



For Immediate Release: Tuesday, September 13, 2011

Contact:

Austin Shafran (ESD) | ashafran@empire.state.ny.us | (800) 260-7313

Jola Szubielski (ESD) | jszubielski@empire.state.ny.us | (800) 260-7313

MOHAWK VALLEY REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL ANNOUNCES THREE COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Public is invited to three community workshops across the region intended to share ideas for an economic development strategy

The Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council today announced details of three community workshops designed for residents to review and offer suggestions on the draft vision statement and the Council's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) summary. The Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council has also been gathering input through small group meetings throughout the six counties and through the council's web site, www.nyworks.ny.gov/content/mohawk-valley. The workshops are intended for the public to aid in the creation of the council's five-year strategic economic development plan for the Mohawk Valley, which includes Herkimer, Oneida, Otsego, Schoharie, Montgomery and Fulton counties.

"Our Council not only welcomes, but needs input from the community in order to put forth the best strategic plan for the Mohawk Valley region's economic development future," said President of Gilroy, Kernan & Gilroy, Inc. and Council co-chair Larry Gilroy. "A plan that integrates the advanced thinking and ideas of our regional community stakeholders and the public will lead to New York State's deployment of economic development funds totaling \$40 million to priority capital projects identified in our plan and for our region."

"These workshops are an important part of the process, and I urge area residents to attend the one nearest them," said President of the SUNY Institute of Technology and Council co-chair Bjong Wolf Yeigh. "Our Council has done a great deal of work so far, and public input is critical

to ensure that our region's many voices are reflected in the course we chart for future economic development.”

The community workshops are scheduled as follows:

Utica: Monday, Sept. 19, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Mohawk Valley Community College
Excellus BCBS Conference Room #225
Science and Technology Building, 2nd floor
1101 Sherman Drive
Utica

Amsterdam: Wednesday, Sept. 28, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Amsterdam High School
Cafeteria
140 Saratoga Avenue
Amsterdam

Cooperstown: Thursday, Sept. 29, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Cooperstown Central High School
Library Media Center
39 Linden Avenue
Cooperstown

Each of these first public meetings will begin with an overview of the purpose of the regional council and the strategic planning process. There will be a presentation of the draft vision and SWOT summary, followed by a public question and answer session and discussion to gather ideas and suggestions.

In addition to these community workshops, the Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council continues to encourage all residents from the region to submit suggestions and comments at www.nyworks.ny.gov/content/mohawk-valley to maximize public input on this important initiative.

Council members and volunteers will also continue to hold focus group meetings across the region to discuss specific interest areas of healthcare, education, agriculture, tourism, manufacturing and more.

Please note, the next regularly scheduled meeting of the council has been moved to **Friday, September 16**, at the Hamilton, Fulton, and Montgomery BOCES campus.

Created 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.

The Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council is one of 10 regional councils across New York that will serve as a single point of contact for economic activity in the region. 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.

Each regional council will draft a strategic plan for the development of their region, which will provide a regional vision for economic development, address critical issues and opportunities, and lay out an implementation roadmap for future growth. The state will work with the regional councils to align state resources and policies, eliminate unnecessary barriers to growth and prosperity, and streamline the delivery of government services and programs to help the Regional Councils carry out their plans for development.

To learn more about each regional council and their economic development plans, visit www.nyworks.ny.gov.

###