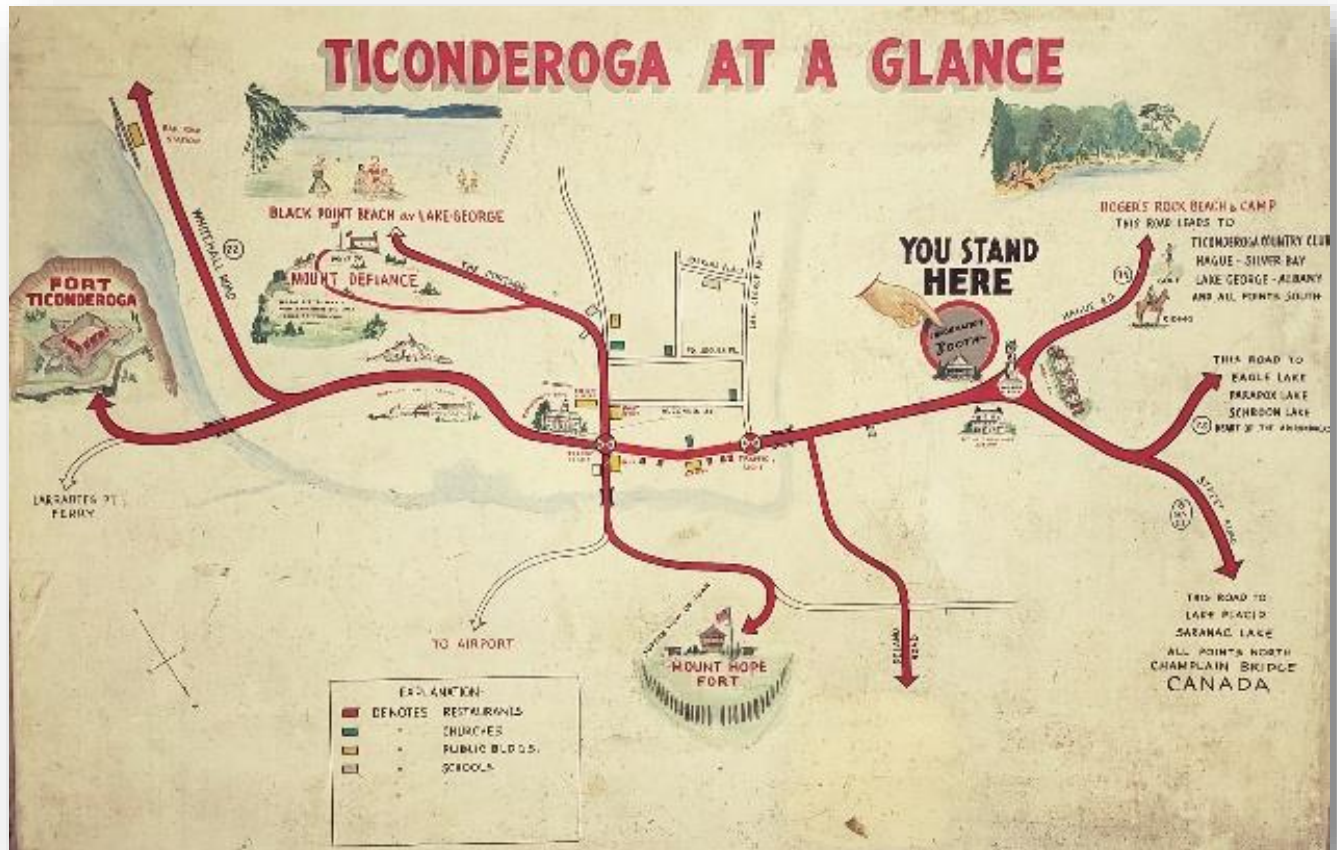


*Town of Ticonderoga*

# State of the Town

*Year in Review - 2022*



January 2023

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# Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.0 Employee Morale .....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1 Employee Handbook.....	5
1.2 Timesheets .....	5
1.3 Payroll .....	5
1.4 Delegation & Eliminating Micromanagement.....	6
1.5 Collective Bargaining Agreements .....	6
1.6 Other Incentives .....	7
<b>2.0 Economic Development .....</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1 Economic Development Committee (EDC) .....	7
2.2 Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) .....	8
2.3 Hacker (J.J. Newberry) Building .....	9
2.4 Regan Development Corporation .....	10
2.5 Solar Projects .....	10
2.6 Break in Access (BIA) .....	11
2.7 Farmer's Market.....	11
<b>3.0 Infrastructure Improvement.....</b>	<b>12</b>
3.1 Sidewalk Removal, Replacement & Repair.....	12
3.2 Public Parking Lot Improvements .....	12
3.3 St. Clair/Grove Water Project .....	13
3.4 Black Watch Expansion Project.....	14
3.5 Zombie Properties .....	14
3.6 Broadband .....	14
3.7 Other Improvements .....	15
<b>4.0 Coordination Efforts.....</b>	<b>15</b>
4.1 Ex-Officio Responsibilities.....	16
4.2 Ticonderoga Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners .....	16
4.3 Ticonderoga Emergency Squad .....	16
4.4 Silver Bay Association.....	17
4.5 Burleigh Block .....	17
<b>5.0 Resident Communication .....</b>	<b>18</b>
5.1 Walk-in Visits .....	18

5.2 Scheduled Meetings .....	19
5.3 Phone Calls/Emails/Messaging.....	19
5.4 Town Facebook Page.....	19
5.5 Town Website .....	20
5.6 Daily Updates & Discussions .....	20
<b>6.0 Major Capital Projects .....</b>	<b>21</b>
6.1 Chilson/Eagle Lake Water .....	21
6.2 The Portage Project.....	23
6.3 Veteran’s Road Culvert Project .....	23
6.4 Airport Apron/Taxiway Rehabilitation.....	23
6.5 La Chute Walking Trail Extension .....	24
6.6 18 <sup>th</sup> Century Sawmill Project.....	24
6.7 Lead Service Line Replacement Project (LSLRP) .....	25
<b>7.0 Other Town Projects &amp; Issues .....</b>	<b>25</b>
7.1 Senior Bus Policy.....	25
7.2 Low Income Housing Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP).....	25
7.3 Airport Beacon & Tower .....	26
7.4 Major Rogers Statue .....	26
7.5 FAA GPS Nighttime Landing Restriction .....	27
7.6 Library Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) .....	27
<b>8.0 Youth Activities &amp; Projects.....</b>	<b>28</b>
8.1 New Playground.....	28
8.2 Summer Camp Program.....	28
8.3 Skating Rink.....	28
<b>9.0 Budget &amp; Finance .....</b>	<b>29</b>
9.1 Annual Budget .....	29
9.2 Budgeting for Capital Projects.....	30
9.3 Enhanced Reporting.....	30
<b>10.0 Public Safety &amp; Security .....</b>	<b>30</b>
10.1 Emergency Response Plan.....	31
10.2 Emergency Backup Generator .....	31
10.3 Beach Law Enforcement Agreement .....	32
10.4 Community Building Security Review .....	32
10.5 Speed & Parking Restrictions .....	33

10.6 Insurance Liabilities.....	34
10.7 Use of Town Property.....	34
<b>11.0 Summary.....</b>	<b>34</b>

# Executive Summary

The Ticonderoga Town Supervisor is pleased to present this State of the Town report from the Supervisor's office. This is a semi-comprehensive summary of several projects and activities conducted in 2022 under the current administration. The reader may desire to reference specific sections rather than read the entire report. This documents our successes as well as our failures. It is important to understand that failure is not the opposite of success, it is part of success, and we must always pass failure on our journey to success.

There was an aggressive approach regarding our 2022 goals. Many goals were achieved, some are still in progress, others laid the foundation for work which will begin in 2023. This report identifies the status of each goal. The following guide should be used regarding goal status:

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

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

**NOT COMPLETED:** The goal should have been completed during the year and was not.

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

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

- ✓ Reinitiate economic development and revitalization activities
- ✓ Increase resident access to and communication with the Supervisor's office
- ✓ Improve employee morale including revising employee handbook
- ✓ Eliminate micromanagement & encourage delegation and job investment
- ✓ Increase coordination and partnership with community organizations
- ✓ Improve infrastructure
- ✓ Advance progress on Chilson/Eagle Lake water issue
- ✓ Review and scrutinize town budget
- ✓ Investigate and plan to mitigate St. Clair/Grove Street issue
- ✓ Complete County Emergency Response Plan

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

- Update the Town's Comprehensive Plan
- Begin town branding efforts
- Continue infrastructure improvements
- Continue advancement of Chilson/Eagle Lake water issues
- Complete mitigation of St. Clair/Grove Street issue
- Complete Town Internal Emergency Response Plan

## Economic Development / Revitalization

Development in Ticonderoga is an active and ongoing issue with more investors taking a role in Ticonderoga than any time in the recent past. Ticonderoga was at a crossroads going into and coming out of the Pandemic. Many brave businesspeople continued operations during the Pandemic and should receive accolades for what they accomplished including new modes of operation, some of which have continued as standard operating procedures and have helped to solidify Ticonderoga's economic foundation.

The Town reestablished the Economic Development Committee after a long absence and partnered with other town organizations to apply for the New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) which was awarded to the Town. Initial investigations have begun to examine a professional branding service to define and solidify Ticonderoga's brand.



*Town Supervisor participation in TMSP*

## Access & Communication

An important aspect of communication and operations involves removing any established stove piping or single points of failure. Projects, activities, and information cannot be held by a single individual(s) with no sharing of that knowledge with others. It became clear in 2022 that some items were missed, unknown to exist, or not clearly understood which impacted the Town's ability to meet its mission efficiently and effectively because of insufficient communication. This was changed as issues were identified to ensure projects and roles and responsibilities were more than one level deep. This effort will take more time to fully identify and mitigate.

The Town Supervisor is now available to residents with increased office hours (0630 – 1630) daily. Walk-ins are encouraged and phone calls/emails are promptly returned. The Supervisor walks the town and attends events which allows further access to the community.

## Employee Morale

A major goal of the new administration was to make immediate improvements to morale. A major accomplishment in this area involved a total rewrite of the Town's Employee Handbook. Paydays were moved back to the Friday beginning this year. New bargaining agreements were finalized with the unions which provide fair compensation and benefits for a fair return to the Town. Other requirements were relaxed, but not the requirement to give 8 hours of work for 8 hours of pay and to be accountable for one's actions. The goal to improve the working



environment was to make municipal jobs sought after once again like they once were many years ago. This effort will take some time before coming to full fruition.

### **Delegation & Eliminating Micromanagement**

A large part of efficiency and morale building involves delegation of duty. The Supervisor's Office now allows Department Heads to run their departments and inform the Supervisor of issues when they arise without micromanagement.

### **Increase Coordination & Partnership**

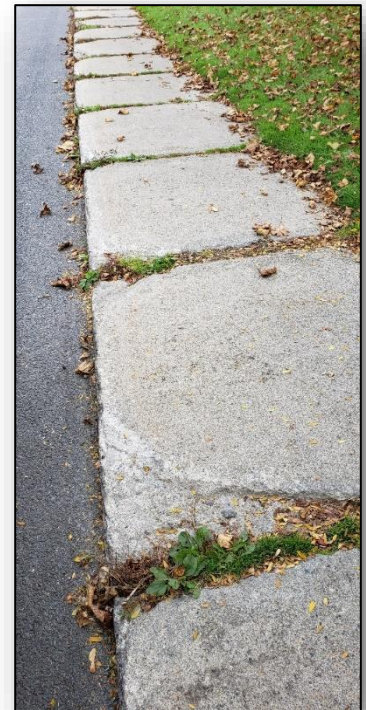
The Town has begun working extensively with the Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce (TACC), the Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance (TRA), PRIDE of Ticonderoga, and the Ticonderoga Montcalm Street Partnership (TMSP) as part of its goal to increase coordination with community partners for the benefit of economic development/revitalization while avoiding reinventing the wheel and the duplication of effort. The Town Supervisor attends TACC, TRA, and TMSP board meetings in the ex-officio role and Ticonderoga Fire District Board of Fire Commissioner meetings on a regular basis. Coordination has begun again with the Office of Prevention to better approach our town's substance abuse and other issues. The Town has also opened active lines of communication with Sylvamo, the Fort Ticonderoga Association, Silver Bay, and others.

### **Improve Infrastructure**

Work on infrastructure began to include replacement of sidewalks using former New York State Senator Betty Little funding and ARPA funding, public parking lot improvements for increased safety, a new children's playground in Percy Thompson Bicentennial Park, preparatory work on the Eagle Lake Causeway, completion of the Veterans Road Culvert over Five Mile Creek, and preparatory work on the Alexandria Bridge and Montcalm Street Bridge. The Town Supervisor advocated, and with the hard work of Ti-Alliance and the Essex County Board of Supervisors, the potential for a revitalized Hacker building (former JJ Newberry) has been realized hopefully avoiding a large hole in the downtown commercial district.

### **Budget**

The 2023 town budget was finely scrutinized this year. The Town has budgeted for a financial analyst to review our current and future capital projects, their associated grant portions, and town matching obligations to ensure we do not overcommit valuable



*Lake George Avenue  
sidewalk before repair.*



taxpayer dollars in an overextended approach to improvement. We have also budgeted for a review and update of the Town's Comprehensive Plan. We must know where we are and where we want to be before setting off on the journey.

## Conclusion

The State of the Town is good and on a much-improved footing and path forward at this point compared to the beginning of 2022. We still have a lot to accomplish. Ticonderoga has several projects and improvements in work, some of which are

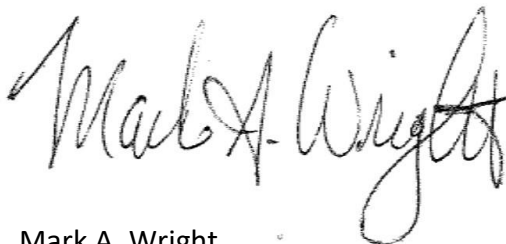


*Lake George Avenue sidewalk replacement.*

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. We are on a positive trajectory and improving, but we have some distance to go considering the decades of neglect and stagnation which have occurred.

There is an air of positivity, forward movement, and investment by private entities. The recent completion of the Burleigh Block, the arrival of several new businesses, and other activities are evident. Many goals have been accomplished, but major initiatives still exist which must be completed. Even upon achieving all our goals, there is always room for improvement to make a better life for all.

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



Mark A. Wright

Ticonderoga Town Supervisor

# 1.0 Employee Morale

A primary goal during the first months of the new administration was to rejuvenate employee morale. Improving morale involved several factors to include a revision to the Employee Handbook, delegation of duties to ensure staff began to feel part of the team and invested in the Town's mission, hiring a new labor relations consultant, moving payday back to Friday, and addressing other internal administrative issues.

## 1.1 Employee Handbook

**GOAL:** Revise & Implement New "Friendly" Document

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Employee Handbook project was the highest priority of the low-hanging fruit initiatives. This was revised in April and distributed to staff. The goal included ensuring the handbook did a much better job of welcoming employees to their employment with the Town, instead of threatening them with overbearing work rules, consequences, and lists of prohibited conducts.

Many changes were made throughout the document. Personal leave was broadened, and restrictions for use removed; employees are allowed to leave the work site during breaks; staff can personalize their work areas; the town policy on phone use was revised. All of this was to make a more productive work environment

## 1.2 Timesheets

**GOAL:** Change Responsibility

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The management of timesheets was changed to eliminate micromanagement and put authority and responsibility back on Department Heads which also made the process easier on employees. Department Heads and employees are no longer required to leave their work assignments and come into the town offices to make changes. Department Heads may now make corrections to their employee's sheets with concurrence of the employee. This is a common-sense approach to increase efficiency while maintaining accountability and control.

## 1.3 Payroll

**GOAL:** Move Pay Day back to Friday

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

During the previous Supervisor's term, payday for town employees was moved farther into the future for micromanagement reasons, inconveniencing the employees and their bill payment cycles. Payday was moved back to Friday in the Employee Handbook. This was a request of many employees for several years and a goal of the new Town Supervisor to improve morale while ensuring town processes and those of our payroll service could accommodate. The Town initiated and completed a process to change its payroll processing provider. This allowed the Town to lessen costs, increase efficiency, and broaden future capabilities.

## 1.4 Delegation & Eliminating Micromanagement

**GOAL:** Increase Delegation and Remove Micromanagement

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Delegation of duties was a major goal to increase productivity and morale and allow staff to become more invested in the mission. Delegation is defined as the assignment of authority to another person and entrusting them to carry out specific activities. It is widely accepted as an essential element of effective management. Ticonderoga has a wealth of talented and skilled town workers with each having the skills and specific knowledge which keep the town operating. Employing delegation has been effective when dealing with limited resources and time.

Micromanagement is the antithesis of productivity and efficiency. It stifles a person's creativity, destroys morale, and can lead to employee turnover and low retention rates. Micromanagement is one of the top three reasons why employees resign. The elimination of micromanagement and ensuring decisions were executed efficiently were key goals and these were accomplished in 2022. Staff were delegated to do their jobs without micromanagement and Department heads carried out their duties without unwarranted Town Supervisor intervention.

## 1.5 Collective Bargaining Agreements

**GOAL:** Complete Contract Negotiations

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Town successfully completed three collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) in 2022 which provide fair compensation and benefits to the union staff. The Town Supervisor selected a new labor relations consultant this year. Negotiations began in October and were completed by the end of November. These will extend for a period of three (3) years.

## 1.6 Other Incentives

**GOAL:** Add New Incentives

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Staff morale is important and the use of incentives which do not impact town operations or reflect negatively upon the town were implemented in 2022. Hawaiian Shirt Friday was implemented during the summer. In the fall, a staff member recommended Flannel Shirt Friday which was approved and benefited a local charity. The Town celebrated the dedication of one of its retiring Highway/Transfer Station employees in March by providing a certificate and a thank you. Often, what people want most is simply recognition and a word of thanks.

Incentives like these will never change the world but provide a more friendly and tolerable work environment which can lead to less employee turnover.



*Flannel Shirt Friday*

## 2.0 Economic Development

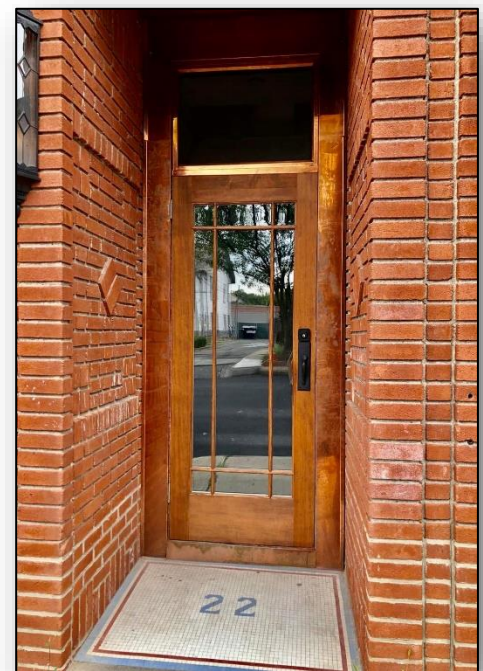
Economic Development was a key issue for the new Town Supervisor in 2022. Ticonderoga has slowly declined economically over many decades for many reasons. It was important to reestablish good working relationships between the Town and local/regional revitalization and economic development organizations to plan for Ticonderoga's recovery and successful future.

### 2.1 Economic Development Committee (EDC)

**GOAL:** Re-establish the Economic Development Committee

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Economic Development Committee was formed at the Organizational Meeting in January. Committee members include the Town of Ticonderoga (two board members) and



*Revitalization of 172 Champlain*



representatives from PRIDE of Ticonderoga, the Ticonderoga Montcalm Street Partnership (TMSP), Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance (TRA), Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce (TACC), and Business. The Committee meets monthly, and its major goals include:

- Leverage efforts of all organizations toward a common goal – revitalization/economic development
- Provide Town cooperation and support in any capacity possible
- Ensure all members are cognizant of each other's efforts/projects/roles & responsibilities
- Maintain free exchange of information among organizations (avoid stove-piping)

## 2.2 Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI)

**GOAL:** Submit DRI Application

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The DRI Committee was formed early in January 2022 to apply for a \$10 million grant for revitalization of our downtown corridor. The committee was composed of representatives from the Town of Ticonderoga, Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce, Essex County IDA, Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance, PRIDE of Ticonderoga, Ticonderoga Montcalm Street Project, and two Ticonderoga young professionals. The Committee immediately began discussions to lobby the Town for financial support, hire a professional consultant, and begin preparation of a list of projects for eventual inclusion into the application package.



*Downtown Revitalization Initiative July 4 parade float.*

The Town of Ticonderoga and PRIDE of Ticonderoga formed an agreement early in the process whereby PRIDE became the administrative arm of the committee. Several public events were held with virtual meetings, in-person open house meetings, and online surveys where the public was encouraged to provide input on what they believed the downtown Ticonderoga area needed in terms of revitalization.

The Town submitted a letter of intent to the Empire State Development/Department of Economic Development - North Country Region in August. Compiling the list of projects and costs was a necessary task. The Committee understood that even if Ticonderoga was not chosen for the

award, this process was still necessary for other grants and endeavors. The Town submitted the official application package in September.

Members of the Committee hosted the Regional Director for the Empire State Development's North County Regional Office on October 4. During this visit, the Committee conducted a site walk of the downtown area identifying areas that corresponded to projects in the application and describing the plans and project details. A final teleconference was conducted on October 24, 2022, allowing the Regional Office to obtain some final information on the town's projects. NY Secretary of State announced on January 23, 2023 that Ticonderoga received the award.

## 2.3 Hacker (J.J. Newberry) Building

**GOAL:** Save the Structure

**STATUS:** PARTIALLY COMPLETED

The former Hacker Boat building has remained vacant for many years and has fallen into disrepair. The future survival of this building became a concern for the Town because without some form of intervention and repair, the structure would surely fail at some point requiring the Town to expend a significant amount of taxpayer dollars to fully demolish the structure and remove the debris. The loss of this structure would result in a large hole in the center of the downtown business district that would remain for decades, impacting the economic recovery and revitalization of the town. It was estimated that the structure would not survive another Adirondack winter without intervention.



*J.J. Newberry (Hacker) building.*

The Town Supervisor worked with the Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance, the Essex County Attorney, the Essex County Board of Supervisors, and other local entities to enable the transfer of ownership from the County to the Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance. Foreclosure efforts by Essex County, which had stalled upon the advent of COVID in 2020, materialized in October when Essex County successfully foreclosed on the property, completed the sale, and transferred the deed to the Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance. TRA began efforts in December working with the Town Supervisor to apply for a RESTORE NY grant for rehabilitation of the building. The Town adopted several resolutions in support and submitted a letter of intent for RESTORE NY. The

Town will send an application for RESTORE NY on behalf of TRA in 2023. Hopefully, this structure will return to the tax rolls through the efforts of TRA.

## 2.4 Regan Development Corporation

**GOAL:** Secure Housing Development

**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

In April, the Town Supervisor contacted the President of a development corporation to inquire about this corporation's possible interest in Ticonderoga for a housing development opportunity like one then under development by the corporation in the region. A housing development of this type by this corporation needed a community with specific services and amenities, requirements which Ticonderoga satisfied.

The Supervisor participated in a meeting in April followed by phone calls and emails. The Supervisor then turned the project over to the Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance and its Director for continuing ideas and support on the development. This project has the potential to bring additional temporary housing, short-term rentals, and permanent housing solutions to Ticonderoga. Inadequate housing and childcare continue to plague Ticonderoga and other communities in the County and the State so this project would be a benefit for Ticonderoga's economic recovery and business sustainability. This activity will continue into 2023.

## 2.5 Solar Projects

**GOAL:** Support Projects

**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

Ticonderoga has become a leader in solar projects and in solar governance within Essex County. Ticonderoga has an abundance of level ground and proximity to high-voltage transmission lines which are two conditions essential for solar farms. Prior to 2022, the town partnered with the Essex County Industrial Development Agency to execute a Payment in Lieu of Taxes schedule that has become affordable for solar companies, while also generating revenue for the town and property owners.

Two solar projects began construction in 2022. These included Pivot Solar NY1 (5MW) at Commerce Drive and Pivot Solar NY9 (5MW) on NY9N and Street Road. Ticon Solar submitted a PILOT in late December and expects to begin construction in 2023. Two additional solar projects are expected to begin construction in 2023.

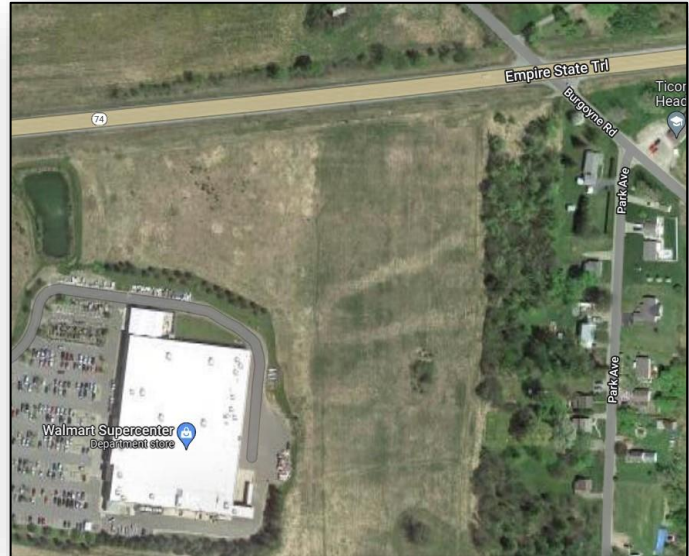


## 2.6 Break in Access (BIA)

**GOAL:** Obtain BIA

**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

The town once had an approved right to tie into Rt 22 at North Wayne Ave near the former Fireman's Field. This was originally planned for a former project but during that project planning phase, the original tie-in was removed leaving the Town with no access and no possibility for development in this area which could benefit the economic development of the town.



*Area of the required break in access for future*

In September, the Town Supervisor coordinated with the Town Attorney, NYS DOT, and others to reobtain a break in access (BIA) and this request was officially transmitted in October to the Property Executive Review Group (PERG), through the NYSDOT. We await a response.

## 2.7 Farmer's Market

**GOAL:** Support Farmer's Market

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

This year marked a significant economic advancement for the Farmer's Market in Ticonderoga. This event is becoming more popular and moved to town property behind the bank. This was a fantastic idea developed through the ingenuity and hard efforts of TACC with coordination with the Town. This area will allow the event to expand, stimulating more pedestrian travel in the area. The Town was proud to partner in this effort.



*Ribbon cutting for Farmer's Market*

## 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. Why would anyone invest in a town which is unwilling to invest in itself?

### 3.1 Sidewalk Removal, Replacement & Repair

**GOAL:** Begin 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. There has been some replacement but only recently has the town identified the categories and differences between removal and replacement and repair for fund tracking purposes. The Town nearly executed removal and replacement in 2021 but technicalities ended that effort.



*New sidewalk near high school.*

The Supervisor verified the availability of the Betty Little money with the State Comptroller's Office and constructed a Request for Proposal (RFP) package with that funding and additional ARPA funding. The goal was to replace high priority areas but do so in an equitable manner that would spread this effort across multiple and varied neighborhoods. There were some delays due to availability of concrete, but approximately 1400 feet of sidewalk was replaced on the east and west sides of Lake George Avenue, Champlain Avenue, Wicker Street, Champlain Avenue, and Highland Street. A final replacement of 100' on Montcalm Street and other repairs by the Highway Department were delayed at the end of the year because paving operations interfered with those efforts. Utilizing the Highway Department for the replacement and repair of certain sections of sidewalk will save the Town money in the end. These efforts will move into 2023. There is much more to repair and replace and it will take many years to do this as it took many years without scheduled maintenance to decay.

### 3.2 Public Parking Lot Improvements

**GOAL:** Pave Public Parking Lots

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Ticonderoga seeks to become a destination for tourism while providing safe infrastructure for its residents. The longer maintenance is postponed, the further the degradation becomes and the

more expensive it becomes to mitigate and correct issues. Two major town parking lots were paved in 2022. These included the Town owned lots behind the old J.J. Newberry (ex. Hacker Boat) building off Algonkin Street and behind the Montcalm Street business district. The Algonkin Street lot is used by residents and visitors for annual town events and had decayed over many years with large chunks of asphalt scattered throughout the lot. The business district lot was in poor shape and, like the Algonkin Street lot, has grown in use with annual events and the movement of the Farmer's Market to that area.



*Public parking lot off Algonkin St. before resurfacing.*

### 3.3 St. Clair/Grove Water Project

**GOAL:** Resolve St. Clair Flooding

**STATUS:** NOT COMPLETED

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 with no solution.



*Flooding at St. Clair and Gove.*

Correcting this deficiency became a high priority project for the current administration but one which has experienced challenges. The goal is to install a new drainage system to remove water in the affected area with no affect to residents downstream. The Town Board discussed and began pursuing and investigating options in 2022 to resolve this issue.

Following extensive discussions and coordination, the Town Supervisor, Highway Superintendent, and Deputy Town Supervisor conducted a site survey in August to view a potential easement route through the various properties. Easement maps were prepared, and further discussions occurred with Town officials and contractors. The Town sent surveyors into the area for a final survey in October to mark the proposed easement route.



Discussions with the Town Board continue towards a solution. Weather conditions and continuing easement discussion will push this project and potential construction into 2023.

### 3.4 Black Watch Expansion Project

**GOAL:** Purchase 6 Carnegie Place

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The effort to purchase property at 6 Carnegie Place began during the previous Supervisor's term and closed in late April 2022. A large portion of the purchase price was through the generosity of an anonymous donor. The Black Watch Memorial Library Board plans to demolish one structure and use the property for the library's children's Storybook Walk, a long-term goal of the library, and to house a multi-use building for residents to utilize for a variety of purposes.



*New Library property at 6 Carnegie Pl.*

### 3.5 Zombie Properties

**GOAL:** Remove Zombie Properties

**STATUS: NOT COMPLETED**

Several zombie properties exist in the Town of Ticonderoga. Some of these are the result of tragic structure fires or owners walking away from properties. The Town has an established process to place an insurance lean on property impacted by fire so that no payments are made to the property owner until an amount is used to mitigate the damaged structure. Sometimes this is successful and sometimes not. This year, the house at 8 Schuyler Street was removed by the homeowner. Other structures remain, and the Town continues to seek resolution regarding these structures.

### 3.6 Broadband

**GOAL:** Join Broadband Group

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Town Supervisor joined the North Country Broadband Alliance Workgroup and participated in weekly group meetings. There were some small local victories regarding broadband connection this year using the resources of this group. There is much more work to be done by the group to ensure all remaining unserved residents have proper access.

### 3.7 Other Improvements

**GOAL:** Improve Town Hall

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The goal was to complete initial, minor improvements to the Community Building this year. The first goals included clearing the basement of old equipment and broken furniture which freed up a significant amount of space which can be used for future emergency operations. Small improvements were made to the downstairs meeting room. TACC donated used furniture to the Town for use in the basement level replacing aging furniture.



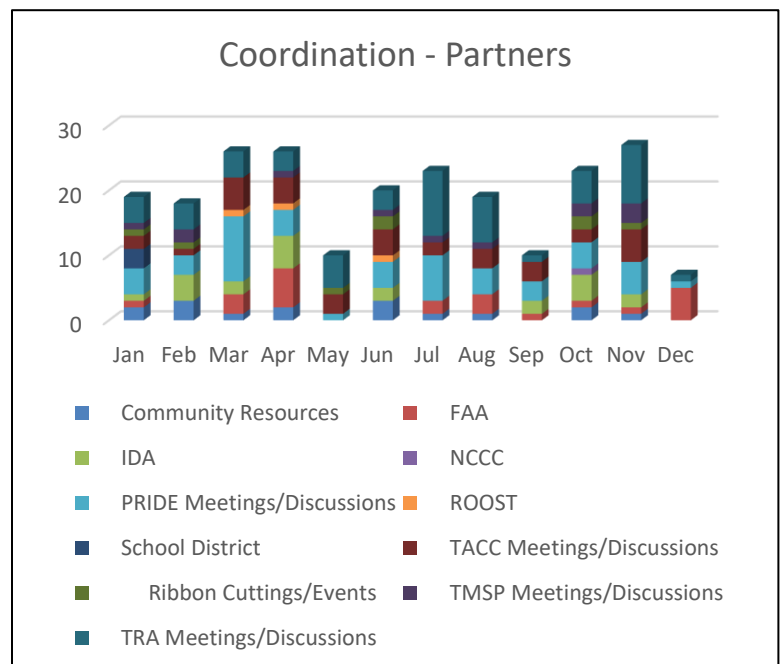
*Secondhand furniture outside Board Room*



*New Board Room tables.*

## 4.0 Coordination Efforts

Communication and coordination are critical to the successful implementation of any activity and frequent, inclusive communication is a major core value for this administration. The Town Supervisor sought to ensure email and phone communication was frequent on issues that required coordination among all relevant organizations. Information on childcare, housing, grants, and other issues from the County Board of Supervisors and other sources was immediately shared by the Supervisor with all local revitalization and economic development organizations.



*Figure 4-1*

## 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 new administration considered these partnerships as critical and vital links to Ticonderoga's successful revitalization and economic development efforts. The Town Supervisor has attended these organizational meetings and events, shared information, and coordinated with their annual activities.

## 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 attends all District monthly Fire Commissioner meetings and budget hearings as a member of the public. The Supervisor also provides monthly statistics to the Fire Company (Fire Chief) from Essex County Emergency Services.

## 4.3 Ticonderoga Emergency Squad

**GOAL:** EMS Support Solution

**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

EMS services for county municipalities is a growing issue. The Town worked closely with the Ticonderoga Emergency Squad during the year beginning in January with the funding of \$30,000 of pre-budgeted funds from the 2022 budget and an additional \$40,000 in funding from General Fund Balance from the Town Board to aid the Squad in meeting expenses for the year. This was required at a critical point to allow the Squad time to better understand their financial situation through the organization of its budgeting process.

The Supervisor attended several meetings regarding the formation of an EMS district and in September asked the Squad and representatives from Essex County Emergency Services to join the Town Board in a budget meeting discussion regarding the future of EMS services for

Ticonderoga. The December regular town board meeting included a presentation from the Ticonderoga Emergency Squad's legal counsel who presented the Board with information on the formation of an EMS district and the End-of-Year board meeting discussed this further. This will continue into 2023.

#### 4.4 Silver Bay Association

**GOAL:** Improve Armory Use

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Supervisor continued partnership discussions, originally initiated by former Councilmember, Mark Russell. Silver Bay provides incredible opportunities for Ticonderoga's youth, and it was important to ensure the Town and Silver Bay arrived at a mutually agreeable plan for supporting our youth using shared space in the Armory.

The Town Supervisor repurposed existing space to create new office space for the Ticonderoga Recreation Director which allowed Silver Bay to obtain the necessary and additional office space needed for their operations. A new agreement was developed and approved by the Town Board in February. Part of this agreement involved Silver Bay installing a divider curtain and two new basketball hoops for the gymnasium allowing for simultaneous Town/Silver Bay youth activities to occur. This was completed in September. The new equipment is a permanent part of the Armory for future generations.

#### 4.5 Burleigh Block

**GOAL:** Support Development

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Although this project was not a town project, a partnership between the developer and the Town developed during construction. Ticonderoga is very grateful to local investor, Mr. Steve Racanelli, for his investment and cooperation during the renovation of the old Burleigh Block.



*Renovated Burleigh Block by private investor.*

During construction, the sidewalk on the north and east sides of the structure was planned for replacement. Half of each section was owned by the Town while the other half was owned by



the property owner. The Town's sidewalk replacement schedule did not synchronize with the building development. The cost to the Town to replace the sidewalk through the building renovation effort was not budgeted in the 2022 town budget. Meetings between the Town Supervisor and Mr. Racanelli in March resolved the issue which allowed the project to continue, installing the full sidewalk, while saving the town any added expense.

## 5.0 Resident Communication

This section reviews specific communication tools used by the new administration. 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 for residents to listen to their concerns and address their complaints. 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. The following metrics demonstrate the amount of activity in 2022 regarding communication.

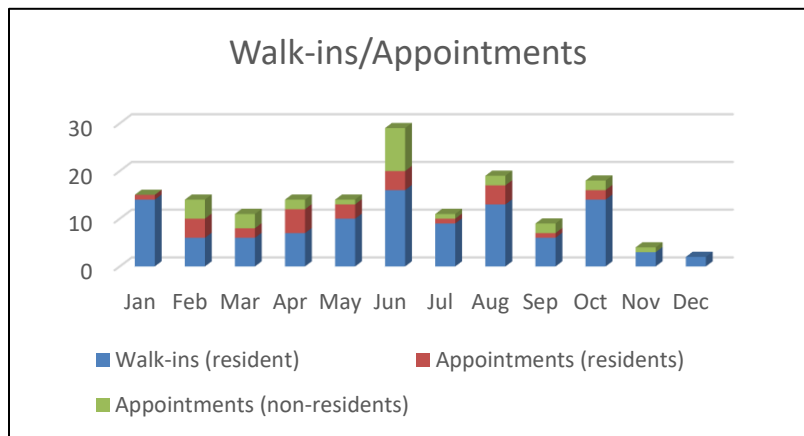


Figure 5-1

### 5.1 Walk-in Visits

**GOAL:** Enable Walk-in Visits

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

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 indicates the number of walk-in visits during 2022.

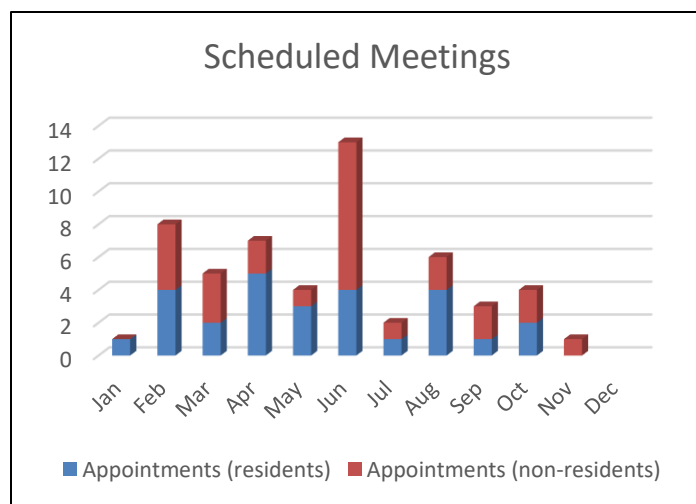


Figure 5-2

## 5.2 Scheduled Meetings

**GOAL:** Increase Communication

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Another communication method is through scheduled meetings between the Supervisor and residents (or others). Scheduled meetings allow for dedicated time to discuss more lengthy issues and aid in better scheduling the Supervisor's and the resident's time. Scheduled meetings include those scheduled with residents, organizational partners, businesspeople, and others. Figure 5-2 depicts the number of such activities in 2022.

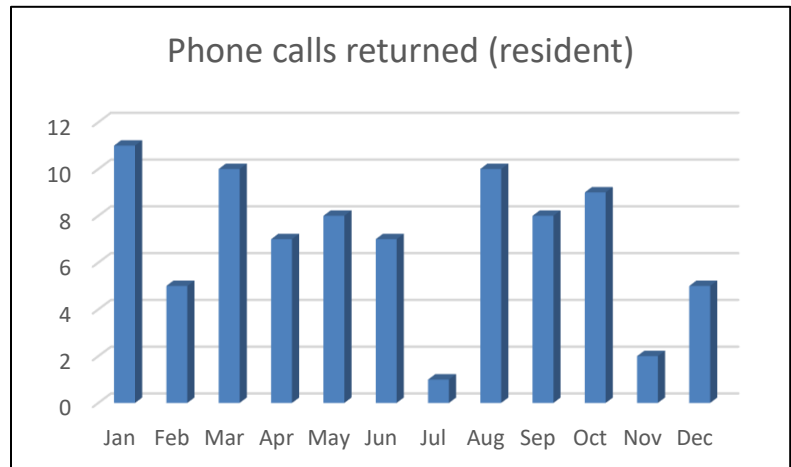


Figure 5-3

## 5.3 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. Figures 5-3 and 5-4 depict the metrics for incoming communications and responses for 2022.

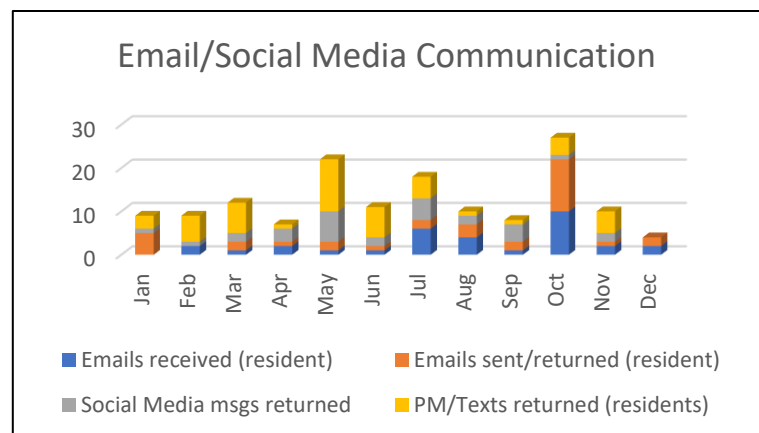


Figure 5-4

## 5.4 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 reinstituted in April 2022. This page disseminates official town information.

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.

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 2023.

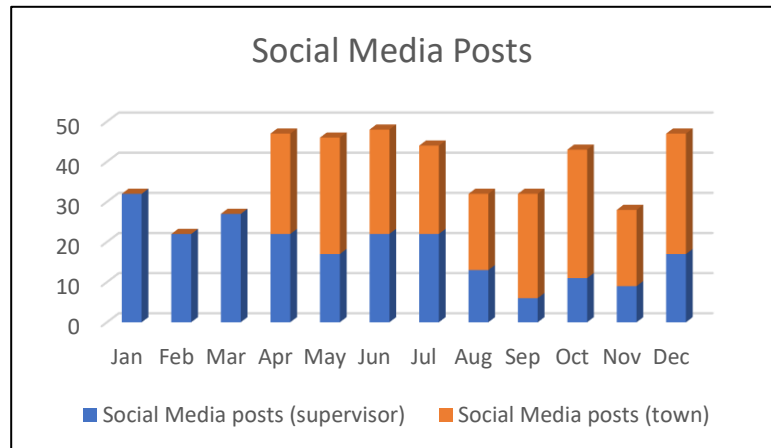


Figure 5-5

## 5.5 Town Website

**GOAL:** Repair & Update Website

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Town website was nonfunctional with old and outdated information. New formatting from the prior year had resulted in a considerable amount of missing and stale data. The Supervisor worked with the website host and became familiar with the new website system during the months of January and February to get the site operational with prior data established and new data added.

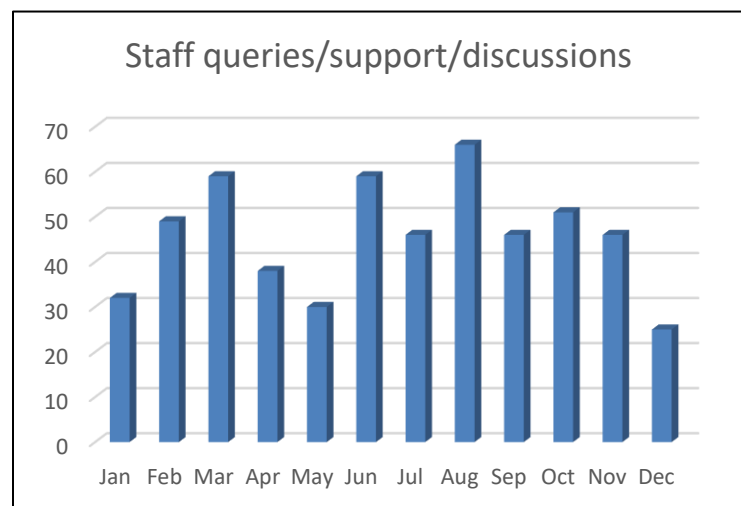


Figure 5-6

The site is updated regularly, by the Town Supervisor, 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.

## 5.6 Daily Updates & Discussions

**GOAL:** Be Available for Discussions/Direction

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

A considerable amount of communication occurs 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, department heads, council members, organizational partners, business owners, and others. Many of these discussions involve staff providing input and seeking direction or clarification, providing status input regarding ongoing events or activities, discussions with individual board members on their projects or current issues, communication between the Supervisor and the Town Clerk, budget discussions, financial issues, personnel issues, highway activities, committee action items, etc. Figure 5-6 depicts the number of such inquiries and discussions over the last year.

## 6.0 Major Capital Projects

### 6.1 Chilson/Eagle Lake Water

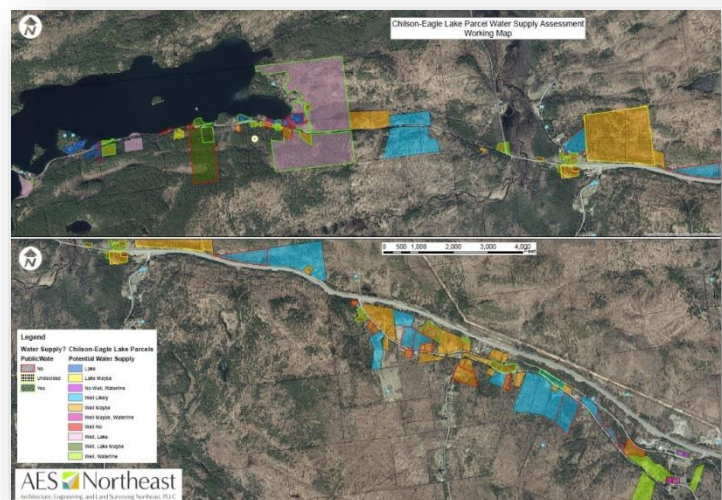
**GOAL:** Water Solution

**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 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. The Town made the decision that fixing Gooseneck is cost prohibitive and unaffordable for residents due to the limited number of residents who would be required to pay for this project and the fact that they do not desire to become a new water district (the only method by which a municipality can supply water).

The Town Supervisor and Town Attorney met with NYS Senator, Dan Stec, Assemblyman, Matt Simpson, and representatives from Congresswoman, Elise Stefanik's office, in February to address the issue and seek project funding. Letters were also issued to Congresswoman Stefanik, US Senator Charles Schumer, US Senator Kirstin Gillibrand, and NYS Governor Hochul requesting



*Parcel map for categorizing well-capable property*

funding. These were in addition to another seven (7) letters written in 2021. The Town encouraged residents to petition their legislative representatives to aid in this project.

Increasing costs and supply chain issues impacted the ability to fund an already unaffordable major water project which involved pushing water up Chilson Hill to the area of concern. The chosen, lowest cost option from 2018, with an estimated cost of \$8M, soon climbed above \$13-\$14M. This would not satisfy the maximum allowable EDU cost by the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) unless residents petitioned for this and were willing to pay the high quarterly charges associated with the project through the formation of a water district. All parties agreed the costs (which did not include operations & maintenance costs) were not financially possible.

The Town was open to and heard resident ideas and options, but none were feasible from an engineering standpoint, and they did not satisfy Consent Decree timelines and requirements. Some residents disagreed with the town officials, engineers, and the Department of Health on the approach and professional analysis. The Town did not grant a request to seek relief from the federal decree because, even if granted, the Town would still be required to become compliant, and the solution and associated costs had not changed and remained unaffordable. Spending more money to achieve the same engineering results was not efficient.

Town officials and consultants worked on another approach. Residents were polled to see who had other means to obtain water and who did not. Responses returned were a disappointingly low 50%. Some residents encouraged others to not respond. Those who indicated they were on their own were provided with additional information to ensure they had full knowledge of the requirements they may need to meet in obtaining their own water source.

The Town classified those who responded into categories, identifying which properties could support/share a well, access other water sources, or for a few cases, some who could be absorbed into a current water district. This information was necessary to understand the amount of money needed from state and federal representatives to fund non-municipal water sources.

The Town Board communicated to a great extent with residents during 2022 on this issue. This included monthly public works (water/sewer) meetings, 3 individual resident meetings, 4 informational town meetings/workshops, 2 regular board meeting discussions, 2 public hearings, and multiple survey/letters.

Congresswoman Elise Stefanik's office contacted the Town in early January 2024 as this report was under development to state that the Town's funding request for \$4 million for the



Chilson/Eagle Lake water project was passed in a recent Federal Omnibus bill. The Supervisor and IDA worked together to submit this request in 2022. This effort will continue into 2023.

## 6.2 The Portage Project

**GOAL:** The Portage Project

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

This water/wastewater separation project was in progress during the prior and current administration. It was completed in 2022 approximately two years late due to COVID impacts and unexpected construction issues. Final paving operations concluded in September. The Town reserves the right to review grass establishment in the spring and request the contractor return if necessary to re-seed any bare spots.



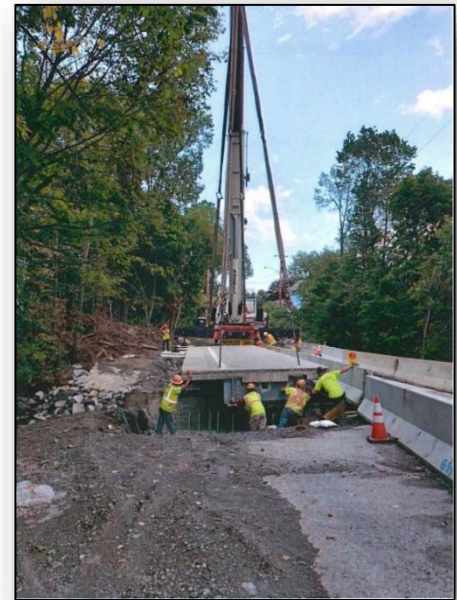
*Construction on The Portage project.*

## 6.3 Veteran's Road Culvert Project

**GOAL:** Veteran's Road Culvert

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

This project was begun under the prior administration through the Bridge NY Program. The first bid process in 2021 did not result in a reasonably acceptable bid price so a second bid process in 2022 was completed and accepted. However, the price exceeded the amount payable by Bridge NY. A small portion of funding (\$105,347) was required by the town if it chose to continue the project. The cost of cancelling the project (\$125,825) with no new culvert exceeded the cost differential so the project was contracted and completed in September.



*Veterans Road culvert work.*

## 6.4 Airport Apron/Taxiway Rehabilitation

**GOAL:** Apron/Taxiway Rehabilitation

**STATUS: NOT COMPLETED**

The Ticonderoga Municipal Airport is an economic benefit to Ticonderoga as one of several key transportation arteries serving the community. It also provides income from the sale of aviation fuel and landing and rental fees.

This project began under the prior administration. The next project phase, Apron & Taxiway Rehabilitation, was put out for bid and awarded to Reale Construction in March with FAA grant approval and final contract completed in August. Construction will begin in Spring 2023.

## 6.5 La Chute Walking Trail Extension

**GOAL:** Begin Trail Extension

**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

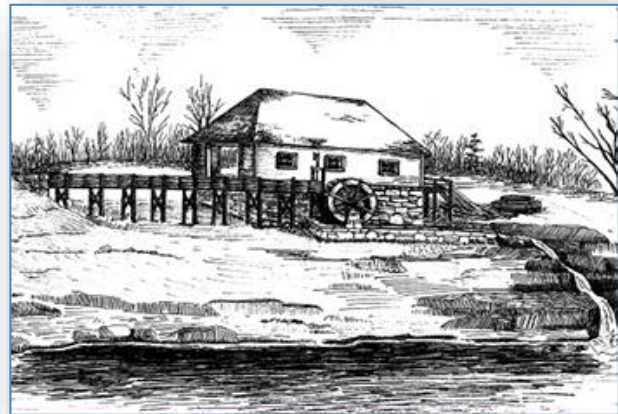
This project will connect the upper and lower La Chute trail sections with an approximate 0.25-mile addition. The Town partners with the New York Department of State, Office of Planning, Development, and Community Infrastructure on this project. The contract was awarded, and discussions occurred throughout the year between the Town Supervisor, New York State, and Essex County Office of Community Resources. The Town expects to issue an RFP in January and is working with help from Essex County Community Resources. PRIDE of Ticonderoga and the Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce are partners with the Town to accomplish this task.

## 6.6 18<sup>th</sup> Century Sawmill Project

**GOAL:** Conduct Research Study

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Town and PRIDE of Ticonderoga have been involved with the 18<sup>th</sup> Century Sawmill Project for several years. During late 2021 and into 2022, the Town of Ticonderoga entered into an agreement with PRIDE and the Fort Ticonderoga Association to complete a research project before any final design and construction began. The goal was to ensure that Ticonderoga did not simply obtain another historic structure, but one which was as historically accurate as possible in terms of design and operation. With that objective in mind, Fort Ticonderoga developed a fellow program to research sawmills of the period in different locations attempting to identify how they were designed and operated. The Ticonderoga Town Supervisor and members of the Fort



*Artist concept for 18<sup>th</sup> Century sawmill.*



Ticonderoga Association participated in interviews to choose a candidate for the research which was completed in August 2022. This project will continue into 2023.

## 6.7 Lead Service Line Replacement Project (LSLRP)

**GOAL:** LSLRP Verification

**STATUS:** NOT COMPLETED

The New York State Governor's Office and Department of Health selected Ticonderoga to receive a grant award in the second round of funding in 2019. Physical work commenced in 2022 on this project. AES Northeast, the town Water Department, and Reale Construction were active in 2022 digging and verifying lead service lines. A few areas remain to check in 2023.

# 7.0 Other Town Projects & Issues

## 7.1 Senior Bus Policy

**GOAL:** Develop Senior Bus Policy

**STATUS:** COMPLETED

The Ticonderoga Senior Bus has operated for years under unofficial documentation and verbal guidelines in terms of eligible ridership, patron cost, rules of operation, area of operation and more. The Town Supervisor initiated a project in 2022 to pull this information into a comprehensive, written policy for the sake of clarification, referral, and efficiency. This included a meeting with drivers in March as well as input from the Town Clerk, Town Council members, and other administrative staff. The Town Board adopted the policy in August. This is a living document and updated as new issues arise to the level of requiring a policy modification.

The policy improperly addressed the use of the bus on election day. This was corrected by the end of 2022 and redlined to address this as well as other uses such as use during an emergency (e.g., active shooter or other event requiring the evacuation of residents from a location). These changes and other issues will be placed before the Town Board for approval in early 2023.

## 7.2 Low Income Housing Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)

**GOAL:** Establish LIHWAP

**STATUS:** COMPLETED

The Town Board attempts to find and implement, where possible, every program that may benefit its residents. In that endeavor, the Town Board approved the town's participation in the

LIHWAP program in February. This New York State program from the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance assists low-income households, particularly those with the lowest incomes, that pay a high proportion of household income for drinking water and wastewater services. The Water and Finance Departments did an excellent job in fielding, monitoring, and maintaining this program for the town. Several residents did apply for the program.

### 7.3 Airport Beacon & Tower

**GOAL:** Accept Beacon & Tower

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

A private 2021 effort emerged to save the old Ticonderoga Intermediate Airfield beacon and tower located at the old airport location, currently on Sylvamo property. Efforts to move, erect, and preserve this non-operational 1939 tower at the entrance of the Ticonderoga Municipal Airport were unsuccessful in 2021. The Town coordinated and cooperated with this private effort in 2022 to achieve this preservation goal. The “Save the Tower” group presented a proposal in March to move and erect the tower at no expense to the town. The Town Board approved this proposal and accepted the beacon tower, donated by Sylvamo, in April.



*The beacon tower moves to town property.*

Coordination with the FAA to erect the tower began in August. Preservation efforts began and the Town is waiting final FAA approval for placement. This project will preserve a valuable and important part of Ticonderoga’s aviation history.

### 7.4 Major Rogers Statue

**GOAL:** Paint Rogers Structure

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Robert Rogers statue was a volunteer project initiated by Roberta Whiteley who raised the funds to construct the statue. Her efforts were organized through the Ticonderoga Montcalm Street Partnership (TMSP). TMSP requested and received permission from the Ticonderoga Town Board in 2021 to place the statue on town property. The enclosure (not originally



*Painting complete.*

planned as part of the project), including the painting of the enclosure, was supposed to be completed by the project before turning the statue over to the Town. Several discussions of the Buildings/Grounds Committee addressed final enclosure methodologies and painting/repainting with the idea that volunteers could complete this at no cost to the Town. Future maintenance of the statue would fall into the normal town maintenance schedule.

The monument stood for some time until a local volunteer completed the final painting of the exterior and interior using funds and supplies donated by other residents. These volunteer efforts are the bands which pull us together as a community.

## 7.5 FAA GPS Nighttime Landing Restriction

**GOAL:** Clear FAA Obstruction

**STATUS: 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. However, the Town did not update the FAA database, provide evidence of this removal, nor did it request the removal of this tree from the FAA's Obstacle Evaluation team. The obstruction persisted and was the subject of several Airport Committee meetings. The Town sought to resolve this issue in 2019, 2020, and 2021. The FAA provided instructions to the Town to aid in completing this effort in August 2021. The Town did not pursue this, and the obstruction remained in the FAA system into 2022.

I am pleased to report that this action was completed with the project submitted to the FAA in December of this year. The Town Supervisor worked with FAA officials and accessed the Runway Airspace Management (RAM) tool through the Airport Data and Information Portal (ADIP) to identify the proper obstacle and submit the necessary documentation to update the FAA database and clear the obstacle. The Town is awaiting notification from the FAA Obstacle Data Team (ODT) who will review and decide on project completion.

## 7.6 Library Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

**GOAL:** Develop Town/Library MOU

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Black Watch Memorial Library is a unique town facility. The structure and property are owned by the Town of Ticonderoga, but the library is operated by a Board of Directors with a town Councilmember assigned to represent the Town on the Board.

Hours of operation differ from that of the regular town offices and this and other issues have created challenges and caused inefficiencies. To eliminate any “reinventing of the wheel” on issues and to provide clarity and consistency for the Library Manager, Town Supervisor, and Library Board, the Town Supervisor developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Town and the library which was coordinated with all parties and approved by the Town Board in November.

## 8.0 Youth Activities & Projects

### 8.1 New Playground

**GOAL:** Install Equipment

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The Town, through the leadership of Councilmember Joyce Cooper and with the generous gift of time and talent by many local volunteers of all ages completed the installation of new playground equipment in Percy Thompson Bicentennial Park. This was completed in June.



*Volunteers complete new town playground.*

### 8.2 Summer Camp Program

**GOAL:** Execute Summer Camp

**STATUS: NOT COMPLETED**

Finding sufficient labor for town positions and activities was a challenge in 2022 as it was for many businesses and industries. This greatly affected the Town’s ability to offer its 2022 Summer Camp Program. Insufficient applicants applied for the positions required by the Town and Department of Health. The Town’s Recreation Supervisor through the Youth Committee did supplement the camp with other scheduled activities for the summer. Hopefully, the summer camp program will meet with more success in 2023.

### 8.3 Skating Rink

**GOAL:** Accept Rink Donation

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

The ice-skating rink is a great recreational resource for residents and visitors and enables Ticonderoga to continue a path to become a 4-season destination. The Town accepted the donation of a regulation size hockey rink in November through the generous actions of local benefactors. The modular-designed rink allows it to fit into the current skating rink footprint. PRIDE of Ticonderoga, through a grant, purchased ice skates. Once again, the generous donation of time and talent will help operate the rink during the 2022-2023 season.

## 9.0 Budget & Finance

### 9.1 Annual Budget

**GOAL:** Scrutinize Budget

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

A major goal was to closely examine 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.

The inflation rate for the year was 7.17%, three times higher than the previous year. Fuel prices soared above 2022 budgeted levels, insurance costs for 2023 increased, transfer station construction debris costs nearly doubled, and increased labor negotiation related costs all contributed to a major impact on the 2023 budget.

#### 9.1.1 Food Allotments

Food Allotments: Other than contractual (collective bargaining agreement) instances, all funds for food using taxpayer monies were removed. This included a line item in the Supervisor's budget for meals during budget workshops and Assessor's budget for meals during Board of Assessment Review grievance day meetings.

#### 9.1.2 Controlling Costs

In preparation for the 2023 budget, the expenditures in several departments remained the same or were reduced from 2022 levels and budgeted closer to observed actuals over time while also considering future costs. However, this was not enough to offset the increased cost of those items needed to operate the government. Town leaders have a responsibility to set the example. No one was required, but all elected officials and some other department leaders agreed to freeze salaries at 2022 levels as one method to keep expenditures in check. I am extremely proud of these individuals because for many, this is their livelihood. Town funding to the many partner organizations were frozen at 2022 levels. The Town contracted with a new partner for Transfer



Station costs in 2023 to lessen the impact of increasing costs. Due to these increasing costs, the Town Board adopted a local law to exceed the tax cap. The original goal was to use fund balance to stay below the tax cap, but ensuing discussions revealed a desire to exceed the cap, however, in a controlled manner by using some portion of unexpended unappropriated fund balance.

## 9.2 Budgeting for Capital Projects

**GOAL:** Obtain Financial Expert

**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

Ticonderoga has many capital projects which require tracking by the Supervisor, Town Council, Water/Wastewater, and Finance Departments. One major area of concern identified by the Supervisor and Town Council Members was the town's ability to continually add capital projects to an already overburdened tax base and limited financial capability. A challenge arises when several projects exist, each which may be partially funded via grant monies, but for which the town has a local share (or match) of financial responsibility. Over time, the town's portion of grant matching adds up to a significant amount and there is a point where the town could easily overextend its ability to fund additional projects.

The 2023 budget allocated a portion of funding to contract a financial advisor whose task would include reviewing the town's current capital project financial responsibility and providing information which allows the Town to better understand its financial limits.

## 9.3 Enhanced Reporting

**GOAL:** Support Enhanced Reporting

**STATUS: NOT COMPLETED**

Ticonderoga received notification from the New York State and Local Retirement System (NYSLRS) in early December that the town must fully implement employer enhanced reporting. The Town engaged with NYSLRS to begin the transition process to meet the upcoming deadline. The Finance Department will continue the transition process with NYSLRS into 2023.

# 10.0 Public Safety & Security

The Town investigated and/or implemented several actions and plans in 2022 associated with public safety and security. These included plans for emergency response, continuing operations, law enforcement agreements, vehicle & traffic issues, and staff/visitor security. The requirement

for employees to provide their system passwords to the Town Supervisor was eliminated both for morale and security reasons.

## 10.1 Emergency Response Plan

**GOAL:** Complete Town/County Response Plan

**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.” One of the first areas investigated in 2022 was the development of an emergency response plan for the town. The Town Supervisor reached out

to other towns for information so as not to reinvent the wheel and also coordinated with the Essex County Director of Emergency Services. The Town Supervisor completed this plan and submitted it to the County in August.



*Active shooter exercise in November.*

The next phase of this program is to identify internal Town of Ticonderoga response actions, areas of responsibility, defining essential personnel, and other related emergency response procedures and actions. The Town Supervisor also participated in the November active shooter exercise with local, county, and state emergency response agencies and affiliated organizations. Information from this event will aid in tailoring Ticonderoga town government response actions and preparations. This will continue in 2023.

## 10.2 Emergency Backup Generator

**GOAL:** Obtain Backup Generator

**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

The Town initiated the process for procuring a backup generator to allow continuity of town operations during an emergency and potentially allow the Community Building to operate as a shelter. This effort ties closely with the effort to free space in the basement to accommodate an increased population. Investigating generator hardware on existing state contracts did not yield favorable results. Therefore, the town will go out for a request for proposal (RFP) in 2023.

### 10.3 Beach Law Enforcement Agreement

**GOAL:** Beach Agreement

**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

The Buildings/Grounds & Parks/Recs Committee raised concern regarding the safety of patrons and town staff at the Ticonderoga Black Point Beach and the inability of local law enforcement to exercise authority over such situations (other than show a presence). The beach, although Town property, lies within the confines of Washington County (Putnam, NY) and is subject to enforcement by the Washington County Sheriff's Department. Past law enforcement issues at the beach brought related challenges to light.

The Ticonderoga Town Supervisor contacted the Putnam Town Supervisor in May regarding the creation of a potential intermunicipal agreement. This agreement sought only to develop an understanding and grant authority to the Ticonderoga Police Department for the enforcement of the law at the beach and no other locations within Washington County. A draft agreement was created which could delegate authority to the Ticonderoga Police Department to enforce the law at the beach, when necessary. Final processing on the agreement occurred in December. Implementation is expected for the 2023 season.

### 10.4 Community Building Security Review

**GOAL:** Security Review

**STATUS: PARTIALLY COMPLETED**

Discussions regarding building security occurred at the Town Board and Town Committee levels during the year. All parties agreed that the Community Building is vulnerable to security issues. The Ticonderoga Municipal Court holds official activities on the second floor in the auditorium and court bench area. A metal detector screens for court access, but this screening occurs after initial entry into the building. Not all security issues are discussed here. The building is not immune to postal or other delivery issues as evidenced by a suspicious package which arrived in the building in May.

In April, the Supervisor expressed concerns regarding the west side access door and ordered all keys for this door returned to the Town Clerk. The side door was secured and relegated to emergency egress only.

On July 19, 2022, the vulnerability of staff and infrastructure was evidenced when a first amendment auditor visited town offices. The individual wandered into offices taking meticulous video of all areas of the building. He was approached by staff asking if they could assist him. The

individual did not identify himself or his purpose. He responded with short answers, was aloof, and stated he needed no assistance while continuing what was perceived as suspicious actions. Many staff and some visitors became concerned for their safety by this individual's actions. The individual was perfectly within his right to be in the building and take video of any areas where no prohibition of such existed and had he explained he was an auditor and what that process entailed, no further interaction may have occurred unless he needed assistance. The individual remained in the building for a period attempting to generate a response by harassing and insulting staff and visitors and interfered with a real time emergency which later occurred within the building.

In August, the Supervisor began researching professional agencies which could assist with a site security evaluation. These activities will continue in 2023.

## 10.5 Speed & Parking Restrictions

### **GOAL:** Speed Restriction Requests

#### **STATUS: COMPLETED**

The safe operation of vehicles and appropriate speed restrictions within Ticonderoga are an important public safety issue. Efforts to reduce speed in two locations occurred during 2022. These were initiated by resident input and actions by the Public Safety Committee. One location involved Kennedy Drive for which a speed reduction was requested to NYS DOT in August 2021. DOT informed the Town in October 2022 that this request was denied. Additional discussions and concerns arose during the summer regarding the risk to the public in the section of NYS 9N before and after the intersection of Alexandria Avenue and NYS 9N. This was processed in August and the Town is awaiting a decision. This is the second submittal for this location.

Parking and related safety issues surfaced during 2022. Some of these were associated with the completion of The Portage project. Others were identified by residents and councilmembers in relation to public safety issues both reported as well as those identified as potential. The Town began investigating a Vehicle and Traffic Local Law which will carry into 2023 and require an extensive effort to capture all related requirements, currently existing and those which must be addressed, into one law.

Stop signs were added to the intersection of Montcalm Street/Wiley Street/Schuyler Street. These supplemented the current red flashing light to better improve the traffic requirement at this intersection. The requirement for signage at the intersection of McCormick and Champlain Avenue was also identified as this location is now more heavily traveled with the Farmer's Market.

## 10.6 Insurance Liabilities

**GOAL:** Review Liabilities

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

NYMIR, the Town's insurance agent, conducted a risk assessment visit in October. These assessments identify the exposures faced by local governments and highlight the importance of safeguarding employees, members of the public and municipal assets. This assessment looked at multiple topics. The Town examined all recommendations at various committees during the months of November and December and provided a preliminary response to the recommendations in December.

## 10.7 Use of Town Property

**GOAL:** Implement Local Law

**STATUS: COMPLETED**

Several recent activities occurring on town property have resulted in the Town taking more decisive action on clarifying and legislating rules and guidelines for the use of town property to ensure public safety and preserve/protect our open spaces. Recent actions resulted in the prohibition of hunting on town property. In July, more in-depth discussion was held in relation to illegal camping on town property. Recent camping required extensive cleanup of debris and drug paraphernalia at a cost to the town taxpayers. The Town developed a local law regulating the use of town owned real property in December.



*A campsite on town property.*

## 11.0 Summary

Ticonderoga is on a positive road to improvement, but we have a long way to go as it took a long time to find ourselves where we are today. Many thanks go to our brave local businesspeople who got creative, survived a Pandemic, and continue to move forward with their endeavors. Sincere thanks go to those who have chosen to make significant investments in Ticonderoga – investors and new businesspeople who have begun new operations and/or moved/expanded



their operations to Ticonderoga. We encourage others to do the same and the Town stands ready to work with our partners to achieve these efforts.

Recognition and thanks also go to our dedicated local area revitalization and economic development organizations such as the Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce (TACC), PRIDE of Ticonderoga, 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), and Essex County Office of Community Resources to name a few. In partnership with the Town of Ticonderoga, much success has occurred during 2022 and the cooperation level has greatly increased.

Finally, considerable thanks go to the staff and department heads in the Town of Ticonderoga who were responsible for many of our achievements and who continue to run our operations and maintain our infrastructure day and night, workday and holiday. They, with those mentioned above, and you are part of our eventual achievement and success.

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