commitment from the town, school, and other organizations to ensure this annual event was supported on a scale like Best 4th or Streetfest. The Town Supervisor assigned the project to the Economic Development Committee. The Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce accepted the task to coordinate with the Central School District. Once accomplished, the Town will assemble a proposal and submit it to the railroad. It may require a year or more to get Ticonderoga back into the holiday schedule.

## 4.7 Fort Ticonderoga Coordination

**GOAL:** Approve Access to Town Property

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Fort Ticonderoga Association approached the Town about their private water main that runs from the town system across La Chute River near Carillon Bridge and travels along the Fort Ti



Road to supply water to that area and its necessary repair/replacement in June and July of 2022. The Town informed Fort Ti that, as it was a private line, the Town could not replace it and would not take over the line but did provide a letter of support for Fort Ti’s application for grant funding.

Upon obtaining funding, Fort Ticonderoga Association approached the Town again beginning in May 2024 requesting access to town property near Carillon Park to install a portion of the new private water line. The Town Water/Wastewater Superintendent and Fort Ti officials worked on and reviewed engineering plans. A final agreement was constructed by the Town Attorney, and this was fully executed by the Town and Fort Ticonderoga Association on October 9, 2024.

### 4.8 Consultant Coordination

**GOAL:** Maintain Professional Consultants

**STATUS:** COMPLETED

The Town has several consultants who aid the town in its many duties and obligations. These include but are not limited to legal consultation, human resource and employment issues, municipal airport operations and FAA coordination, labor relations and collective bargaining issues, health and liability insurance, town engineering, and payroll services. Figure 4-1 depicts the amount of coordination during 2024.

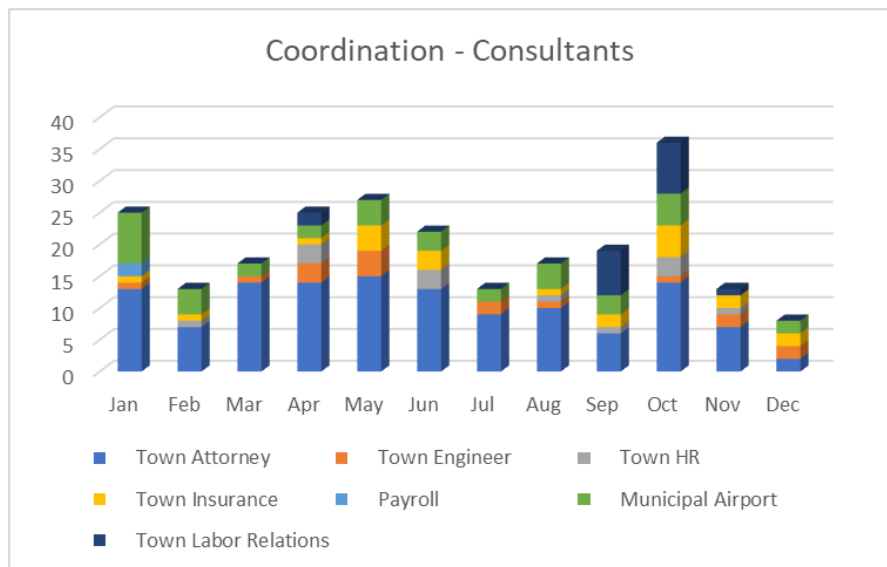


FIGURE 4-1

# 5.0 Resident & Staff Communication

This section reviews specific communication tools used by the Town Supervisor to communicate and receive information and news to/from residents. A major element of effective communication involves allowing the public to have access to their leadership and leadership keeping the residents informed on what is occurring in their town – good or bad. The Town Supervisor should be available to listen to residents’ concerns and address their issues. Phone calls should be answered, emails promptly returned, and an open-door policy implemented. Additional communication occurs in the town offices each day between staff and leadership on a variety of issues. Metrics comprise an excellent method to track not only the volume of communications but also the responsiveness of the Town Supervisor. The following metrics demonstrate the amount of activity in 2024 regarding communication.



## 5.1 Walk-in Visits & Appointments

**GOAL:** Enable Walk-in Visits & Appointments

**STATUS:** COMPLETED

Walk-in visits include unplanned and non-scheduled appointments where residents or other individuals arrive unexpectedly wishing to speak with the Town Supervisor. All walk-ins were welcomed at any time unless the Supervisor was engaged in another activity. In this case, the resident or individual was provided with a mutually agreeable time in which to return.

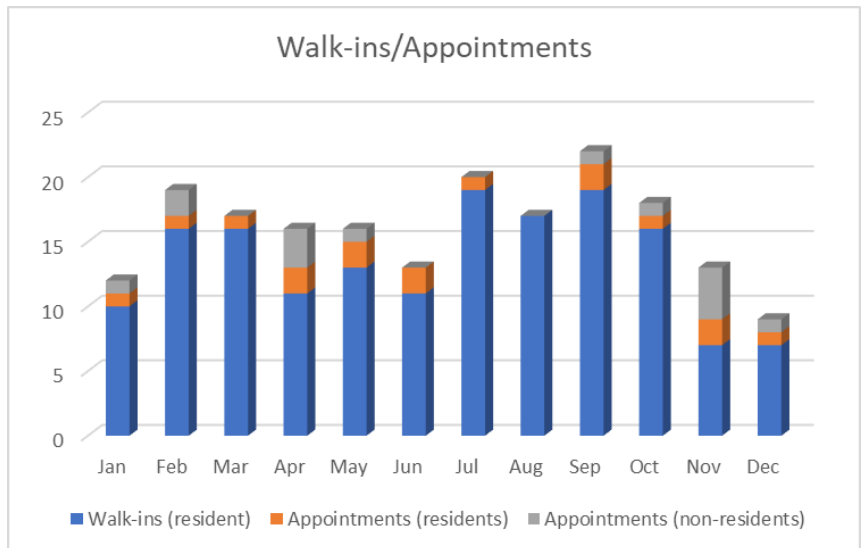


FIGURE 5-1

Scheduled meetings between the Supervisor and residents (or others) allow for dedicated time to discuss more lengthy issues and aid in better scheduling the Supervisor’s and the resident’s time. Figure 5-1 indicates the number of walk-in visits and appointments during 2024.

## 5.2 Phone Calls/Emails/Messaging

**GOAL:** Return Communication

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

It is the policy of this administration to promptly return phone calls and emails. Most are returned immediately. Some at the end of the day or the following day. Some communication comes to the Supervisor via social media messages and is returned as soon as practical. Figure 5-2 depicts the metrics associated with the volume of resident phone calls received and those which were required to be returned. Some calls are answered directly while others were recorded when our of the office and then returned.

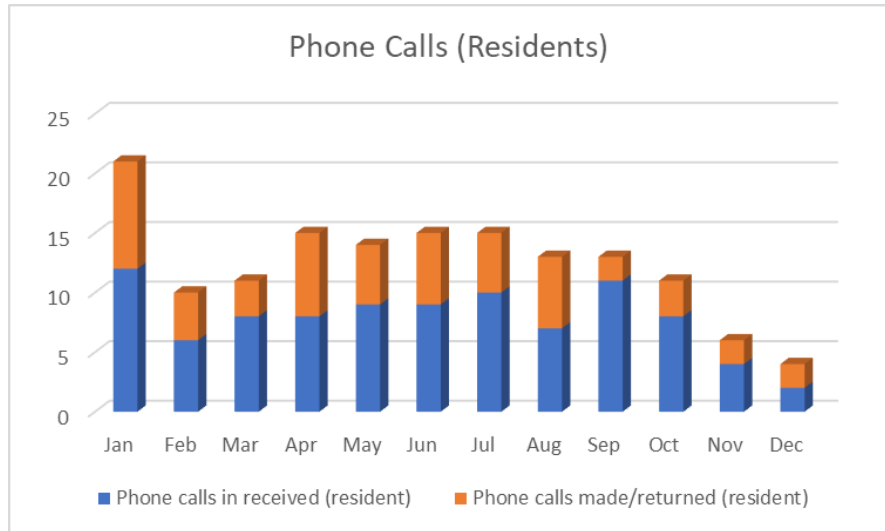


FIGURE 5-2

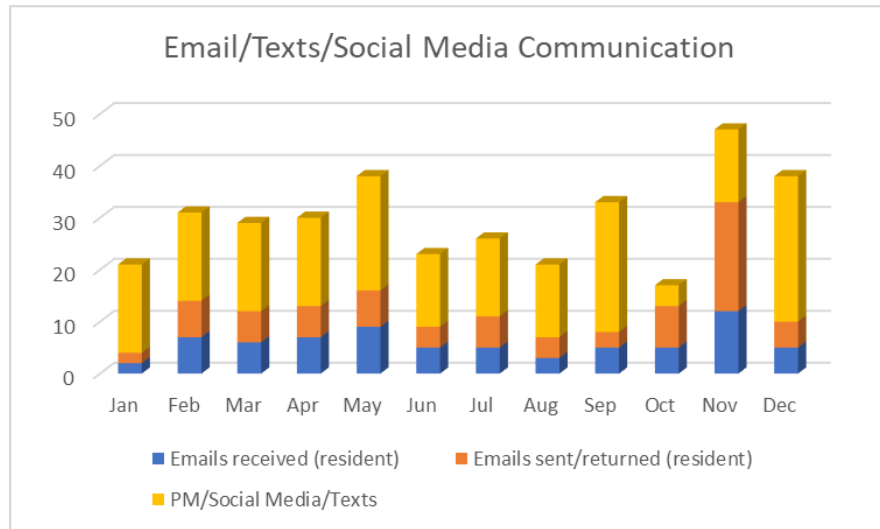


FIGURE 5-3

Figure 5-3 depicts the metrics associated with the volume of email and social media incoming communications and responses for 2024.

### 5.3 Partnership Communication

**GOAL:** Communicate with Partners

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Communication with the Town’s partners, who for the most part are also town residents, is critical for the success of town wide initiatives, endeavors, and goals. The Town has many partners including those in business, economic development and revitalization, utility providers, county and state government organizations and officials, media representatives, educational providers, and other areas.

Figures 5-4 and 5-5 identifies these partners as well as provides the metrics associated with the volume of communications in 2024.

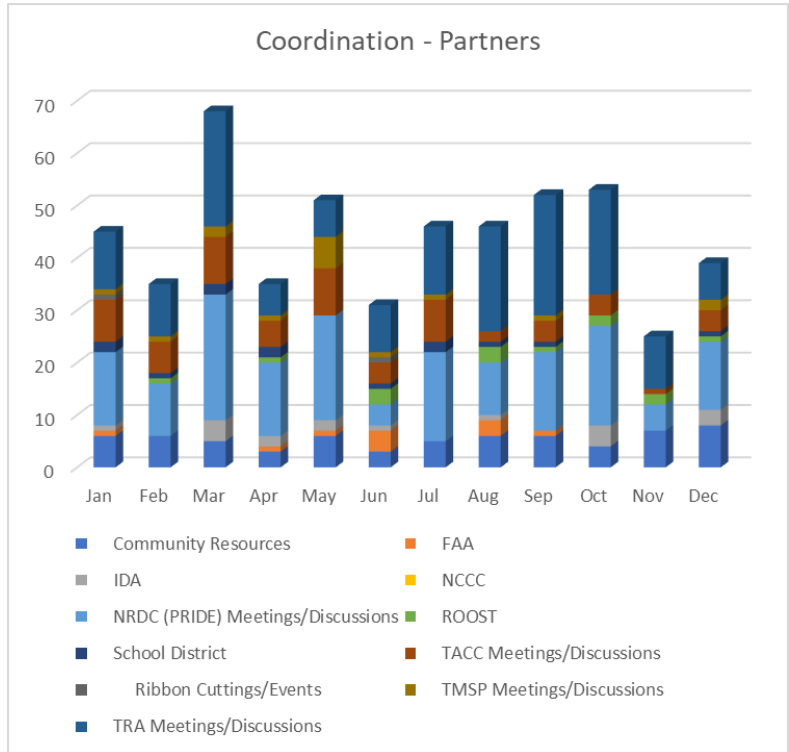


FIGURE 5-4

### 5.4 Community Interaction

**GOAL:** Check-ins & Visits

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

It is important for the Town Supervisor to occasionally check in on businesses and visit areas within the town for specific issues when the need arises. Figure 5-6 provides the metrics associated with the volume of check-ins and visits in 2024.

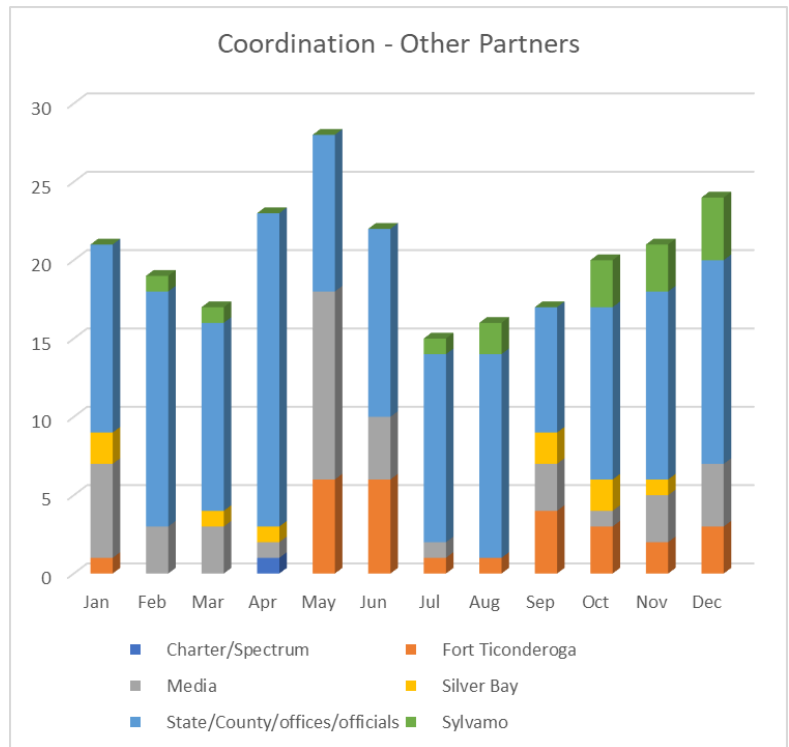


FIGURE 5-5

### 5.5 Town Facebook Page

**GOAL:** Facebook Page Posts

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Facebook is both a useful communication tool and a challenge, but the benefits for disseminating and receiving information cannot be ignored. The Town removed its Facebook page in 2021, but it was reinstated in April 2022 by the current Town Supervisor and has been an effective tool during 2024. This page disseminates official town information and notifications including meeting dates and changes, closure information, weather warnings, county information, etc. It is not a platform for discussion.



FIGURE 5-6

In addition to the Town Facebook page, the Town Supervisor also communicates using a second Facebook page which provides information of interest from the Supervisor such as regular reports of activities and local town issues through the “From the Supervisor’s Desk” series.

Facebook has proven to be an effective tool even though the audience may be somewhat limited due to the availability of the platform to some residents. Its use will continue in 2025.

### 5.6 Town Website

**GOAL:** Maintain Website

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The town website is an important tool for communicating with the public. It is updated regularly with town board meeting agendas and minutes comprising the most frequent information updated. The event schedule and important information from other sources (County, etc.) is also updated frequently.

The Town Supervisor continued to maintain the town website during 2024. The Supervisor continues to support the Police Department and the Black Watch Library in making their information available to the public. In April, the new content was added in the Things to Do section of the website. The website format was changed slightly to provide better readability.

### 5.7 Daily Updates & Discussions

**GOAL:** Internal Discussions/Direction

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

A considerable amount of communication and decisions occur in the town offices each day on a multitude of issues/topics so the Town Supervisor must be present during regular business hours to participate in these discussions with residents, staff, consultants, department heads, council members, organizational partners, business owners, and others. Many of these discussions involve staff providing input and seeking

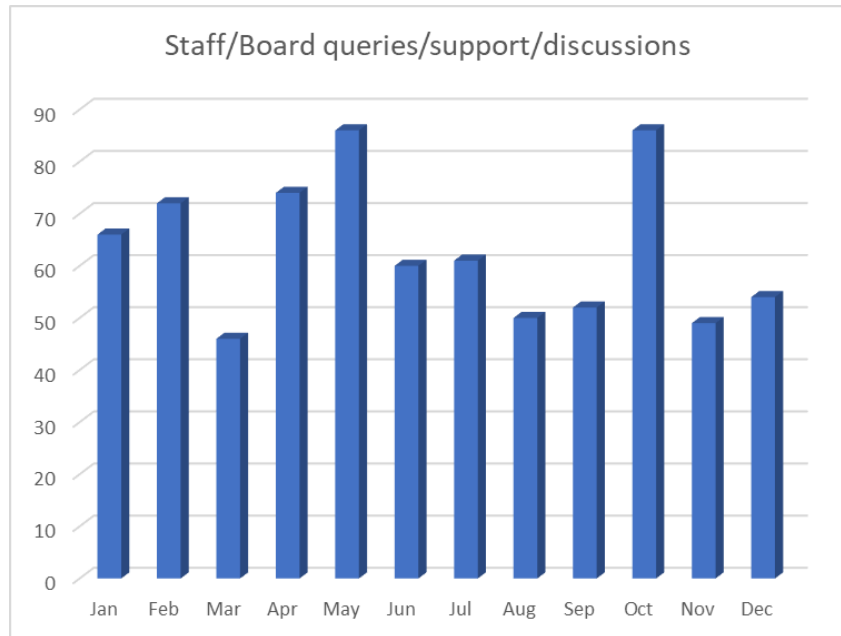


FIGURE 5-7

direction or clarification, providing status input regarding ongoing events or activities, discussions with individual board members on their projects or current issues, budget discussions, financial issues, personnel issues, highway activities, committee action items, etc. Figure 5-7 depicts the approximate number of such inquiries and discussions on significant issues over the last year.

### 5.8 Public Meetings

**GOAL:** Ensure Open Meetings

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Town adheres to the New York State Open Meetings Law. Residents are welcomed and encouraged to observe their local government in action.

Town Board meetings and committee meetings are open to the public and are held at times which best accommodate the greatest majority of the public while limiting staff overtime costs. Regular Town Board meetings and some committee meetings offer a public comment period subject to discussion and time limitation guidelines which are typical in the municipal industry (see the link to these guidelines on the town website). Other board meetings do not accommodate public comment but still allow observation in accordance with NYS law. The public

may also provide written comments to the Town Clerk for inclusion in the minutes for any town meeting.

Figures 5-8 and 5-9 provide the metrics associated with the volume of government meetings in 2024 in which the Town Supervisor was in attendance. Additional meetings may have occurred but could not include the Supervisor due to scheduling conflicts.

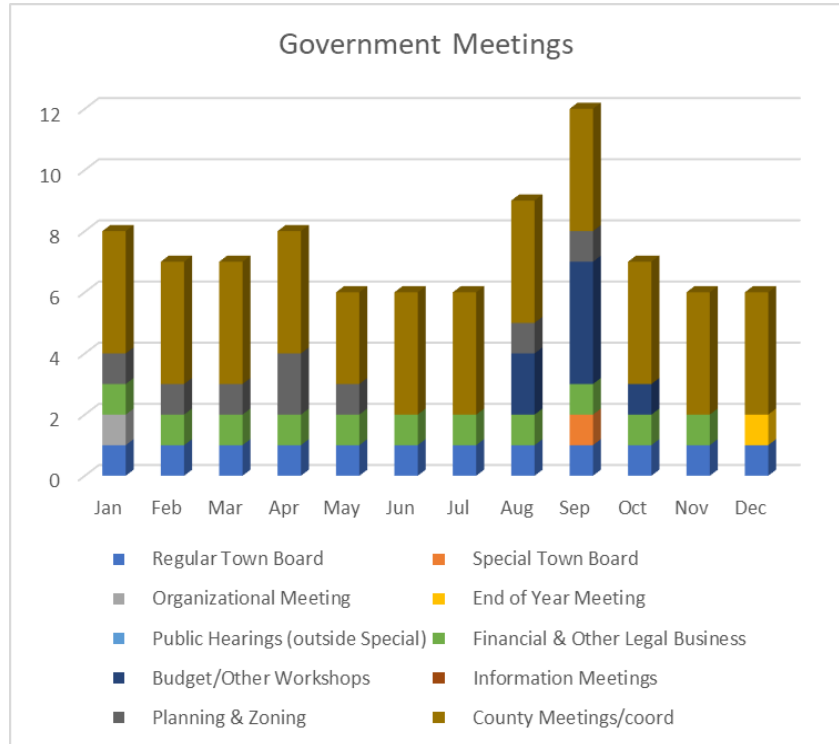


FIGURE 5-8

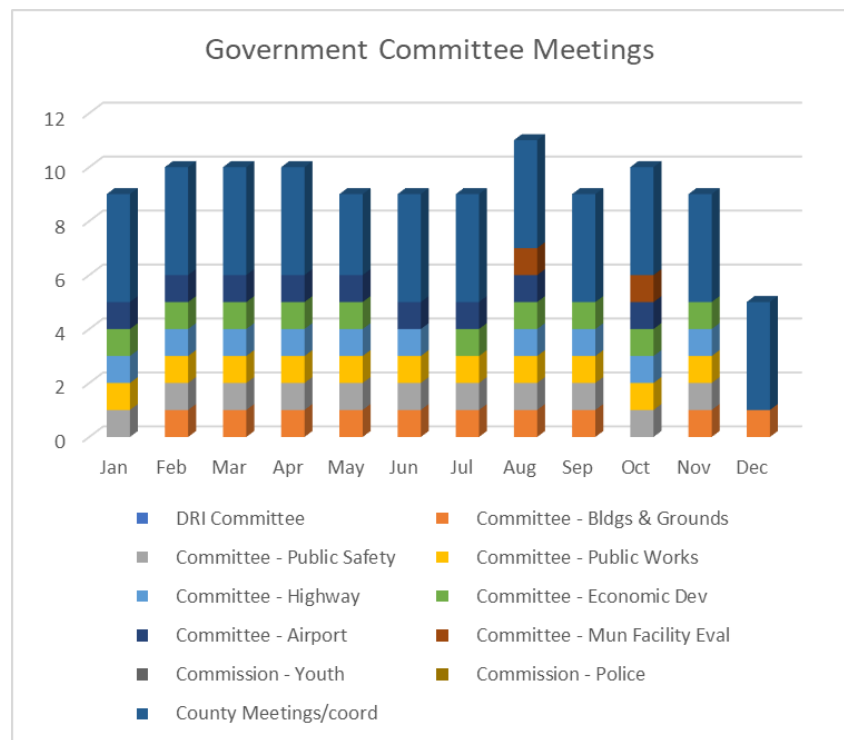


FIGURE 5-9

## 5.9 Community Visibility

**GOAL:** Community Participation

**STATUS:** COMPLETED

Another form of communication and access to town government occurs when elected officials are seen in the streets of the town and participating in community events. The Town Supervisor maintained this form of access and communication in 2024. The Town Supervisor’s availability using this method was successful in allowing residents to take the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback. Participation included several fund raising BBQs among multiple organizations, the annual TMSP StreetFest, Independence Day activities, FallFest, Annual Car Show, OctoberFest, weekly Farmer’s Market, Festival Guild summer concerts, Essex County Fair opening ceremonies, Festival of the Trees, Trekonderoga, Small Business Saturday, TACC Community Appreciation awards, Irishman of the Year, NRDC Wine & Swine, Sylvamo Community Advisory Council, Ticonderoga Central School District board meetings, Elks Flag Day ceremony, Ti Alumni Awards, Ti Art Gallery exhibitions, TACC Annual Fundraiser, annual Kiwanis Easter Egg Hunt, and others.



*TACC Community Appreciation Dinner Awards.*



*“Coffee with a Cop” at Stewarts in Ticonderoga.*

In addition, the Town Supervisor issued seven (7) proclamations in 2024 to honor or commemorate historic events and individuals. These included the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ticonderoga Emergency Squad, the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of PRIDE of Ticonderoga, the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the TrailNorth Federal Credit Union, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Elks Lodge 1494, the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cook Boulder (Heroes Rock) dedication, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Liberty Monument dedication, and the dedication of American Legion Post Commander Charles Messier.



## 6.0 Major Capital Projects

### 6.1 Chilson/Eagle Lake Water

**GOAL:** Municipal Water Solution

**STATUS: NOT COMPLETED**

The current town noncompliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 has existed for many decades through multiple Supervisors, but the project to bring the water system into compliance was most active during the prior and current administrations as these two administrations were under



*Gooseneck.*

a 2018 Consent Decree with the Department of Justice (DOJ), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and New York State Department of Health (DOH), to remove Ticonderoga from the filtration avoidance criteria that existed since 1991. Compliance equates with either abandoning Gooseneck as a municipal water source or fixing it to bring it into compliance. Prior and current Town Boards made the decision that fixing Gooseneck is cost prohibitive and unaffordable for taxpayers and residents due to the limited number of residents who would be required to pay for this project and the fact that they formerly expressed a desire to not become a new water district (the only method by which a municipality can supply water).

A small minority of residents disagreed with the town elected officials, engineers, Town Attorney, and the NYS Department of Health on the approach and professional analysis in terms of using Gooseneck water. Although stating many times that a petition containing 700 signatures was provided to the Town requesting the Town to only utilize Lake George and Gooseneck Pond as primary water sources, only 240 signatures were turned into the Town Clerk on June 9, 2022, at the regular town board meeting. Of those 240 signatures, approximately 59 were not signatures (printed names). In approximately 13 instances, two names appeared to have been signed by the same individual (identical handwriting). In the case of 8 individuals, a phone number was provided instead of the required address and approximately 45 individuals were not listed on registered voter records. More importantly, none of the petition pages were valid and did not contain witness statements, were not signed by a witness, and were not dated by a witness.

Town elected officials and consultants pivoted several times when presented with engineering and funding challenges. Activities late in 2023 and into 2024 included a process by which the Town would conduct test wells for a future municipal well system. However, efforts to execute

that solution were challenged in October 2023 when three residents filed a lawsuit against the Town, Department of Justice, and New York State Department of Health. This halted any use of grant monies to provide a feasible, affordable, safe, and compliant drinking water solution. A federal court ruled on June 3 and granted the Town's request to dismiss the case with prejudice stating, "...a closer inspection reveals that this case is just an improper attempt to collaterally attack a settlement agreement adopted in an earlier dispute between the defendants in this case."

Discussions between the Town, federal, and state officials continue. The Town has discussed status at each monthly Public Works meeting. Test well operations are not expected to occur until Spring 2025.

## 6.2 La Chute River Walking Trail Extension

**GOAL:** Complete Trail Extension

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Ticonderoga received a NYS Local Waterfront Revitalization Program grant to connect the lower and upper trail locations. The path was designed to follow a specific route, avoiding a protected wetland, and terminate at the top of the hill near the spoils area off Lake George Avenue. Work began early in the year with site inspections marking trees and brush for removal along the proposed path. Residents who lived next to the work area were informed of the activity and the project. The Town Highway Department completed initial brush and tree removal in March before the protected species prohibition began in April. Most of the work was centered around brush removal. This in-kind work reduced the overall cost of the project. The Town modified the path, reducing the original width of the trail from 10' to 6' to better match the current path and reduce the number of tree cuttings and erosion control work. The Town was very careful and selective when marking the trail to save established and healthy trees as much as possible.



*La Chute River Walking Trail under construction.*



The project cost significantly increased, and the three (3) bids provided to the Town all came in over the anticipated construction budget. The Town was required to supplement the planned local match of \$93,250 with an additional \$59,760. This funding was all using ARPA funds. This was considered prudent as the Town already expended over \$52,760 of the \$279,750 grant amount on design engineering and did not wish this money

to be expended without a project completion. The Town will save another approximately \$50,000 for a guiderail (not required but desired) by applying for grant money and using in-king force work once the trail is completed.

The Town Board awarded the construction contract to Reale Construction as the lowest responsible bidder on September 12, 2024. The pre-construction meeting was held on September 24, 2024. Construction began in October and was completed in December with a punch list walk on December 2. Re-seeding may be required in spring.

### 6.3 WPCP and Collection System Upgrades

**GOAL:** Bond and Fund

**STATUS:** PARTIALLY COMPLETED

The Town is currently pursuing a major project to upgrade the Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) and Collection System. Ventilation heat systems have reached their useful life and are due for upgrades and replacement to meet existing codes and standards. The WPCP system also requires upgrades to various other treatment systems. In addition, the current plant status presents a health and safety issue for the staff who work there.

The Town Board passed resolutions in June and November authorizing the design, construction, and funding of the project. This is a projected \$35M project and will require significant funding through grants and zero interest loans. If the Town can secure a major portion of grant funding for the entire project, Ticonderoga taxpayers could realize over \$35M of needed upgrades for a total Town investment of around \$4M. This would be an incredible achievement. The Town completed the bonding action in November. This does not obligate the Town to spend this amount but does authorize the Town to do so.

Ticonderoga received Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding, having the highest score in the State, in the amount of \$8,559,500.00 for this effort and another \$7,743,293 in funding through a New York State Water Infrastructure Improvement Act (WIIA) grant in December. This provides approximately half of the project cost. The plan calls to apply for additional grant monies to lower the final cost. The Town will then borrow the balance of those funds from NYS EFC State Revolving Loan program. The Town qualified for a subsidized interest rate at zero percent. This project will continue into 2024.

The Town initiated a project in 2024 to upgrade the Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP). This project was dealt a significant financial blow when Ticonderoga was not on the list to receive up to \$10M in additional WQIP grant funding. The Town continued to examine its options and had several conversations with the NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC). Interviews were conducted in October with firms for the engineering portion of the project and three firms were selected for design engineering on the water meter project, the Chilson/Eagle Lake water project, and the Wastewater Treatment Plant project. If cost prohibitive, the project may be rescoped, if possible, to a more affordable project for the taxpayer addressing the higher priority portions of the overall project until additional funding is achieved.

## 6.4 Water Meter Project

**GOAL:** Install Water Meters

**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

The Town is required by permit from New York State to have water meters installed by March 31, 2025, associated with the Street Road well water source. The Town received a Green Innovation Grant Program GIGP award of 1.795M for this project. Costs have risen from \$2,624,879 to an estimated budget of \$3,117,325. The Town issued a request for qualifications on this project and received five (5) potential interested firms. The project schedule has an estimated completion date of 12/31/27. Interviews were conducted in October with firms for the engineering portion of the project. MJ Engineering was selected in December as the design engineer on this project.

## 6.5 Airport Apron Expansion

**GOAL:** Initiate Design Phase

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Town began an effort, partially funded through the FAA's Airport Improvement Plan (AIP) grant program (90%) and New York State funding (5%), to increase the apron size at the Ticonderoga Municipal Airport. The first part of this capital project is the design phase to

expand the existing main apron approximately 2,300 square yards, including associated aircraft tie-downs, drainage, and marking. Grant paperwork was submitted in August.

## 7.0 Other Town Projects & Issues

### 7.1 FAA GPS Nighttime Landing Restriction

**GOAL:** Clear Additional Tree Obstructions

**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

The FAA placed a GPS nighttime landing restriction on the Ticonderoga Municipal Airport (4B6) in June 2015 due to an obstruction. The Town physically removed the obstruction (tree) in the Fall of 2015 and in the FAA's Obstacle database in 2022. In 2023, the FAA informed the town of additional tree obstructions that must be removed. These were identified by the Airport Committee in September which coordinated with Sylvamo Paper upon whose property these are located. The Airport Committee worked with Sylvamo to remove the obstructions in 2024, but this task is not yet complete.

The Airport Committee in coordination with the Town's airport consultant conducted a drone survey on June 11 to identify the location and number of trees which must be removed to allow sufficient airspace clearance. The Committee will continue to work with Sylvamo in 2025 to remove the trees affecting proper clearance.

### 7.2 Develop Sick Leave Donation Policy

**GOAL:** Adopt Written Sick Leave Policy

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The development and establishment of a sick leave donation policy began late in 2023. The policy outlines the requirements for an individual who is unable to work for an extended period due to a serious health condition, to allow for other eligible employees to voluntarily donate their sick leave credits to the sick or injured employee. This project was scheduled to begin in 2024 but was initiated and the policy and related forms completed ahead of schedule in November of 2023. The policy was reviewed and adopted by the Town Board on January 11, 2024.

### 7.3 Improvements Using ARPA Funding

**GOAL:** Obligate ARPA Funding

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Town of Ticonderoga received \$545,297.27 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding related to lost revenue due to COVID impacts. These funds included \$487,793.41 from the federal government and \$57,503.86 from Essex County. The United States Treasury Department required these funds to be obligated by December 31, 2024, and expended by December 31,

2025. The Town of Ticonderoga obligated all funding by the required timeline using the funds to supplement direct lost revenue for some organizations and making public safety and infrastructure improvements. Projects included:

- Chilson/Eagle Lake Preliminary Design Review
- Recreational Field Infrastructure Improvement
- Community Building Emergency Generator
- Chilson Chapel Revenue Loss
- Public Sidewalk Infrastructure Replacement
- La Chute Trail Extension Infrastructure Improvement
- Infrastructure Tree Replacement
- Chilson Volunteer Fire Department Revenue Loss
- Community Building Security Measure Improvements
- Police Equipment K9 Program
- Ambulance District Map Plan Report
- Renovate New Police Department

## 8.0 Youth Activities & Projects

### 8.1 Beach Access

**GOAL:** Complete ADA Compliant Path

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Town understands the importance of ensuring accessibility and inclusivity in public spaces, specifically parks and recreational facilities. North Country Rural Development Coalition (NRDC) through the Town's Parks & Recs Committee and the leadership of Councilmember Joyce Cooper coordinated an effort to provide ADA compliant access to the beach playground and the water in 2024.



*ADA Compliant Path at Beach*

### 8.2 Youth Programs

**GOAL:** Execute Summer & After School Programs

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Finding sufficient labor for town positions and activities was a challenge again in 2024 as it was for many businesses and industries, however, we were quite successful in obtaining the minimum number of applications to ensure the success of the summer program, beach support, and after school programs. The Town's new Recreational Supervisor, hired late during the 2023 program took charge and managed the entire 2024 program. The Town worked early this year getting the message out to residents who were interested in summer employment for the summer camp and food program. Approximately 15 town summer staff (10 summer camp counselors, 1 Director, 1 Assistant Director, 1 Health Director, 2 cooks) supported approximately 88 summer program participants. Another 5 lifeguards ensured the safety of beach goers this summer. Approximately 16 staff assistants supported approximately 36 participants in the two 2024 After School program sessions.

The Town is extremely grateful to those individuals who stepped forward to provide oversight and leadership for these programs. Budgeted funds support these programs, however, the success of these programs relies on the generosity of residents to step forward and support these programs as counselors, cooks, and activity attendants. We cannot do this without you!

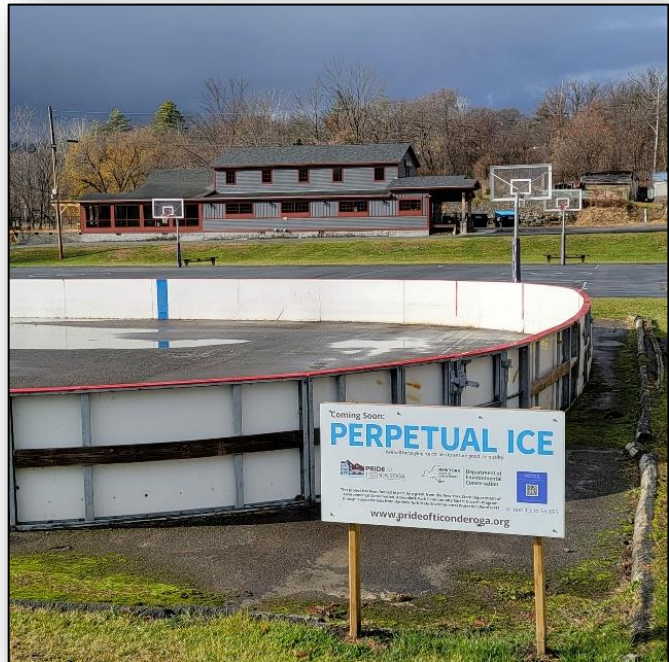


### 8.3 Skating Rink

**GOAL:** Obtain Chiller

**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

The Town skating rink at the corner of Tower Avenue and Burgoyne Road is a popular recreational resource for residents and visitors and enables Ticonderoga to continue a path to become a 4-season destination. During the year, North Country Rural Development Coalition (NRDC) sponsored the ice-skating rink improvement as a project in the NYS Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI). Unfortunately, this project was not advanced. The Town worked with NRDC to



*Skating rink project.*

seek other available funding for this project through a Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Smart Growth Grant for \$122,000 approved on April 24. This grant funded chillers allowing rink operations to extend 3-4 months in mild weather instead of a few days of

cold weather creating more seasonal activity and greater economic impact for residents and bringing other participants into town.



*Rink installation completed.*

Due to rising costs, the fiscal year ended with a significant funding gap but NRDC secured corporate and individual donations to bridge the gap. Rink operations were forecast to begin in early 2025 with improvements continuing during the year.

## 9.0 Budget & Finance

### 9.1 Annual Budget

**GOAL:** Scrutinize Budget

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

A major financial goal remains the close examination of the town budget, looking for ways to better refine the expenditures and revenues thereby eliminating excessive taxation which has the potential to build an unnecessarily high fund balance. This year's efforts in the construction of the proposed 2024 budget were no exception. The Town conducted seven (7) public budget workshops this year. No public attended.

Changes in 2024 included the consolidation of 8 water districts and extensions into one district. These eight (8) districts included 9N & 74 Water District (SW01), Street Road Water District (SW02), Alexandria Water District No. 1 (SW03), Homeland Water District (SW04), Alexandria Water District No. 2 (SW05), Central Water District (SW06), Park Avenue Water District (SW07), and Shore Airport Road Water District (SW09). The Water Districts including prior extensions included 9N & 74 Water District, 9N & 74 Water District Extension, 9N & 74 Water District Extension 1, Alexandria Water District 1, Alexandria Water District 2, Homelands Water District, Park Avenue Water District, Shore Airport Road Water District, Street Road Water District, Village (Central) Water District, Village Water District Extension 1, Village Water District Extension 2, Village Water District Extension 3, Village Water District Extension 4, and Village Water District Extension 5. This consolidation required changes in the budget support spreadsheets to properly account for revenue, costs, and remaining debt.

The Town Board, Town Clerk, department heads, and staff reviewed the budget line by line for each department and fund. This dedicated effort continued in 2024 to control spending with a goal to always remain below the NYS tax cap. The Town Board's dedicated efforts resulted in a Tentative Budget which exceeded the tax cap by only \$105. However, the creation of an ambulance district for 2025 placed an additional \$397,000 into the budget which pushed the town over the NYS tax cap. Additional last-minute fuel costs added another \$20,000 to the Preliminary Budget. The Town Board had no alternative but to pass a local law to exceed the tax cap in accordance with NYS General Municipal law §3-C.

## 9.2 Capital Projects Tracking

**GOAL:** Maintain Records & Brief Board

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Town continued to follow its corrective action plan in 2024 in compliance with the New York State Comptroller (OSC) recommendation to better track capital projects and report status to the Town Board. The Town Supervisor provides an update to the Board during each financial meeting.

A new capital projects spreadsheet was created and updated by the Supervisor and the Finance Office. Work continues to not only track current capital projects, but also, as time allows, to go back and complete information on former capital projects.

## 9.3 Flood Damages

**GOAL:** Obtain FEMA Reimbursement

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Heavy rains on July 9 and 10 of 2023 caused significant damage to areas of Essex County. Ticonderoga was affected and one major washout occurred on Old Chilson Road which was repaired and returned to service. The Highway and Water/Sewer Departments also completed damage and repairs at DeLano Road, Abercrombie, and the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The Town declared a Local State of Emergency on July 9 which allowed the Town to become eligible for federal and state assistance in recovering a portion of town expenditures and putting that revenue back into town coffers.



*FEMA reimbursed projects like this washout.*

During 2024, the Town worked with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the New York State Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (NYS DHES) to obtain reimbursement of \$32,393.39 from federal and state agencies. FEMA reimbursed 75% of our expenses while NYS reimbursed another 12.5%. This greatly resupplied our Highway and Water/Wastewater coffers to offset those unexpected expenses and allow us to continue with those planned tasks for 2024.

## 9.4 Recovered & Reimbursed Funds

### GOAL: Recover Funds

### STATUS: COMPLETED

The Town expends significant funds on many projects and necessities. What many may not realize is that most grants for capital projects are reimbursable. The Town must expend its own funding, usually from available unexpended fund balance, and then seek reimbursement. Reimbursement is not automatic. The process involves submitting requests and specific forms/paperwork. Full reimbursement may require a year or more depending on the project. This is why a healthy fund balance is critical and why the number of capital projects is somewhat limited as other unexpected expenses can also drain fund balance and contingency funding reserves.

Part of a responsible budgeting process is looking for additional reimbursement where available to fund projects or offset taxpayer costs, getting more bang for the buck, and recovering matching reimbursement on capital projects. The Town recovered or has been granted funding in the following approximate amounts during 2024 for a total of \$7,531,421:

- \$ 32,393.39 FEMA and NYS recovered from July 9, 2023, storm.
  - Wastewater Project (\$3,581.66)
  - Abercrombie & DeLano Project (\$9,349.73)
  - Old Chilson Road Project (\$17,711.00)
  - Management Costs (\$1,751.00)
- \$ 836,825.07 Airport Apron & Taxiway Rehabilitation Project.
- \$ 787,613.76 Airport Runway Rehabilitation Project.
- \$ 55,904.89 Airport Pavement Management Project.
- \$ 120,184.19 Veteran's Road Culvert Project.
- \$ 5,000.00 Clean Energy Community Grant.
- \$ 58,500.00 CFA Grant for Comprehensive Plan.
- \$ 122,000.00 DEC Smart Growth Grant (Skating Rink).
- \$1,795,000.00 Water Meter Project Grant
- \$1,325,000.00 NYSDOH Grant for Chilson/Eagle Lake Water Project
- \$2,393,000.00 DEC WQIP Grant for Water Pollution Control Plant Improvement

## 9.5 Budgeting ARPA Funding

**GOAL:** Track & Report ARPA Expenditures

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Town developed an American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) spreadsheet to track those projects and expenditures supported by ARPA funding. A total of 12 public safety and community-oriented projects were tracked in 2024 (see Section 7):

Also created was a summary report to document all ARPA projects for municipal and County records. All ARPA funding was obligated by the December 31, 2024, deadline with most of the funding expended. All funding must be expended by December 31, 2025. The Town Supervisor submitted its annual ARPA funding report to the US Treasury Department ahead of schedule on April 26.

## 10.0 Public Safety & Security

The safety and security of the public and of the town staff is of paramount importance. The premise that something catastrophic or unthinkable cannot happen in Ticonderoga is unacceptable. The Town investigated and/or implemented several actions and plans in 2024 associated with public safety and security. These included plans for emergency response, continuing operations, vehicle & traffic issues, and staff/visitor security.

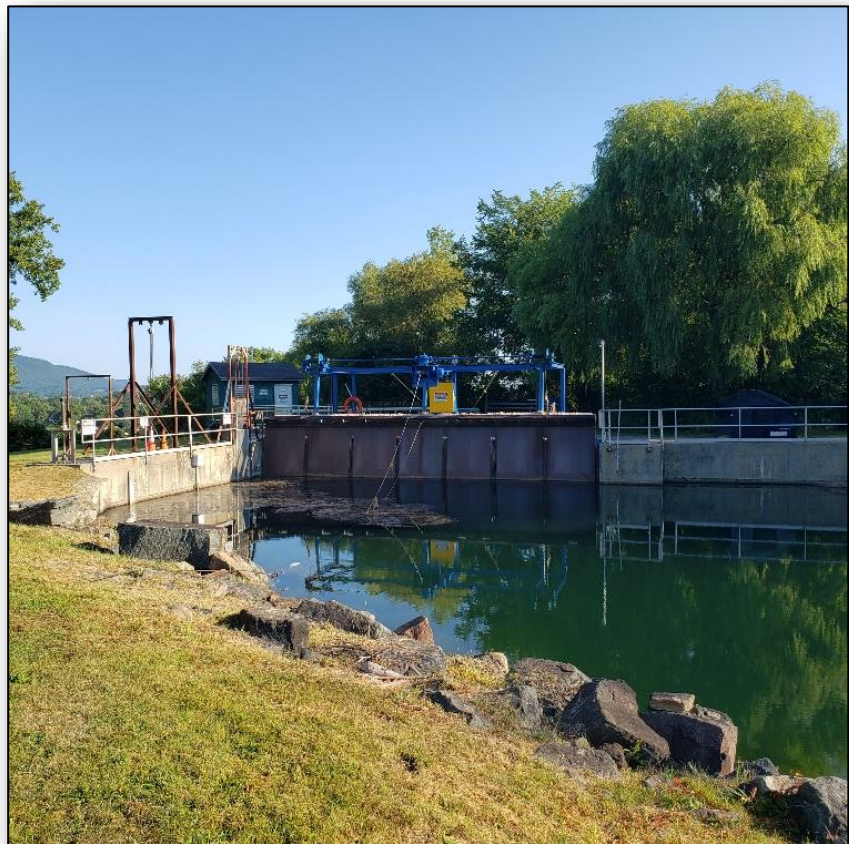
### 10.1 Local Emergency Response Plan

**GOAL:** Adopt Internal Town Response Plan & Checklists

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Preparation, planning, and rehearsal are key factors to a successful emergency response. Ticonderoga should be prepared and not assume that “it will never happen here.” Following the completion of the development of an emergency response plan in 2022 between the town and Essex county, the Town began developing a response plan and checklists on a more local response level in 2023.

The Town completed draft response actions, areas of responsibility, rally points, defined essential personnel, and other related emergency response procedures and actions. Part of this effort was to develop simple to use checklists for specific response functions. The local plan was completed, and the Town Board adopted the plan on March 14, 2024. It was provided to all departments on April 1, 2024.



*“A” Dam controlled by Patriot Hydro.*

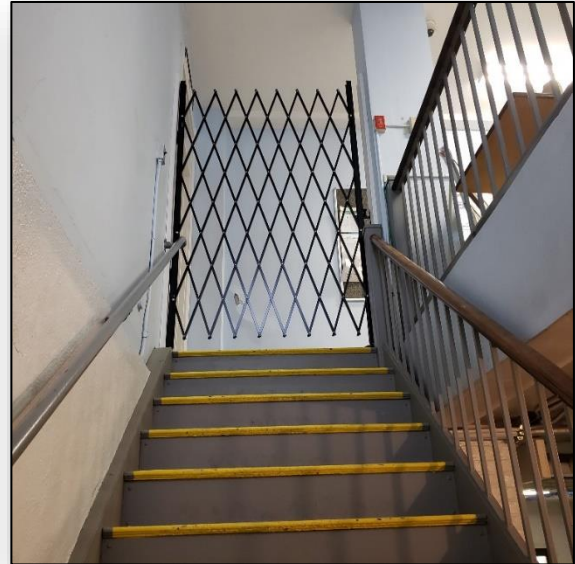
The Town Supervisor participated in an exercise with Patriot Hydro and emergency officials in September in which a simulated total dam collapse of the “A” Dam at the outlet of Lake Geroge. This exercised communication actions and individual roles and responsibilities. Additionally, in October, the Town Supervisor discussed the town’s hazard mitigation plan with officials.

## 10.2 Community Building Security Review

**GOAL:** Implement Threat Assessment Mitigations

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Community Building is a publicly accessible space but is vulnerable to several security issues. The safety of the staff and visitors is of the utmost importance. Following completion of a threat assessment of the Community Building in May 2023 by the Town Supervisor, New York State Police, and Ticonderoga Police Chief, the Supervisor began implementing recommended security measures from the assessment.



*Stairwell security gates.*

### Securing the Basement Level

In January, the Town installed security gates to restrict unescorted public access to the basement portion of the building. One was installed at the top of the stairs near the County DMV office. A second was installed at the basement elevator door. These are locked and the basement area permanently always secured unless a meeting is required in the basement boardroom.

### Finance Office Security

A new Dutch door was constructed and installed at the Finance Office entrance April 17. This was a simple method to slow or stop individuals from approaching staff work areas when they do not need access to those areas to receive service. If a situation arises where an individual becomes agitated and potentially physically confrontational, this door allows sufficient space between the individual and staff. The door does nothing to stop someone seeking to do harm, but it does send a message to those approaching that they can be serviced from that point without requiring access to an area where personnel information may be visible. Similar counters and barriers exist in other public and private structures where staff interface with the public. The door contains a writing pad area, like the municipal court clerk door on the second floor, for customers to use

when completing forms and signing documents. It has been very successful in halting traffic into the finance area.

### **East Hallway Security**

The East hallway section of the building houses the Water Clerk's office, employee break room, employee restroom, and side door to the Supervisor's office (the appropriate entrance for the public is through the Finance Office). The employee restroom and breakroom are not publicly accessible areas. Those requiring Water Clerk services are permitted to access the area when invited. The east hallway has been used by municipal court participants as an unintentional exit when they get confused as to the proper exit. This results in the east doorway being unsecured. A restricted access sign was installed in the east hallway on February 7. This was replaced on June 17 with a second Dutch door with an emergency exit



*East Hallway Dutch door.*

only – restricted access sign. The door swings open so as not to impede emergency egress and does not restrict the width of the hallway opening. Like the Finance door, it is meant to send a message to individuals that access beyond that point is only available during an emergency or when authorized to do so.

### **After Hours Security**

All first-floor bathrooms (employee and public) and the employee breakroom were locked after business hours beginning on January 10 to prevent after-hour public access (court) and restricting access to first floor areas. This was for the protection of staff and the public.

A policy was implemented to lock and unlock the building in coordination with the posted office hours for the town. Staff had become used to unlocking doors before 8 am upon arrival before the building was officially open to the public and when minimum staff were present. This was changed to unlock doors at 8 am and secure for the day at 4 pm.

### **Securing the Auditorium**

The Ticonderoga Police Chief provided a recommendation to the Town Supervisor on August 27, 2024, that the doorways into the upstairs auditorium of the Community Building remain closed and locked when not in use. It was not impossible to sufficiently monitor this area while the town



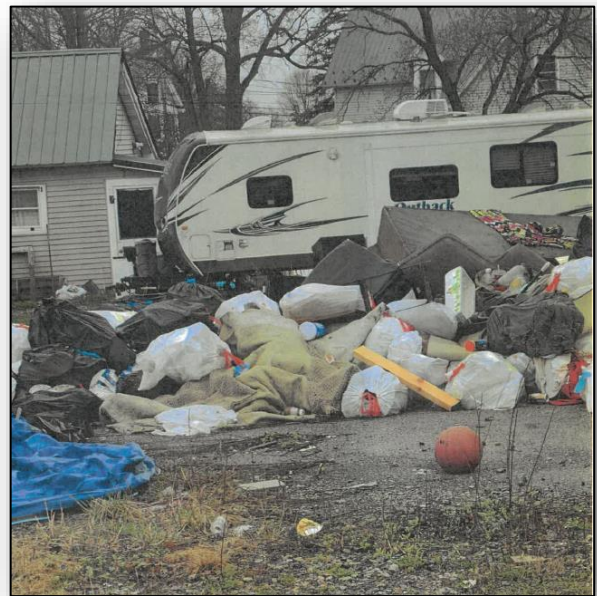
was conducting public business. The Police Department had experienced an incident where they discovered narcotics placed under a chair in the court area that were meant to be picked up by a county jail inmate while the inmate was attending a court session. There was a legitimate concern that this could also occur with a weapon. An officer uses a metal detector on all court visitors before they enter but that practice would be useless if individuals could conceal contraband inside the court area before the court was in session. The Town Supervisor immediately implemented this policy.

### 10.3 Nuisance & Litter Law Violations

**GOAL:** Aggressively Pursue Violations

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Town continues to battle issues involving property owners not maintaining property in compliance with Town codes and local laws. The Town focused heavily on violations of the Town litter law and nuisance property laws in 2024. Property owners who habitually violate these laws impact property values in their neighborhood, negatively impact economic development and investment, discourage tourism, and more importantly, create a public safety issue.



*Property at 64 The Portage received a violation.*

On January 26, Town officials (Police Chief and Town Supervisor) had discussions with St. Joseph's regarding infractions at the latter's Mt. Hope Avenue facility. The Town informed St. Joseph of recent nuisance calls to that location and that the Town would pursue the accumulation of nuisance points with a potential to suspend the facility's certificate of occupancy if the current situation there continued. No further incidents were reported during the year.

On April 25, the Town Board ruled that 64 The Portage was in violation of the litter law and ordered it cleaned up. The property owner failed to do so by the required date and after multiple requests, so the Town contracted for the cleanup and billed the property owner. On May 9, the Town Board ruled that the property owner was in violation of the Nuisance Law. The certificate of occupancy was suspended for a maximum of 12 months and fined the maximum of \$1,000.00. Entry points for the residence were boarded and locked on May 22. Town Code Enforcement pursued other violations during the year. This will no longer be tolerated in Ticonderoga.

## 10.4 Combat Illegal Narcotics

**GOAL:** Organize K9 Program

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Ticonderoga, like many other towns, is plagued with the issue of narcotics being smuggled in from outside jurisdictions and sold in our community. These drugs are brought in by vehicles, by train, or by mail service. On May 9, the Town Board agreed to pursue the installation of a police canine (K9) program to help fight the drug issue in our community by giving the Ticonderoga Police Department the means to find narcotics hidden within vehicles that are humanly impossible to detect. The canine program provides an opportunity to increase our police department's ability to investigate and enforce drug crimes. The addition of a canine team to our community sends a message to the people we serve that the Town and its Police Department are taking the drug problem seriously and will use whatever tools that are legally and affordably available.

From another perspective, residents traditionally feel an increase in personal security with a canine presence in the community. Canines have also been effective in promoting interaction with the public at schools, events, and other day to day contacts, especially since adults and children alike love animals. A canine team is a great way to send a proactive message to the young people of Ticonderoga by displaying the capabilities of a drug detection dog, helping to bridge the gap between the youth and the Ticonderoga Police Department. We can send a positive lifesaving message to these young citizens and maintain that connection into adulthood, when they become the leaders in our community.

The Town Supervisor and Labor Relations consultant met with Police Department and Labor Union officials on September 18, 2024, to establish an agreement between the Town and Department which would contain topics such as a stipend for a K9 handler and other issues. This agreement was completed, and the Town Board approved the program in November.

## 10.5 Support EMS Activities

**GOAL:** Establish Ambulance District

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

EMS services for county municipalities continues to present a crisis in Ticonderoga and Essex County. The Town could not fund direct payment for an EMS provider through a budget line item, having expended \$260,000.00 of fund balance over a period of two (2) years to help keep Ti EMS funded. The Town Board concluded the formation of an Ambulance District was the better, more



*The Town and Ti EMS sign the ambulance district agreement.*

affordable approach for the taxpayer rather than a line item in the budget and decided in January to pursue the ambulance district approach.

Materials for a map, plan, and report (MPR) were assembled in January and February including a district map and property value information from Essex County Real Property. The Town issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) in May

seeking qualifications from

interested parties for the preparation of a map, plan and report (MPR) for the formation of an ambulance district pursuant to the Town Law of the State of New York. Two entities responded in June. This was the first step to form an MPR. The Town Board chose the Center for Government Research (CGR) to assemble the MPR. A public hearing was held on September 19. The Town chose to go straight to a permissive referendum as there was no time to add the issue to the ballot in time to establish a district by January 1, 2025. No petitions for a permissive referendum were submitted so the Town Board established the Ambulance District on October 21, 2024. Requests for proposals (RFP) were issued on November 21, 2024. Ticonderoga EMS was chosen as the contracted entity to provide ambulance services to the Ticonderoga Ambulance District on December 27, 2024.

## 10.6 Hazard Mitigation

**GOAL:** Establish Plan w/County

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Town Supervisor worked with Chloeta, an emergency management contractor contracted by Essex County, in October to update Ticonderoga's Hazard Mitigation Plan. This updated statistical data, administrative and technical capabilities, fiscal resources and agreements, communication platforms, capability assessments, critical facilities, etc.

### 10.7 Improve Public Safety

**GOAL:** Miscellaneous

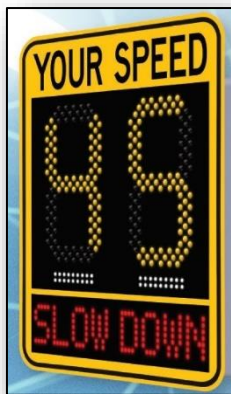
**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Town requested National Grid to install a new light pole at the corner of Cannonball Pat and Depot Street in April. Work was completed on May 22. This action results in providing better lighting for vehicular and pedestrian traffic in that area. In addition, lights were installed on the Community Building to provide more visibility to the eastern side of the building and on the corresponding side of the rear parking lot.

In June, the Highway Department applied striping to two (2) major intersections at Montcalm Street/Lake George Avenue and Montcalm Street/Wiley Street with “STOP” to provide additional information to motorists. Frequent violations in these areas were creating a public safety issue.



*New light pole.*



The Town worked with residents and the Town’s insurance company to replace the solar powered speed limit sign on Black Point Road that was destroyed in 2023.

In November, the Town moved forward with procuring two (2) solar powered radar speed limit signs for an area in Eagle Lake. This area is prone to excessive speed, is a dangerous roadway, and has experienced incidents where the public has been struck by vehicular traffic. The signs were delivered in early December. The Town and NYS will coordinate to install the signage.

## 11.0 Summary

An exciting change is occurring in Ticonderoga. The state of our town has improved and continues to improve. Ticonderoga has witnessed significant positive economic improvements during 2024 with forward movement of the New York State \$10M Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) award and the State's acceptance of eight (8) approved projects. This, in combination with other revitalization successes such as housing and childcare (TRA project) projects during the year, and NRDC and Essex County Land Bank efforts to rehabilitate properties in Ticonderoga will aid in putting Ticonderoga back on the economic development track to success and provide the necessary amenities required for economic stability and advancement. The Town of Ticonderoga is thankful for all those who have invested and expanded during 2024 and in the previous years.



*The first DRI project begins.*

The Town recognizes, acknowledges, and thanks our dedicated local area business development, revitalization and economic development organizations such as the Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce (TACC), North Country Rural Development Coalition (NRDC), Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance (TRA), and Ticonderoga Montcalm Street Partnership (TMSP) as well as our regional partners including the Essex County Industrial Development Agency (ECIDA), Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism (ROOST), Essex County Board of Supervisors, Essex County Office of Community Resources, Sylvamo Paper, Fort Ticonderoga Association, and National Grid to name a few. In partnership with the Town of Ticonderoga, much success has occurred, and the cooperation level among organizations is exceptional.

As always, considerable thanks go to the staff and department heads in the Town of Ticonderoga who played a key role in our many achievements and who continue to run our operations and maintain our infrastructure day and night, workdays, and holidays, in snow and rain. They, with those mentioned above share responsibility for our achievement and success during 2024 to make Ticonderoga a destination and an exceptional place to live, work, play, invest, and raise a family. Onward to 2025!

**Our Town...Our Future.**