EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT APPROVES $19 MILLION TO FUND PROJECTS
GENERATING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACROSS NEW YORK STATE

The Empire State Development (ESD) Board of Directors met yesterday in New York City and approved $19 million in funding for nine projects that are spurring economic growth and opportunity in New York State. These targeted investments will leverage over $136 million in private and other public funding to support small businesses, community and downtown revitalization, regional tourism, and projects that are building a strong foundation for future economic growth and job creation. The projects will directly create nearly 120 new jobs and retain more than 380 existing New York State jobs.

“The State’s formula for growing jobs and the economy is working: Governor Cuomo’s Regional Economic Development Councils have made smart suggestions and ESD is taking action to support key projects across the state that are creating economic and employment opportunities for New Yorkers,” said Empire State Development President, CEO & Commissioner Kenneth Adams. “The funds approved by the Board are supporting expanding businesses, infrastructure improvements and helping to revitalize communities from Buffalo to Brooklyn, and are proving to be critical investments in our efforts to strengthen and grow our economy.”

The Board approved the following Regional Council award grants:

COR Development Company – (Central New York Region – Onondaga County) – $3,600,000
COR Development Company, LLC, a private real estate developer that develops projects across Central and Upstate New York, will use a capital grant of up to $3,600,000 to support demolition, environmental remediation, asbestos abatement, and infrastructure upgrades as part of site preparation for the future development of Loguen Crossing, a mixed-use commercial and residential redevelopment project in Syracuse, Onondaga County. The Central New York Regional Economic Development Council (CNYREDC) identified this as a regional priority project, consistent with the CNYREDC’s goal to revitalize the region’s urban cores, main streets, and neighborhoods.

The company has completed the first phase of the overall $300 million plan to redevelop the former Kennedy Square Housing complex in downtown Syracuse. Phase I project work included
the removal of asbestos containing materials, environmental remediation and demolition of fifteen buildings on the former Kennedy Square housing site, including two eight-story towers, two four-story buildings and eleven two-story buildings, as well as the removal of all demolition debris and construction of preliminary roadways. The project will prepare the site making it shovel ready for future redevelopment of a proposed a mixed-use urban neighborhood to include 140,000 square feet of restaurant and retail space, 230,000 square feet of office space, and 280 1-3 bedroom apartments and townhouses. The assistance awarded by the State was crucial to help render the site ready for redevelopment as without the requested funding, the project would likely not take place.

The goal of the overall development initiative is to restore a dormant, blighted property in a premier location of downtown Syracuse into a well-planned urban development cohesively connecting educational, entrepreneurial, residential and commercial interests to serve future generations of the City, County and Region. In total, COR Development Company has developed over four million square feet of commercial, residential and mixed-use space throughout Central and Upstate New York. Past ESD support for COR Development Company includes $3 million in 2013 for Phase 1 of the Inner Harbor redevelopment project, for which funds have been fully disbursed and COR is compliance with all terms and conditions of the grant agreement.

City of White Plains – (Mid-Hudson Region – Westchester County) – $2,000,000
The City of White Plains will use a grant of up to $2,000,000 to be used for a portion of the cost of construction and renovation of the Lyon Place parking garage as part of the redevelopment of the Post Road Corridor. White Plains, located in Westchester County, is a residential community of nearly 58,000; however, the population soars to more than 250,000 during the day as office workers, shoppers and visitors arrive by car, rail, bus and plane. White Plains is Westchester's leading business market and is home to the county’s largest concentration of retail activity, while its downtown area has become a corporate hub attracting high technology firms, major corporations and investments from local universities.

The Lyon Place garage, located within the Post Road Corridor which features the White Plains Hospital Center, government and commercial buildings, as well as private and public housing sites, was vacant for several years and in need of major repairs or replacement. To keep pace with the transformation of the downtown core and the need for additional parking space, the City of White Plains acquired the parking facility, demolished it and built a new 650 space parking garage. The municipality was awarded $2 million through the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council (MHREDC) to fill a financing gap that allowed the project to move forward in a timely manner. The construction of the new parking garage was completed in September 2014, adding 650 parking spaces for White Plains. As a result of the project, the Post Road Corridor will have access to additional parking to support the tremendous increased traffic passing through the area.

Medcare Administrators, LLC – (Mohawk Valley Region – Oneida County) – $200,000
Medcare Administrators LLC, a privately-held company in the medical billing and management consulting industry that assists medical practices with revenue enhancement, management processes, and controlling practice expenditures, will use a grant of up to $200,000 for a portion of renovation costs of an expansion project involving a move to a new 15,000 square-foot commercial building in Marcy, Oneida County. The company purchased the former car dealership site and has converted it to professional office space, involving a roof replacement, structural repairs, environmental remediation, landscaping, installation of a new HVAC system, electrical and plumbing upgrades, parking lot repairs, and installation of new workstations. Medcare will retain 41 employees and create 10 new jobs as part of the project, which is the company’s first with ESD.

Adirondack Historical Association – (North Country Region – Hamilton County) – $130,000
The Adirondack Historical Association, also known as the Adirondack Museum, a 501(c)(3) private not-for-profit focused on collecting, preserving, and exhibiting objects either made or used by Adirondackers, will use a grant of up to $130,000 for a portion of construction and equipment costs associated with a facility improvement project involving the purchase and installation of a new wood pellet boiler system and thermal storage system. The Adirondack Museum at Blue Mountain Lake attracts about 60,000 visitors annually. The origins of the museum go back to 1947, when local efforts were made to preserve the history of the work and people of the Adirondacks. The present museum opened in 1957. Today, the museum collections include 30,000 objects, 70,000 photographs, 9,500 books and 2,500 works of art.

The Association required financing assistance to replace the museum’s old heating system and determined the best option was to install an energy and cost-saving renewable energy heating system. The Association applied for financial assistance through the North Country Regional Economic Development Council (NCREDC) to support the project and was awarded $130,000 in ESD assistance which enabled the project to move forward. The project is consistent with the NCREDC’s Strategic Plan to develop renewable green energy projects and systems for heating. The NCREDC designated this as a priority project since it is a renewable energy project designed to use sustainable wood pellet fuel produced from North Country trees and will create jobs in the forestry industry. The new wood-fired boiler is more efficient and expected to reduce annual heating costs by $22,500.

Mohawk Valley STEM Opportunities Program – (Mohawk Valley Region – Oneida County) – $90,000
The Workforce Investment Board for Herkimer, Madison & Oneida Counties, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit that provides workforce developing and job training services in the Mohawk Valley region, used a working capital grant of up to $90,000 to fund a program providing 75 young people with summer internships introducing them to local professionals in the region’s growing Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) sectors. The program was conceptualized after the Workforce Investment Board identified that disadvantaged students lack educational and life experiences that would lead to jobs in the IT workforce. Interns in the program met with local professionals in the region's growing STEM sectors and were provided with career guidance and summer stipends for their time in the program. It is anticipated that the interns
will continue their interests in STEM careers, leading to the interns attending college, successfully obtaining degrees and pursuing a career in the STEM fields in which opportunities are currently growing in the Mohawk Valley Region. The project is consistent with the Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council’s Strategic Plan to expand workforce development and training programs that are aligned with regional concentrations, and employers demand for labor.

The Board approved the following Buffalo Billion Initiative grant:

Robert Moses Parkway South Segment: Riverway Project – (Western New York Region – Niagara County) – $10,000,000

The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), on behalf of New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP), will use a grant of up to $10 million for an infrastructure improvement project that includes road reconstruction on a portion of the Robert Moses Parkway (RMP) South and the adjoining areas. The project is part of the Buffalo Billion Initiative to enhance the development of downtown Niagara Falls and is a demonstration of the State’s commitment to revitalize the tourism economy of Western New York, which is a focus of the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council (WNYREDC). As a result, the WNYREDC Strategic Plan outlined measures to enhance and grow Niagara Falls tourism, including re-establishing waterfront access in the City.

The project involves reconfiguration of a one-mile segment of the RMP to create an at-grade, landscaped roadway, including replacement of a grade-separated interchange at John B. Daly Boulevard with a modern roundabout to create a more fitting gateway experience into Niagara Falls State Park and downtown Niagara Falls; removal of the elevated embankment to open views and access to the Upper Niagara River and Rapids; and implementation of a full landscaping and access plan with native vegetation, scenic overlooks and multi-purpose trail facilities. The project will construct an access system that is “right-sized” to accommodate all modes of travel; eliminate underutilized and/or redundant roadway facilities; and restore native habitats along the riverfront.

The economic impact of the project will be significant as it will directly support and facilitate at least four mixed-use lodging/retail projects in the adjoining Buffalo Avenue and Rainbow Boulevard corridors, representing over 450 hotel rooms and nearly $50 million in new investment. Additionally, according to the City of Niagara Falls Waterfront Master Plan, which this project will help bring to fruition, projected long-term economic benefits include: a net increase in demand for more than one million new hotel room nights; net annual increase in retail/non-retail spending of $336 million; new retail, lodging and travel-related employment totaling more than 2,800 jobs; and over $14 million in annual State tax revenues.

The Board approved the following New York Works Capital grant:

Rosina Food Products, Inc. – (Western New York Region – Erie County) – $1,500,000
Rosina Food Products, Inc., a manufacturer of frozen foods including pre-cooked meatballs, Italian sausages, filled pasta, eggplant cutlets, entrees, and pizza toppings, will use a grant of up to $1.5 million for a portion of the cost of building construction and renovations as well as to purchase new machinery and equipment. The project involves upgrades to its pasta, entrée, and protein manufacturing facilities. The renovations are needed so that Rosina can obtain British Retail Consortium (BRC) certification, a global food safety initiative required to maintain current larger customers. In addition, the company will expand to return its research and development activities to Western New York; the operation was previously outsourced to Chicago, IL.

Rosina was founded in 1963, originally manufacturing sausage products sold to neighborhood meat markets, supermarkets, and restaurants, from a single Buffalo storefront location. The privately held, wholly- and family-owned company now maintains five locations in Western New York as well as an International Division in Cheektowaga; and employs several hundred New Yorkers.

This expansion and improvement project is consistent with the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council’s strategic plan, as it builds upon the region’s advanced manufacturing strengths. When complete, the project will retain 345 existing jobs and Rosina has already created the 25 new jobs to which it has committed as well as achieved BRC certification. Without ESD assistance, 150 of Rosina’s 345 employees would have been relocated out of New York State.

The Board approved the following Urban and Community Development Program grant:

New York eHealth Collaborative – (New York City Region – New York County) – $250,000

New York eHealth Collaborative (NYeC), a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit founded in 2006 by healthcare leaders that is the State-designated entity for the New York State Health Information Exchange Program, will use a working capital grant of up to $250,000 to cover a portion of the costs of launching a second New York Health Accelerator class. Last year’s class of eight accelerator companies created a total of 135 jobs with a total of $24 Million dollars in funding post program, and two of these companies were acquired within six months of the program. This year’s class is on target to meet the bar set by the last class. The class will include seven companies, and NYeC will augment the mentor cohort with a new, diverse group of executives drawn from the provider, health plan, and pharmaceutical industries. Without ESD's offer of assistance the project could not have taken place.

NYeC has created a statewide health information exchange to connect electronic health records at individual and group providers around New York State. The project fosters the creation of innovative tools for clinicians and other users of the Statewide Health Information Network for New York (SHIN-NY) and facilitates investments by the venture community in companies that participate in the program. The program supports job creation by requiring companies to open an office in New York State. The Organization receives support from state and federal grants to serve as the focal point of health information technology in New York State. NYeC works to
develop policies and standards, to assist healthcare providers in making the shift to electronic health records. NYeC was. The New York State Department of Health has separately awarded NYeC $53 million to pursue complementary initiatives to further develop statewide health IT policy and enhance the State's Health Information Exchange infrastructure.

The Board approved the following Downtown Revitalization Fund loan:

Sims Municipal Recycling of New York, LLC – (New York City Region – Kings County) – $1,500,000

Sims Municipal Recycling of New York, a subsidiary of Sims Metal Management Limited that was formed in 2007 to execute a long-term recycling contract with the City of New York designating Sims as the sole processor of metal, glass and plastics collected by the City’s Department of Sanitation, will use a convertible loan of up to $1.5 million for a portion of the cost of construction, machinery and equipment, and dredging at the 30th Street Pier on South Brooklyn Marine Terminal. As part of the agreement, the company will build a new materials recovery facility in Brooklyn and the City of New York will invest in the site infrastructure. The new facility in Sunset Park will include administration and visitors’ center buildings; landscaping; new utilities; purchase and installation of scales, a scale house and processing equipment; dredging and construction of new dock and bulkhead.

Due to the proximity to the water, Sims reviewed projected sea level rise and elevated vulnerable parts of the site by up to four feet using recycled glass and crushed rock from the Second Avenue subway project. The additional $1 million investment kept the pier dry when Hurricane Sandy’s 12 foot surge flooded nearby streets and waterfront businesses. As a result of the new facility, the annual DSNY truck traffic will be reduced by 230,000 vehicle miles traveled and the project will provide a recycling infrastructure within NYC while creating 84 new jobs. The project was completed in August 2014 and the company has already created 80 jobs.

The project is consistent with the New York City Regional Economic Development Council’s (NYCREDC) Five-Year Strategic Plan to invest in public-private partnerships in order to accelerate economic growth and job creation while protecting the environment.

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be in November.

Empire State Development (ESD) is New York’s chief economic development agency (www.esd.ny.gov). The mission of ESD is to promote a vigorous and growing economy, encourage the creation of new job and economic opportunities, increase revenues to the State and its municipalities, and achieve stable and diversified local economies. Through the use of loans, grants, tax credits and other forms of financial assistance, ESD strives to enhance private business investment and growth to spur job creation and support prosperous communities across New York State. ESD is also the primary administrative agency overseeing Governor Cuomo’s Regional Economic Development Councils and the marketing of “I Love NY,” the State’s iconic tourism brand. For more information on Regional Councils and Empire State

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