

Clayton Local Development Corporation

Annual Report 2025

CLDC Mission Statement:

The Clayton Local Development Corporation seeks to promote, provide and enhance employment opportunities and business development in the Town and Village of Clayton; and act in the public interest to improve the area's quality of life, to lessen the burdens of government, and to improve the economic welfare and prosperity of all residents.

Note from the Chairman

In 2025, the Clayton Local Development Corporation (CLDC) remained proactive in advancing its mission and strengthening partnerships across the community and region. Despite limited availability of viable New York State, federal, and regional funding opportunities, the CLDC continued active engagement with the Village and Town of Clayton, local businesses, developers, and regional partners. Support was successfully provided to the North Jefferson Improvement Association (NJIA) through the Essential Housing Committee.

While no progress was made on enhancements to local trails or walkway systems during the year, this goal was intentionally carried forward in anticipation of future leadership by partner organizations and associated grant opportunities.

The CLDC continued to rely on its Strategic Plan as a guiding framework with measurable action items. Notably, the organization assisted a neighboring community with a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) grant application, strengthening regional collaboration while contributing to the CLDC's long-term financial sustainability.

Housing remained a key area of focus. In 2025, the NJIA-sponsored Essential Housing Committee secured a New York State grant to complete a more detailed Housing Needs Assessment. The CLDC is now actively advancing the assessment's recommended action items to support the development of additional affordable housing and to improve housing metrics that assist residents, developers, and community stakeholders.

Looking ahead, the CLDC remains committed to developing and implementing initiatives that support local businesses, families, schools, and the overall vitality of the Clayton community.

*James S. Ganter
Chairman*

CLDC Board Members 2025

Officers

Chairman

Jamie Ganter, Retired Director of Media Operations Knowlton Technologies LCC

Vice-Chairman

Bobby Cantwell, Jefferson County Legislature, District #1

Treasurer

John Cooper, Territory Sales Manager, Reeb

Secretary

Christine Powers, retired VP/Commercial Loan Officer, Watertown Savings Bank

Assistant Secretary

Christopher Bogenschutz, President of the Clayton Chamber of Commerce, Ex-Officio Member

Ex-Officio Members

Doug Rogers, Chairman of the Clayton Joint Planning Board, Ex-Officio Member

Nancy Hyde Village of Clayton Mayor

Lisa Ingerson, Superintendent of Schools, Thousand Islands School District

Tim Doney, Town of Clayton Supervisor

Community Members

Jack Stopper, owner Weather Stopper

Norma Zimmer, former Mayor

Mike Hazlewood, owner Hazlewood Mechanicals & Wood Boat Brewery

Tim Lalonde, Financial Consultant & former CFO of Carrols Restaurant Group, Inc.

Executive Director

Kristi Dippel

Highlights for 2025

Housing

In 2025, the Essential Housing Committee determined that while the initial study confirmed a local housing need, it lacked sufficient detail to support next steps. As a result, the Committee applied for and received a New York State grant to complete a comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment. An experienced housing consulting firm was engaged, and the process incorporated community input through interviews and surveys. The executive summary was shared publicly and confirmed ongoing trends and the need for additional affordable housing. The Committee is now advancing the recommended action items, including improved housing metrics to support housing searches, developer requirements, and strategies to increase affordable housing opportunities.

Regionalization

Expanding regional collaboration remains a key Strategic Goal of the CLDC. In 2025, the CLDC maintained active communication with neighboring communities, including Cape Vincent, Alexandria Bay, and Henderson. The CLDC also partnered with the Village of Henderson to assist with a second application for a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) grant. This effort supported regional cooperation while contributing to the CLDC's long-term financial sustainability.

LWRP

The CLDC continued its partnership with the Village of Clayton on the LWRP initiative. A committee was formed consisting of community stakeholders, Town and Village leadership, and CLDC members. In 2025, a consulting firm was engaged, and work began collaboratively with the committee, New York State, and the consultants to advance the plan.

Strategic Planning

The Strategic Plan continues to serve as a guiding framework for the CLDC's activities. In 2025, the organization hosted a community stakeholder meeting and presentation in place of the traditional Business with a Twist event. The presentation focused on business succession planning. The CLDC continues to implement strategic action items related to regionalization and revenue generation to support long-term sustainability, while remaining focused on its mission to enhance employment opportunities, business development, and overall quality of life in the Town and Village of Clayton.

CLDC Goals for 2026

1. Work with the Village of Clayton, the Town of Clayton, local businesses and organizations to submit viable applications to appropriate NYS, federal and regional funding opportunities and programs that will benefit the community.
2. Explore additional revenue generating activities to ensure the future sustainability of the CLDC.
3. Continue to work toward generating measurable action items in the updated Strategic Plan, including regionalization.
4. Work with the Town and Village of Clayton, as well as the Joint Planning board towards completing the updated Joint Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan.
5. Continue to explore solutions to local housing issues, including partnering with the North Jefferson Improvement Association, moving forward with the Essential Housing Committee to explore potential opportunities to bring affordable housing to the community and moving forward with the recommendations of the 2026 Housing Needs Assessment.
6. Work with potential developers for possible development projects in the community
7. Strengthen community outreach by building relationships with local businesses and organizations and pursuing partnerships that advance and expand the CLDC mission.