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**MOHAWK VALLEY REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL PRESENTS  
DRAFT VISION STATEMENT**

*Public invited to provide feedback and input on draft vision statement and throughout the strategic planning process*

The Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council met today for its second meeting, which was open to the public. Approximately 80 people convened at Herkimer County Community College for this meeting, attended by Lt. Governor Robert Duffy, and led by Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council co-chairs Bjong Wolf Yeigh, President of the SUNY Institute of Technology, and Larry Gilroy, President of Gilroy, Kernan & Gilroy, Inc. During today's session, the Council presented and discussed its draft vision statement, which is intended to guide the long-term strategic planning process moving forward. The draft vision statement is one that: capitalizes on the region's assets, drives economically sustainable future development, is feasible and encompasses the entire six county region. The Council is seeking public input on the draft prior to adopting a final version to be included in its strategic plan at a future meeting. The draft vision statement can be found at <http://nyworks.ny.gov/content/mohawk-valley> and is as follows:

**Draft Vision Statement for the Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Plan**

*By connecting a diverse economy and the promise of an entrepreneurial future with the roots of an historic and innovative past, the Mohawk Valley Region will be recognized as one that is open to new ideas and inclusive of others; one that maximizes sustainable use of its abundant natural, cultural, and geographical resources; and one that values a safe, affordable quality of life for all. Our social and economic futures will continue to be refreshed and replenished with new talent that will find new ways of creating value for the world and wealth for our region.*

“We’re pleased that the Council is moving steadily through the process, taking into account a wide-ranging array of views from stakeholders across our six-county region,” said President of the SUNY Institute of Technology and Council co-chair Bjong Wolf Yeigh. “It’s encouraging that both Council members representing various regional constituencies and those availing themselves of the public portion of today’s meeting are engaged and bringing their ideas and energy to this important process.”

“The draft vision statement approved by our council members with input from a diverse group of stakeholders reaffirms our common goals for a strong and vibrant Mohawk Valley economy,” said President of Gilroy, Kernan & Gilroy, Inc. and Council co-chair Larry Gilroy. “We appreciate and value the participation of all those involved and will work to ensure we actively engage community members from all corners of the region in the strategic planning process moving forward.”

The group also discussed and approved the delivery of a high-level Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) summary and announced and outlined the activities of its five work groups:

- **Vision**- Chair, Randy VanWagoner
- **Public Participation**- Chair, Nancy Pattarini
- **SWOT/Regional Drivers/Regional Endorsement Standard**- Chair, Mike Reese
- **Overall Strategies and Implementation**- Chair, Nick Matt
- **Strategic Writing Group**- Chair, Ann Thane

In addition, the Mohawk Valley Regional Council detailed its public engagement strategy, which includes a series of meetings for the general public, a series of smaller topic-specific meetings and public surveys. The Council’s goal is to integrate the public into the strategic planning process to design an economic development plan that reflects the local communities’ vision for job creation and economic opportunity. The Council encourages public participation and feedback through outreach, community meetings, forums, and online (<http://nyworks.ny.gov/content/mohawk-valley>).

The next regular scheduled meeting for the Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council will be September 14 at Fulton-Montgomery Community College.

The Mohawk Valley Regional Council, which is comprised of a diverse group of approximately 30 area leaders from the private and public sectors, labor, chambers of commerce, higher education, and community-based organizations, is working to create a five year strategic plan for economic development in Herkimer, Oneida, Otsego, Schoharie, Montgomery and Fulton counties. The strategic plan will provide a regional vision for economic development, address critical issues and opportunities, and lay out an implementation roadmap for future growth.

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.

The Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council is one of ten regional councils across New York that will serve as single points of contact for economic activity in each region. 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.

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