



**Finger Lakes
Regional Economic
Development Council**

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FINGER LAKES REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL HOLDS PUBLIC MEETING IN ROCHESTER

FLREDC to begin soliciting strategic input and priority projects for funding in the region

The Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council (FLREDC) held a public meeting on Thursday in Rochester. The meeting, attended by Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul and Empire State Development President, CEO & Commissioner Howard Zensky, included presentations on the launch of the fifth round of the Regional Economic Development Council competition and funding, as well as the Upstate Revitalization Initiative (URI) competition. In addition, information regarding a regional assessment was presented to the council.

“The excitement is building in the Finger Lakes as we kick off the fifth round of funding for the Regional Council process and embark on our quest to secure \$500 million for the region through the Governor’s new Upstate Revitalization Initiative,” said the co-chairs of the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council, University of Rochester President Joel Seligman and Wegmans Food Markets CEO Danny Wegman. “We encourage all with great ideas that align with and will advance our region’s priorities to apply. Because of the Governor’s leadership, we have the tools and resources needed to invest in our future.”

The launch of the \$1.5 billion URI and Round V of the Regional Economic Development Councils (REDC) competition, which includes up to \$750 million in state economic development resources, was announced by Governor Andrew Cuomo today. The Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) will open to applicants on May 1 with a deadline of July 31 at 4 p.m., allotting more time than past years for FLREDC to solicit and identify projects in the region. This timeline also provides additional time for businesses, municipalities, not-for-profits and the public to apply for assistance from dozens of state funding programs for job creation and community development projects. As in prior years, the REDCs will submit a Progress Report for Round V, which provides both an update on the council’s implementation of its Strategic Plan and an outline of the projects and proposals for which the REDC is seeking funding. The

2015 REDC Progress Report updates and priority project lists for all 10 regions are due to the state on September 21, 2015.

This year, seven Upstate regions—Finger Lakes, Southern Tier, Central New York, Mohawk Valley, North Country, Capital Region, and Mid-Hudson—are also eligible to compete in the \$1.5 billion URI. These regions will submit proposals for three awards of up to \$500 million, disbursed at a rate of \$100 million per year for five years. The regions will submit a “Revitalization Plan” as an addendum to their progress report. In addition to the priorities outlined in the 2015 Progress Report update, the Upstate Revitalization Plan should provide a more detailed analysis of the region and develop ideas and strategies to transform the regional economy. As part of the addendum, each region will submit a list of initial projects they would like to have funded should they be selected a “Best Plan Awardee” of the competition, which may be different from the priority project list submitted in the REDC Progress Report. Each URI region will be required to identify potential projects seeking URI funds and may continue to do so after the CFA closes. URI Revitalization Plans will be due to the State on October 5, 2015.

A presentation was also given at the FLREDC meeting by the University at Buffalo Regional Institute (UBRI), which is working with the REDCs to provide in-depth research and decision-making tools to all seven regions involved in the Upstate Revitalization Initiative. UBRI’s research will assist the regions in developing areas of focus for their URI plans. UBRI recently delivered each region a Toolkit for Community Engagement and individualized Regional Assessments, and will present the findings of each region’s assessment to their REDCs. The first presentation was to the Finger Lakes REDC and topics included economy and industry, tourism, demographics and workforce, innovation, and smart growth and development. The FLREDC learned that in recent years the Finger Lakes region grew more jobs and firms than Upstate as whole and has seen export growth, especially in computers and electronics. Further, the Finger Lakes’ colleges and universities are one of the region’s strengths for fostering innovation and growing the knowledge economy. The innovative region acquires more patents per worker, grants more college degrees in STEM fields, and captures more R&D dollars per capita than Upstate, New York State and the nation.

The 2015 REDC and URI Guidebooks and list of available resources are available at www.regionalcouncils.ny.gov and <https://www.ny.gov/programs/upstate-revitalization-initiative>. For applicants, the CFA is available at <https://apps.cio.ny.gov/apps/cfa/>.

The FLREDC, which is composed of Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming and Yates counties, is one of 10 regional councils across New York State that serve as a single point of contact for economic activity in the various regions. The FLREDC was named a “Top Performer” and awarded **\$80.7 million supporting 100 projects** in 2014, including projects that continue investment in Eastman Business Park, foster innovation and technology commercialization, strengthen communities and key industrial sites, improve the quality of life of the region’s residents, attract more visitors, address key infrastructure barriers to growth and enhance workforce development, among other initiatives. In the first four rounds of

the Regional Council initiative, the Finger Lakes region was awarded \$305.5 million in state support for 355 projects across the region. To learn more about the FLREDC, visit <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/content/finger-lakes>.

About the Consolidated Funding Application

As part of Governor Cuomo's efforts to improve the state's economic development model, the NYS Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) was created to streamline and expedite the grant application process. The CFA process marks a fundamental shift in the way state resources are allocated, ensuring less bureaucracy and greater efficiency to fulfill local economic development needs. The CFA serves as the single entry point for access to economic development funding, ensuring applicants no longer have to slowly navigate multiple agencies and sources without any mechanism for coordination. Now, economic development projects use the CFA as a support mechanism to access multiple state funding sources through one application, making the process quicker, easier, and more productive. To access the CFA, please visit <https://apps.cio.ny.gov/apps/cfa/>.

About the Regional Economic Development Councils

The Regional Economic Development Council initiative (REDC) is a key component of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's transformative approach to economic development. In 2011, Governor Cuomo established 10 Regional Councils to develop long-term strategic plans for economic growth for their regions. The Councils are public-private partnerships made up of local experts and stakeholders from business, academia, local government, and non-governmental organizations. The Regional Councils have redefined the way New York invests in jobs and economic growth by putting in place a community-based, bottom up approach and establishing a competitive process for State resources. After four rounds of the REDC process, nearly \$3 billion has been awarded to more than 3,100 projects consistent with each region's Strategic Plan and are projected to result in the creation or retention of more than 150,000 jobs. For more information on the Regional Councils, visit www.regionalcouncils.ny.gov.

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