

INSIDE INSIGHTS

THE NEWSLETTER OF
THE SULLIVAN COUNTY MANAGER

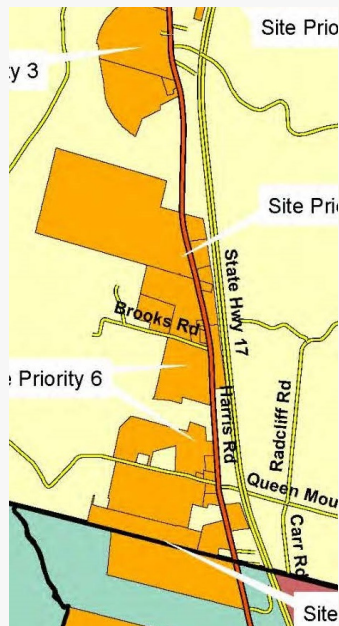


CREATING LIVABLE WAGE JOBS IN LIBERTY

BY JOSHUA POTOSEK, COUNTY MANAGER

Thanks to Congressman Marc Molinaro, we're in the pipeline to receive \$1 million from the Federal government to continue work on the Old Route 17 Corridor Infrastructure Project Design.

The "Old" refers to the location - just off both Old Route 17 and "new" 17 (future I-86), south of Liberty. We've partnered with the Town of Liberty to upgrade water and sewer infrastructure to resolve existing water quality issues and to service up to 1.4



Parcels proposed to be served along Old Rte. 17

million square feet of new commercial/ industrial development.

These new opportunities will help meet a strong regional demand for commercial and industrial space, and allow for economic growth and diversification in an area that needs and is capable of hosting manufacturing jobs.

Highway access places the corridor within two hours of the New York metro area, and within a three-hour drive of 29 million people in 10 states.

While the upgrades will mostly be within Town boundaries, the Village of Liberty will benefit from replacement/construction of

water/sewer systems, along with the creation of jobs, as people will seek housing and businesses in the Village.

The project's ultimate goal is to create shovel-ready sites for industrial developers (warehouses, office spaces, manufacturing facilities), addressing the local need for an expanded tax and job base, the regional need to support economic growth, and the broader need to be competitive in attracting new business and investment.

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WHERE'S OUR WATER? WE NEED TO KNOW

What if you turned your faucet on, and nothing happened? What if you discovered the issue wasn't your pipes, your pumps or your provider? What if the water source on which you rely simply ran dry?

That's the disastrous outcome we're intent on mitigating, and it's that type of concern that has motivated us to get a clear and comprehensive understanding of water resources Countywide. Portions of Sullivan County are facing significant potential residential and commercial development, which has equally significant implications for water sources and water providers – and not just potable water, but wastewater as well. We need to understand where fresh water is, how much of it exists, and the infrastructure that provides drinking water and handles wastewater.

We're currently reviewing firms to inventory our

municipal water assets and turn that into a publicly available interactive map. The company chosen by the Legislature later this year will scour State records, contact town and village officials, and collaborate with the County to identify our drinking water reservoirs, pipes and pumps, along with our wastewater facilities.

We'll also dig into 60 years' worth of data already collected about our natural water resources – our aquifers, our lakes, our springs, our rivers and streams, and our private and public wells.

We'll then combine that with the data we have about existing, ongoing and proposed development throughout the County, including where these developments are getting or plan on getting drinking water and wastewater resources.

The result will be a truly comprehensive, incredibly valuable dataset from which experts, local officials and the general public can retrieve information about the state of water assets Countywide.

SHARING IDEAS: IT'S A REGIONAL THING

More than 200 local influencers and businesspeople gathered in Poughkeepsie in April to listen to county leaders discuss the challenges of the day: housing, workforce training, demographics shifts, poverty and more.

Our legislative chair, Nadia Rajsz, joined the county executives from Dutchess (Sue Serino), Orange (Steve Neuhaus) and Ulster (Jen Metzger) to talk about how we've tackled these issues.

In fact, Chair Rajsz got a chance to talk about an initiative we're researching with the host of this event, Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress. Building off of our recent study on the local housing crisis, Pattern's staff have created a proposal for a housing trust fund that would set aside monies to stimulate the creation of local affordable housing.



From the left, Pattern CEO Adam Bosch speaks while Sullivan County Legislature Chair Nadia Rajsz and Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino prepare to weigh in.

DID WE SAY 'GOOGLE'? WHY, YES WE DID!

Our Communications Director Dan Hust, accompanied by ITS Commissioner Lorne Green and Director of Application Development & Support Andrew McCabe, travelled to Manhattan in February to participate in a Google conference about municipal implementation of artificial intelligence.



Enjoying their peek at Google's new NYC offices earlier this year were, from the left, Sullivan County ITS Commissioner Lorne Green, Communications Director Dan Hust, Director of Application Development & Support Andrew McCabe and their Google sales rep, Chris Gabriel.

Dan proved to be "the star of the show," explaining to an audience of 500 public-sector leaders how Sullivan County managed to become a national leader in rolling out Google's new Vertex AI, through a chatbot on the County website. Listeners were struck by the fact that just two County employees - Dan and Andrew - leveraged a team supplied by Google to develop, launch and maintain "Saige," our AI-powered question-answerer at www.sullivanny.us.

Try Saige out yourself! Just click on the dialog box in the lower righthand of any screen on our County website.

WE'RE CLIMBING UP

According to the latest Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's (RWJF's) County Health Rankings and Roadmap report, Sullivan County is improving in overall health.

"I am very excited to be able to share that although we clearly still have much to improve, there is a lot of good news for Sullivan County in this year's report," observed Sullivan County Health & Human Services Commissioner John Liddle. "While RWJF no longer provides numerical rankings at the county level, a careful calculation of the data appears to indicate Sullivan has risen from 60th to 57th out of 62 counties across New York State."

Released in March, the report offers an exceptional level of detail and data that health officials across the nation will use to inform and guide public policy.

The report can be found at www.countyhealthrankings.org.

SUMMER'S COMING, AND THE JOBS ARE HERE

Summer is right around the corner, but we're already looking for anyone, from 14 on up, who's got an interest in working between Memorial Day and Labor Day - and beyond.

The work is varied, and it's not all outside. We've got office internships, temporary Sheriff's deputy positions, and the usual array of lifeguard, laborer, and park attendant spots.

Details on all these jobs, plus the way to apply, can be found at sullivan-portal.mycivilservice.com/jobopps. And if a teen aged 14-16 would like to be part of a memorable team experience, they should take a look at our Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), which specializes in group projects across the County. Find out more about SYEP by calling our Center for Workforce Development at 845-794-3340.

TAKING OUR AIRPORT INTO THE 21ST CENTURY



A major step towards our goal of making the Sullivan County Airport self-sustaining is now under way. These are renderings of the new terminal that even now is being built, thanks to an \$18.5 million grant from the State. Its design is multi-purpose: rentable offices on the first floor, a restaurant with an outdoor balcony on the second floor, a pilots' lounge and other amenities. Though it's not realistic to try to attract regularly scheduled passenger airline service, the facility will be open to the public, and our strategy is to use this beautiful asset to garner aviation companies, business flights and entrepreneurs interested in having operations close to New York City but far enough away that costs are controllable. Right place, right time!

