

Bethel Local Development Corporation

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

2021 BLDC Measurement Report

Performance Goals:

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

In 2021, the BLDC secured a \$3000.00 grant from the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance to partially fund the Bethel Lakeside Music (BLM) program. BLM provides concerts from June thru September at the Community Park gazebo in Kauneonga Lake. 2021 marks the 6th summer series concert season. Donations were received from the Bethel Council of the Arts as was in-kind support from local businesses. Grant funding was negatively impacted in 2021 due to COVID.

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

The Citizens Energy Assistance (CEAP) Program is a locally run and funded initiative that was re-activated in 2021 to assist needy Bethel citizens in paying heating costs in the fall of 2021.

Nourish Your Neighbor is a food drive initiative aimed at making healthy foods available to the people in Bethel. The BLDC worked with local citizens who wished to help the local food pantry during 2021.

These citizens raised substantial sums that were donated to the BLDC and then contributed to the local food pantry, the Shepherd's Pantry.

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

The BLDC throughout 2021 provided support and fundraising assistance to various local activities ranging from the Bethel Council of the Arts, Kauneonga Lake Farmer's Market, Bethel Lakeside Music, Tribute to First Responders, Yoga-in-the-Park, and seasonal pop-ups including Hanukah Menorah Lighting, Christmas Tree Lighting, and the Bethel Business Association, as well as, many other smaller organizations and charities that have worked with the BLDC for several years.

At the end of 2021, there were funds in various accounts reflecting local organizations that the BLDC supports. A detailed list of these organizations and the specific dollar amounts associated with each organization and initiative is available as part of the 2021 BLDC Audit.

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

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

During 2016, the access road and parking lot for this facility was completed by Town of Bethel personnel along with an approximately quarter-mile loop trail. A stream-crossing permit was secured for a bridge over the Lybolt Brook to provide access to other portions of the property. This bridge was completed in 2017. Areas of the park were cleared with the help of volunteers and benches were installed. Outdoor exercise equipment was secured for the park through a grant program administered by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Sullivan County. This equipment was installed in 2017. Planning for the expansion of the trail network and the upgrading of signage and an addition of a comfort station was added in 2021.

In 2015, the BLDC formed a strategic partnership with the Bethel Business Association (BBA) whereby the BBA is a committee under the BLDC. This relationship has enhanced the BLDC's mission to create programs, secure funding and in other ways work to enhance the economic vitality of the Town of Bethel. As a first step, a marketing arrangement was secured with the Bethel Woods Center for Arts whereby businesses in the Town of Bethel have access to the advertising materials of Bethel Woods during the 2016 season. In addition, a partnership was formed with the local newspaper to provide discounted marketing services to BBA members. This successful initiative continued in 2021. Overall, in 2021 the BLDC continued to support the mission of the BBA as a committee of the BLDC in working to support and enhance the economy of the Town of Bethel.

The Woodstock Heritage Trail initiative was kicked off in 2018 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1969 Festival. Several projects were launched in 2018 including the creation of a Woodstock-themed "Heritage Trail" supported by the BLDC. 2021 initiatives included maintenance and plantings along the trail

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

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

The BLDC Manager continues to work with volunteer groups and various organizations such as Healthy Bethel (formerly the Bethel Healthy Community Task Force), Sullivan County Public Health, Sullivan Renaissance, Bethel Business Association, Substance Use Task Force, Fire Districts & Departments, Bethel Ambulance, Kauneonga Lake Farmers Market, Bethel Council of the Arts & Bethel Lakeside Music and other groups aimed at creating a more healthy, safe, economically secure, and environmentally sound in the Town of Bethel.

Approved by the BLDC Board members in January of 2021