

Greene County

Economic Redevelopment Plan

Crisis Response & Recovery



Strategic Planning Initiatives

When the COVID-19 Pandemic hit, Greene County was in the process of updating its economic development strategy, our action plan to position the county for success in the future economy. As we pivot to provide emergency support for businesses and the economy, the central initiatives within the strategy are guiding immediate, near-term and longer-term actions for economic response and recovery.

The four initiatives within Greene County's Economic Redevelopment Strategy include:

Initiative 1: Prioritizing Workforce Development

Initiative 2: Strengthening and Growing Greene's Major Industries

- Manufacturing, Distribution, Tourism, Recreation, Retail, Entertainment, & Hospitality

Initiative 3: Investing in Economic Development Infrastructure

- Shovel Ready Sites, Business Parks & Priority Properties
- Broadband & Cellular Connectivity

Initiative 4: Strengthening our Downtowns and Community Centers as Creative Hubs

Rising to the Challenge

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, Greene County launched a comprehensive economic and business development response and recovery initiative:

- An [online business resource center](#) with links to resources and guidelines, updated daily with the most current information available and distributed on multiple communications platforms.
 - eNewsletters, Social Media Posts, and Press Releases (Positively Greene, Greene Government News, & Greene County EDC Updates)
- An [emergency loan fund](#) to assist negatively affected local businesses
 - Small Business Loans for Employee Retention, Restoration and/or New Hiring
- A special Buy In Greene '[Open During the Pause](#)' Campaign connecting consumers to searchable online listings of local businesses providing goods and services during the pandemic
- A [Reopening After the Pause](#) online survey of over 650 Greene County Businesses resulting in a comprehensive Industry Sector breakdown of responses was provide to NYS in advance of their issuance of guidance for re-opening by region:
 - Respondents provided answers to a series of questions on what is unique to their specific business sector and how they would open safely and profitably.
- A Survey of the Great Northern Catskills of Greene County's target audience that showed 65% willing to travel within the first month of reopening, and 92% more likely to drive rather than fly. Outdoor activities and restaurant dining were looked-forward-to the most.
- Expansion of our [Virtual Main Street](#) program featuring aerial views, street level video and 360 virtual tours of local businesses and community assets on BuyInGreene.com

Reallocating Resources

An immediate pause was placed on All Paid Media Advertising to attract visitors to Greene County, enabling resources to be applied to:

- A new website at TakeOutInGreene.com promoting restaurants and brewers offering Take Out, Delivery and Curbside Pick-up, supported by local radio and targeted social media campaigns
- A “Stay Safe, Stay Inspired, Stay Home” social media campaign to followers of our Great Northern Catskills of Greene County platforms, fostering continuing interest in our destinations through virtual and interactive content, while supporting our stay at home messaging

Crisis Response

Greene County’s COVID-19 Economic Recovery Team



At the direction of County leadership our recovery team was formed including: the Department of Economic Development, Planning and Tourism, the Greene County Economic Development Corporation, Greene IDA and the Greene County Chamber of Commerce who are working in consort to engage with our local businesses by industry sector and:

- Conduct on-line focus groups identifying specific challenges in Key Business Sectors including:
 - Retail, Restaurants, Resorts & Lodging, Personal Services, Arts / Entertainment / Recreation, and Not-For-Profits.
- Channel information to NYS and regional response & recovery entities
- Raise the visibility of Greene County needs and concerns to state authorities
- Communicate information and guidance as it become available through website repositories, social media channels, and opt-in subscriber eNewsletters & releases.

The NY Forward Plan

On May 5th, NYS released the [NY Forward Plan](#) – a data-driven protocol that focuses on getting people back to work and easing social isolation without triggering renewed spread of the virus or overwhelming the hospital system. New York will reopen on a regional basis as each region meets the criteria necessary to protect public health.

A series of [7 Key Metrics](#) determines when each region can begin the reopening process. Industries are divided into 4 phases beginning with the most essential and those with the least risk of triggering an outbreak. As long as all seven metrics continue to be met, reopening phases can proceed in as little as two weeks after the initiation of the previous phase.

Phase 1: Construction, Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting, Retail (limited to Curbside) Manufacturing & Wholesale Trade – **business open as of May 20, 2020**

Phase 2: Professional & Personal Services, Retail, Administrative Support, Real Estate / Rentals & Leasing – **anticipated date is June 3, 2020**

Phase 3: Restaurants / Food Services – **anticipated date is June 17, 2020**

Phase 4: Arts / Entertainment / Recreation / Education – **anticipated date is July 1, 2020**

Crisis Response

Region by Region Reopening

New York is comprised of 10 Economic Development Regions. Greene County is part of the [Capital Region](#) which also includes Columbia, Albany, Rensselaer, Schenectady, Saratoga, Warren & Washington counties.

Regions must meet and maintain compliance with seven public health metrics in order to reopen and progress through each of the four phases. [Regional Control Rooms](#) have been established to ensure a consistent response to region-specific issues.

Regional Control Room Collaboration

The Capital Region Control Room is a 12-member panel responsible for monitoring regional metrics during the reopening process including:

- Hospitalization Rate, death rate, and number of new hospitalizations;
- Hospital bed capacity and ICU bed capacity, and;
- Testing and contact tracing within the region

Greene County will represent our businesses and communities through the Capital Region Control Room, with the ability to elevate local issues unique to the needs of Greene County residents to the regional level. We will also work closely with our regional partners to monitor the [Regional COVID-19 metrics dashboard](#) and the [Capital Region hospitalizations dashboard](#) daily, throughout the phased reopening process.

If any indicators begin to backslide and indicate the need for additional attention, Greene County and the Regional Control Room will communicate necessary operational changes to businesses.

Business Guidance

Guidelines for essential and non-essential businesses are detailed by industry sector on the State [NY Forward Website](#), and organized into a single Greene County repository at <https://greenecountyedc.com/resources-for-businesses-in-response-to-covid-19/reopening-guidelines/>

The Regional Phased Reopening requires businesses to **read and affirm compliance with NYS operational guidelines**. Businesses are also required to **download and complete a Business Safety Plan** to keep on file and guide their safe reopening and continuing operation.

As businesses reopen, they will not be returning to business as usual. Each business and industry must have a plan to protect employees and consumers, make the physical workspace safer, and implement processes that lower the risk of infection within the business.

In developing these plans, businesses will need to consider three main factors.

- 1. The first factor is protections for employees and customers.** These include possible adjustments to workplace hours and shift design as necessary to reduce density in the workplace; enacting social distancing protocols and restricting non-essential travel for employees.
- 2. The second is changes to the physical workspace,** including requiring all employees and customers to wear masks if in frequent close contact with others and implementing strict cleaning and sanitation standards.
- 3. The last factor for businesses to consider is implementing processes that meet our changing public health obligations,** like screening individuals when they enter the workplace, or reporting confirmed positives to customers. While these processes will vary from business to business, almost everyone will have to adapt, in some way or another, to a different way of doing business.

Communicate. Connect. Collaborate.

Greene County's role in reopening our economy is to connect with residents, businesses, local officials, and regional partners to exchange information and knowledge critical to creating and sustaining a healthy and safe community for residents, workers, and visitors. We are fully committed to continuing the role as communicator and connector. Specifically, Greene County will continue the following:

Public Health & Emergency Management

- Facilitate testing through the New York State Department of Health.
- Monitor all metrics daily and react quickly to changes, including tracking individuals under quarantine, and documenting and summarize active and resolved cases, hospitalizations, and deaths.
- Support vulnerable populations, including the continued monitoring of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- Communicate the critical role of every individual in maintaining public health and safety moving forward and continue to build a regional sense of cohesion among the business community and beyond.
- Disseminate information across multiple channels to reach different audiences (video conferences, social media, websites, newsletters, press release, etc.)
- Provide transit service by appointment for urgent and essential travel, and non-emergency medical appointments.
- Field questions from the public and municipal leaders.

Business & Organization

- Work in partnership with the Capital Region Control Room to communicate factually and clearly to explain the facts on the ground that drive decision-making regarding reopening and make that data available to the public.
- Engage with Greene County businesses about the rules and guidelines under New York Forward, which will include encouraging businesses to read and affirm the detailed guidelines from the State and prepare Business Safety Plans.
- Continue outreach and education to support businesses that are not in compliance with guidelines.
- Facilitate ongoing discussions within and across industry sectors to share best and emerging practices, lessons learned, and strategies for employing safe and healthy business environments.
- Coordinate with school districts to plan and implement a safe reopening of our education system.

Our Economic Recovery Team



Re-opening Greene

Getting back to Business

Greene County and its Economic Development partners are actively working with businesses to weather the crisis, plan to re-open, and succeed going forward. Following are the Immediate Priorities and Opportunities for optimal crisis recovery.

Business Sector Re-Opening

- Leverage the communication gains made during the crisis to proactively engage more local businesses and generate excitement with consumers in advance of each phase of the re-opening.
- Production and deployment of a series of video ads, each featuring a Greene County business representative of the major sectors that drive our economy.
 - Each business puts a personal face on doing business in Greene County, the resilience and determination of weathering challenges, and a celebration of their dedicated staff and customers.
 - These ads will initially be deployed locally immediately upon the relaxation of restriction of each business sector: *"Now more than ever, it's never been more important to Buy In Greene"*.
- Expansion of our Virtual Greene program to connect consumers with our Main Streets on-line through new 360-degree tours of businesses, community assets, and attractions.

New Business Attraction

- Targeted marketing campaigns to attract downstate and NY Metro businesses seeking to relocate in an area with less population density.
- Once the reopening doing-business paradigm has been well established, the video ads will be re-purposed carrying the message that *"Greene County NY is Full of Opportunity"*

Tourism Promotion

- The phased reopening will have significant impacts on the travel market, therefore Greene County Tourism's advertising and marketing for the 2020 travel season will include the implementation of an overarching concept, "Little Things MAGNIFIED," to be used across all Tourism Campaign messaging targeting the 'drive' market:

"When you realize that all those little things, the long weekends with friends, the afternoons rambling around a new town, weren't so little after all, then it's time to plan a new kind of adventure."

"Reconnect with friends and the great outdoors and make new memories."

"Not so little memories are made in the Great Northern Catskills"

- In support of Tourism and Hospitality businesses, Greene County Tourism will launch an integrated and phased-in marketing and advertising strategy of paid media, social media, and public relations, highlighting lodging, attractions, arts and entertainment, dining, and outdoor activities linking to the Great Northern Catskills of Greene County website with information on businesses that are open and appropriate messaging for visitors to the county.
- Production of a Round Top Destination Marketing Campaign
- Expanded execution of the Virtual Greene / Main Streets / Attractions Program

Our Economic Recovery Team

