

H. NYS Urban Council Economic Development Outreach 2010-11 (W927)

June 24, 2010

Grantee: New York State Urban Council, Inc. (“Urban Council” or the “Organization”)

ESD Investment: A grant of up to \$85,000, pending passage of the New York State budget, to be used for a portion of the cost of program expenses for the 2010 - 2011 operating year.

Project Location: Statewide

NYS Empire Zone (or equivalent): N/A

ESD Incentive Offer Accepted: December 27, 2009

Project Completion: April 2011

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Project Team: Project Management Glendon McLeary
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Project Description:

Background

Since 1991, the Urban Council has provided services to cities, towns and villages across New York State in an effort to help revitalize central business districts. Membership in the Organization is free of charge and open to all municipalities and downtown organizations. Urban Council staff and members offer technical assistance services at no charge to its members and lobby for issues that directly affect the health and vitality of central business districts. The Organization’s accomplishments include: providing technical assistance to over 500 communities of all sizes throughout the state; becoming the statewide authority on the establishment and operation of business improvement districts; and identifying financing sources for local initiatives that will increase investment and job creation opportunities in central business districts.

Competition for limited funding, tax base erosion and policies that historically have favored greenfield development over redevelopment of existing sites are just some of the critical issues that continue to face downtowns in New York State. Yet, the viability of central business districts and traditional commercial centers remains an essential component of the ongoing revitalization of New York State. Many of the state’s distressed communities cannot afford to hire full-time economic development staff and the Urban Council steps in to act in this vital role, providing the communities with the tools necessary to build

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successful revitalization campaigns. ESD's continued support of the Urban Council has allowed it to maintain its current level of support to communities throughout New York State.

Since 1995, the Urban Council has been aided by a number of grants from ESD totaling \$737,000. These grants, needed to fill funding gaps and used to assist in covering programming costs, have been leveraged by over \$750,000 in Urban Council member in-kind and financial support. The funds have allowed the Urban Council to provide free technical assistance to economically distressed communities across the state seeking to revitalize their downtowns and traditional commercial centers.

The Project

The Urban Council is requesting ESD assistance in order to continue its outreach services. The Organization will continue to offer focused technical assistance to economically distressed communities across the State by providing the tools necessary to foster job creation, business retention and expansion, community investment, and the successful leveraging of public and private dollars. Outreach will focus on the two broad activities listed below:

- **Technical assistance and community outreach activities**, including: strategic action planning for the creation of overall revitalization campaigns; project identification, evaluation and development of key downtown revitalization projects; assistance with securing outside expertise on specific issues of concern; BID creation and organization; and assistance with locating funding opportunities.
- **Regional and statewide assistance activities**, including: organizing regional downtown forums across the State; investigating the feasibility of a downtown manager's information exchange program; fostering linkages and communication between downstate and upstate professionals and organizations working on the revitalization of downtowns and central business districts; continuing to advocate for amendments to the legislation for the New York State Historic Preservation Tax Credit; and working with the State Legislature and the Governor's office to fund key statewide initiatives.

The Urban Council will manage the project directly. ESD funds will be applied toward program administration, travel and workshop, printing, postage and Web site expenses, and information dissemination.

Upon completion of the project, the Grantee will furnish a final report describing the impact and effectiveness of the project.

Financing Uses	Amount	Financing Sources	Amount	Percent
Secretarial	\$5,000	ESD Grant	\$85,000	47%
Program Administration	70,000	Organization Equity	30,000	16%
Travel/Workshop/Event	13,000	MDA*	67,000	37%
Printing/Postage/Website	6,000			
Information Dissemination	10,000			
Office/Telephone	18,000	2		
Member Support	30,000			
MDA Staff Support	30,000			
Total Project Costs	\$182,000	Total Project Financing	\$182,000	100%

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* Metropolitan Development Association of Central New York, Inc.

Financial Terms and Conditions:

1. The Organization will contribute at least 10% in equity to the Project. Equity is defined as any non-debt source of capital, and should be auditable through Organization financial statements or Organization accounts, if so requested by ESD.
2. Up to \$85,000 will be disbursed to Grantee no more frequently than monthly, in proportion to ESD's funding share, upon documentation of eligible project costs, assuming that all project approvals have been completed and funds are available. The final ten percent (10%) of the Grant shall not be disbursed until the Project has been completed and the final report has been submitted. Payment will be made upon presentation to ESD of an invoice and such other documentation as ESD may reasonably require. Expenses must be incurred on or after December 27, 2009 to be considered eligible project costs. All disbursements must be requested by April 1, 2012.
3. ESD may reallocate the project funds to another form of assistance, at an amount no greater than \$85,000 for this project if ESD determines that the reallocation of the assistance would better serve the needs of the Company and the State of New York. In no event shall the total amount of any assistance to be so reallocated exceed the total amount of assistance approved by the Directors.

Statutory Basis – Urban and Community Development Program:

This project is authorized under Sections 5(4) and 16-d of the New York State Urban Development Corporation Act (the "Act") and satisfies the eligibility criteria for a Neighborhood and Community Partnership grant as set forth in the Act and the rules and regulations for the Urban and Community Development Program. No residential relocation is required as there are no families or individuals residing on the site.