

LOCAL LAW NO. “A” OF 2022

A LOCAL LAW ESTABLISHING THE SUSTAINABLE TECHNOLOGY AND GREEN ENERGY ACT (“STAGE ACT”)

Introduced: 3/14/22

By Messrs. A. Joyce, Feeney, Efekoro, Fein, Reinhardt and Simpson:

BE IT ENACTED by the County Legislature of the County of Albany as follows:

(1) Title:

This Local law shall be known as the “Sustainable Technology and Green Energy Act”.

(2) Declaration of Legislative Findings & Intent:

In 2019, the State of New York enacted the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA), thereby creating one of the most ambitious and comprehensive climate and energy laws in the country. The CLCPA calls for nothing less than the decarbonization of the NYS economy and calls on each and every municipality in the state to collaboratively work to significantly increase the green energy business infrastructure in their municipalities to the greatest extent possible. New York has set aggressive goals through the CLCPA, and has established a target of reaching a point where no less than 70% of the state’s electricity consumption will be derived from renewable power generation by the year 2030.

The Albany County Legislature finds that local municipalities are uniquely situated to address the climate goals noted in the CLCPA through local economic development efforts, which prioritize the shift towards clean renewable energy systems and green business that will fuel our economy in the next century. Through collaborative efforts amongst neighboring municipalities, and local economic development agencies, Albany County intends to provide the resources through which business can find a partner in the fight for a healthier environment that brings long-term job investment and employment to our community.

The Albany County Legislature further finds that as our national, state, and local governments emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic the need for an economy driven by green economic development has become more apparent than ever. Only through sustainable investment in long-term clean energy businesses can we hope to stem the tide of decades of environmental devastation brought on by a much prolonged dependence on petroleum-based economies. The County Albany County Legislature determines that the County of Albany and its arms of municipal government can act as a promoter of this type of economic development and intends to commit significant resources to the development of green economic development projects across the County.

The intention of the Albany County Legislature is to establish a [Green Economic Development Plan] Sustainable Technology and Green Energy Plan, which will invigorate and diversify the green business industry in the County of Albany for years to come and contribute to significant economic development, job retention, and development.

(3) Definitions:

- (a) **“STAGE Plan”**: shall mean the [Green Economic Development Plan] Sustainable Technology and Green Energy Plan within Albany County that is authorized and established by Section 4 this Local Law.
- (b) **“Commissioner”**- shall mean the Commissioner of the Office of Management and Budget as established by Article 5, §§501 & 502 of the Albany County Charter.
- (c) **“Comptroller”**- shall mean the Albany County Comptroller as established by Article 4, §401 of the Albany County Charter.
- (d) **“County”**- shall mean the County of Albany, NY.
- (e) **“County Executive”**- shall mean the Albany County Executive as established by Article 3, §§ 301 & 302 of the Albany County Charter.
- (f) **“Director”**- shall mean the Director of the Albany County Department of Economic Development, Conservation, and Planning as established by Article 11, §§1101 & 1102 of the Albany County Charter.
- (g) **“Economic development project”**- shall mean a project undertaken by local development agencies (as defined herein) which is for the purpose of improvement of economic development, job retention, job growth, or business growth within the County.
- (h) **“Green Business”**- shall mean any entity that is a for-profit business that produces goods or provides services that benefit the environment, conserve natural resources, or reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Green businesses include, but are not limited to, corporations that manufacture, produce, build, engineer, service, supply, and/or distribute any product which produces clean energy sources or reduces emissions in other sectors of the economy, such as building or transportation, in order to meet local, state, and federal sustainability goals and contribute demonstrably to the green business footprint in the County.
- (i) **“Financial Assistance”**- shall mean assistance that is provided to the covered entity for the improvement or development of real property,

economic development, job retention and growth, or other similar purposes that is provided either (i) directly by the County, or (ii) indirectly by local economic development agencies. Financial assistance as defined in this section shall include, but not be limited to: grants, bonds, financing, real property tax abatements or exemptions (including, but not limited to, abatements or exemptions from real property taxes, mortgage recording taxes, sales and uses taxes, or payments in lieu of taxes).

- (j) **“Local Economic Development Agencies”**- shall mean an entity that has been constituted and/or established to provide or administer economic development benefits on behalf of the County including, but not limited to : (i) a not-for profit local development corporation established pursuant Section 1411 of the New York State Not-For Profit Corporation Law; (ii) an industrial development agency established pursuant to Sections 856 and/or 903-b of the New York State General Municipal Law; or (iii) any urban development corporation as defined by the New York State Urban Development Corporation Act and/or a public benefit corporation as authorized by the laws of New York. [authorized to be established pursuant to NYS Law which is a state entity.]

(4) Green Economic Development Plan Established:

- (a) The Albany County Legislature hereby establishes an economic development program within Albany County, which shall hereinafter be known as the Sustainable Technology and Green Energy Plan (the “STAGE Plan”). The STAGE Plan, is intended to contribute to the revitalization of the [Albany] County economy, in part, through the support and development of green businesses which bring innovation in the green energy sector and work to diversify our local green business community in contribution to the goals set forth in the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) which was adopted by the New York State Legislature in 2019.
- (b) The Director is hereby [empowered] authorized to exercise all powers granted to them pursuant to Article 11, §§1101 &1102 of the Albany County Charter to establish and develop the STAGE Plan and encourage related green business economic development priorities as established by this local law. The Director is encouraged to work collaboratively with the County Executive, Comptroller, Commissioner in the development of the [an economic development Plan] STAGE Plan which prioritizes the retention and attraction of green business in the County.
- (c) Included in the STAGE Plan shall be primary goals, including but not limited to:

- (i) the fostering of, expansion towards, and development of green businesses in the County of Albany;
 - (ii) the development and promulgation of rules and regulations which are geared towards the encouragement of green business the County of Albany;
 - (iii) the development of inter-municipal agreements as well as agreements with local development agencies for the purpose of attracting green business to the County of Albany and providing financial assistance thereto; and
 - (iv) the prioritization of economic development projects which increase the amount of green business, and related employment opportunities created by each in the County of Albany.
- (d) In furtherance of establishing a robust economy with a thriving green energy sector, the Director is further authorized to take any all steps necessary and required to collaborate with local development agencies which are already established and operating in the County to support local economic development goals noted above. This support includes, but in not limited to financial assistance to green business, and economic development projects as defined by this l[L]ocal l[L]aw.
- (e) No later than January 1, 2023, the Director shall promulgate and implement rules and regulations as appropriate and authorized by this section that are necessary required to establish the STAGE Plan. The Director is authorized to work in collaboration and consultation with the County Executive, Comptroller, Commissioner, the Legislature, the Albany County Attorney, and their representatives, as deemed necessary and appropriate to implement the purposes of this local law. The Albany County Legislature shall approve the final STAGE Plan when it is submitted by the Director.
- (f) The Comptroller and/ or the Albany County Legislature may inspect the records and documents related to the STAGE Plan upon written request to the Director and/or the County Executive. Once a properly submitted written request is filed, the Director and/or County Executive must respond within thirty (30) business days with records which respond to a request related to the STAGE Plan.

(5) Funding and Annual Budgetary Appropriation:

- (a) On an annual basis, the Director shall, in conjunction with the Commissioner, incorporate into the County's [of Albany's] yearly budget proposal a fund or appropriation sufficient to support all purposes of this

law including, but not limited to, the necessary community outreach to the green business, to provide for financial assistance as authorized by this law, and to encourage economic development projects prioritized by this local law.

- (b) The Commissioner of Management and Budget is further authorized pursuant to this local law, and consistent with Article 6 of the Albany County Charter and relevant New York State law, to establish any and all necessary funds within each annual County budget proposal which funds all programs and goals as outlined in this local law.

(6) SEQRA Determination:

- (a) The Albany County Legislature hereby determines that the adoption of this Local Law constitutes a “Type II action” as defined in the State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”), and that no further action with respect to the same is required under SEQRA.

(7) Severability:

- (a) If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section, or part of this Local Law or the application thereof to any person individual, corporation, firm, partnership, entity, or circumstance shall be adjudged by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unconstitutional, such order or judgement shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section, or part of this law, or in its application to the person, individual, corporation, firm, partnership, entity, or circumstance directly involved in the controversy in which such order or judgement is rendered.

(8) Effective Date:

- (a) This Local Law shall be effective upon filing with the NYS Secretary of State.

Referred to Conservation, Sustainability, and Green Initiatives and Law Committees – 3/14/22