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Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council Meets to Discuss Next Steps and New Initiatives

The Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council (FLREDC) today held a meeting at the Rochester Riverside Convention Center. The meeting provided the Council with an update on Upstate Revitalization Initiative (URI) implementation, began discussions on new initiatives proposed in Governor Cuomo's 2016-17 Executive Budget and announced the upcoming launch of the New NY Broadband Program, which will begin accepting applications on March 1.

"We continue to work hard to advance our council's strategic vision for economic growth across the Finger Lakes Region," said Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council Co-Chairs, University of Rochester President Joel Seligman and Wegmans Food Markets CEO Danny Wegman. "This year we will work together to build on our past successes and utilize our Finger Lakes Forward funds to realize the region's full potential, while implementing new initiatives that will better position us nationally and globally."

The Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council (FLREDC) was named an URI Best Plan Awardee in December 2015 for its strategic plan, entitled "[United for Success: Finger Lakes Forward](#)." This means the region will receive \$500 million over five years to fund projects that will meet their plan goals of creating jobs, leveraging private investment, increasing wealth and reducing poverty. The Finger Lakes Region's URI plan consists of three industry clusters, or pillars, that will act as the core drivers of job and output growth: optics, photonics and imaging; agriculture and food production; and next generation manufacturing and technology.

At today's meeting, the Council announced it would begin review of more than 70 applications received to date. Projects that will have a transformational impact on the region's economy and strategic goals will be recommended to New York State for detailed consideration and potential funding awards. In addition, today the FLREDC announced it will be restructuring its work groups to better align with the new strategies

outlined in *Finger Lakes Forward* plan. Those interested in participating in the new work groups should send requests to NYS-FingerLakes@esd.ny.gov by March 11.

Lastly, the council discussed the New NY Broadband Program, which was created by Governor Cuomo utilizing capital funds from bank settlements to incentivize the private sector to expand high-speed broadband access in underserved and unserved areas. Applications for projects that will boost speeds for unserved and underserved areas will be accepted starting March 1 until April 15. Learn more [here](#).

About the Regional Economic Development Councils

The Regional Economic Development Council initiative is a key component of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's transformative approach to State investment and 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 five rounds of the REDC process, nearly \$4 billion has been awarded to more than 4,100 job creation and community development projects consistent with each region's strategic plans, supporting the creation or retention of approximately 200,000 jobs.

To learn more about the FLREDC, visit <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/content/finger-lakes>.

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