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**Empire State Development Awarded Funding through USEPA Grant to Assist with the  
Western New York Sustainable Business Roundtable**

*Erie County will help administer the federal grant and take the lead on work plan  
implementation*

Empire State Development (ESD) and Erie County today announced that, through the award of a United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) grant to ESD, the county and state will work together to assist the Western New York Sustainable Business Roundtable (SBR) to create a more sustainable and resilient region. Erie County, with a successful pollution prevention program for more than 20 years, will lead SBR's work plan implementation and help administer this federal grant. The SBR's objective is to foster collaborations that enable its member businesses to develop and act on their sustainability goals, increase profitability and promote a healthy community. This is accomplished by providing businesses with tools that build a culture of sustainability and improve environmentally-responsible practices.

"This federal grant awarded to ESD to support the Western New York Sustainable Business Roundtable will allow the region's businesses to tackle challenges and opportunities related to reducing environmental impact and improving the local quality of life," said Empire State Development President, CEO & Commissioner Kenneth Adams. "Working with Erie County and County Executive Poloncarz, the grant will allow the network to monitor how it delivers training, technical assistance and outcomes."

"Erie County is grateful to the USEPA and Empire State Development for the opportunity to assist with this business-driven effort," said County Executive Mark Poloncarz. "The founding members of the Western New York Sustainable Business Roundtable represent the spectrum of the business community in our region, from restaurants and nano-breweries to car manufacturers and international food manufacturers. Within this diverse organization, the businesses have pledged to protect and enhance the environment in our region. This is vital as

clean air and water are essential to a healthy thriving community, as are jobs. I commend the businesses for their leadership and we look forward to helping them move forward.”

The \$179,630 grant was awarded at a ceremony at the Western New York Sustainable Business Roundtable’s October meeting hosted by one of its founding members, GM Powertrain. The SBR’s meeting featured presentations on federally-funded assistance programs that business can access to support their sustainability initiatives, as well as a tour of GM.

SBR represents organizations of varying sizes and industries at different stages in their sustainability journeys and enables them to engage with each other for information-sharing activities. Members also have access to external experts via workshops and webinars. While the SBR is a business-driven initiative, it has received support from and worked in partnership with Erie County, the University at Buffalo and Empire State Development. In fact, providing initial support for the Western New York Sustainable Business Roundtable is highlighted in the County Executive’s *Initiatives for a Smart Economy*.

Empire State Development will oversee and administer the Western New York Sustainable Business Roundtable jointly with Erie County, the sub-awardee, which will provide a forum for training opportunities, technical assistance, measurement and documentation of pollution prevented, as well as assistance in identifying and pursuing opportunities for state funding for large project implementation.

New members are welcome to join the SBR. For more information, please contact Andrew Goldstein at [Andrew.Goldstein@erie.gov](mailto:Andrew.Goldstein@erie.gov).

### **About the Western New York Sustainable Business Roundtable**

The strategy for the project has been guided by more than 40 businesses and organizations that participated in four exploratory meetings between June 2013 and January 2014. Those meetings, along with dozens of meetings of an ad-hoc steering committee, have led to a call to formally establish a Western New York Sustainable Business Roundtable (WNYSBR) to serve as a central resource for Western New York businesses to tackle challenges and opportunities related to reducing environmental impact and improving local quality of life. The Western New York Sustainable Business Roundtable is committed to become a thriving and resilient business by establishing and implementing a sustainability plan that: reduces waste and pollution, protects our waterways, optimizes use of energy and materials and invests in our communities in a transparent and measurable way that collectively, with the efforts of other WNY organizations, reduces the severity of global climate change.

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