



For Immediate Release: August 24, 2011

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**FINGER LAKES REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL ANNOUNCES
COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS**

Public is invited to three workshops across the region intended to gain input for economic development strategy

The Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council today announced details of community workshops designed to gain input and aid in the creation of the council's five-year strategic economic development plan for the Finger Lakes Region. The workshops will be held starting next week.

"Integrating the public into the strategic planning process is a major part of our work to design an economic development plan that reflects the local communities' vision for job creation and economic opportunity," said Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council Vice-Chair and Wegmans Food Markets CEO Danny Wegman. "I encourage the public to attend a workshop that is close to your home or business."

"These meetings are designed to obtain the views of local stakeholders and the public on the critical economic issues and opportunities facing our region," said Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council Vice-Chair and University of Rochester President Joel Seligman. "I'd invite any and all interested in our region's economic future to participate in these public meetings."

The workshops will be held:

Monday, August 29 in Batavia

6 to 8 p.m.

Genesee Community College

Conable Technology Building
College Road, Batavia

Tuesday, August 30 in Brighton

6 to 8 p.m.

Monroe Community College

Warshof Conference Center

1000 East Henrietta Road, Brighton

To reach the Warshof Conference Center, enter the Flynn Campus Center from Parking Lot M

Wednesday, August 31 in Geneva

6 to 8 p.m.

Ramada Geneva Lakefront

41 Lakefront Drive, Geneva

The council plans to hold a facilitated community conversation at each of these first public meetings. The meetings will begin with an overview of the purpose of the regional council and a discussion of the strategic planning process. Facilitators will then break the attendees into small groups that will brainstorm and discuss the issues and opportunities facing the region. Groups will report their results, and those results will be tabulated and presented to the regional council at the next council meeting.

To register for the workshop, visit <http://nyworks.ny.gov/form/08172011fingerlakes> or call (585) 399-7075.

Created by Executive Order by Governor Cuomo, the Regional Economic Development Councils represent a fundamental shift in the state's approach to economic development—from a top-down development model to a community-based approach that emphasizes regions' unique assets, harnesses local expertise, and empowers each region to set plans and priorities.

The Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council is one of ten regional councils across New York that will serve as a single point of contact for economic activity in the region. Through their strategic planning process, the Councils will identify and expedite priority projects that demonstrate the greatest potential for job growth. As part of the initiative, up to \$1 billion in state resources will be accessible to eligible economic development projects through existing program grants and tax credits.

Each Regional Council will develop a plan for the development of their region, which will provide a regional vision for economic development, address critical issues and opportunities, and lay out an implementation roadmap for future growth. The state will work with the Regional Councils to align state resources and policies, eliminate unnecessary barriers to growth and prosperity, and streamline the delivery of government services and programs to help the Regional Councils carry out their plans for development.

To learn more about each region and their economic development plans, visit <http://www.governor.ny.gov>.

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