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DEPARTMENT OF STATE ANNOUNCES \$6.5 MILLION IN BROWNFIELD OPPORTUNITY AREAS PROGRAM GRANTS

ALBANY - Acting Secretary of State Ruth Noemi Colón today announced \$6.5 million in Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) Program grants for 21 projects located across the state. The grants will help revitalize communities, create jobs, support environmental remediation and expand the tax base in distressed neighborhoods that have been adversely affected by multiple brownfield sites.

"This initiative provides neighborhoods with the much needed support to create effective strategies for sustained redevelopment," said Acting Secretary of State Ruth Noemi Colón. "Communities participating in the program are establishing the groundwork for sound investments that will be the catalysts for cleaning up, improving, and energizing New York's local economies. Brownfield redevelopment will help reuse former industrial and commercial sites in ways that will revitalize our communities while providing for a cleaner, healthier environment."

Brownfields are dormant properties where contamination has impeded redevelopment, making them an economic and environmental drain on localities. To date, more than 100 BOA revitalization strategies supported by more than \$32 million in state funding are underway across the state. The Department of State administers the BOA Program in partnership with the Department of Environmental Conservation.

"Too much of New York's urban and rural landscape is blighted with brownfields, especially in environmental justice communities, which degrade the environment and create health risks as well as contributing to unemployment, lost revenue, and urban sprawl," DEC Commissioner Joe Martens said. "The Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program provides a valuable tool for communities to develop area-wide plans for the cleanup and redevelopment of brownfield sites. The grants announced today will enable local governments and not-for-profit organizations to create a blueprint for neighborhood revitalization."

The BOA Program provides a neighborhood approach rather than the traditional site by site approach to assess and redevelop brownfields. This enables communities to comprehensively measure existing economic and environmental conditions associated with brownfield blight and impacted areas. It also aids communities in identifying and prioritizing community supported redevelopment opportunities and attracting public and private investment to implement projects. Communities are now using the BOA approach to attract new uses and businesses including housing and retail, commercial, manufacturing, business incubators and public amenities such as parks or recreation facilities.

The brownfield initiative provides a flexible framework for communities to catalyze the redevelopment of strategic sites and affected areas through a locally-driven process. The grants support a variety of revitalization activities including opportunities for public participation; existing conditions analysis; strategic site identification; economic and market studies to assist in determining the best use of brownfields and vacant sites; investigations to assess site contamination and environmental conditions; site-specific redevelopment plans; environmental impact assessments and statements; marketing to attract developer interest; local law changes; development design guidelines; and other actions to spur investment in, clean-up of, and redevelopment of brownfield sites.

"The Brownfield Opportunity Area Program has been widely successful in helping communities revitalize their brownfields by bringing business as well as jobs to the host communities," said Senator Mark Grisanti, chair of the Senate Committee on Environmental Conservation. "The BOA program is a leading example of how government and business can work together in creating a green partnership that can help to revitalize communities throughout New York. I am pleased that the City of Niagara Falls will be receiving BOA money to help reclaim brownfield areas along the Buffalo Avenue Industrial Corridor."

"I am delighted that the BOA program will give communities additional tools to develop plans to help clean up contaminated sites," said Assemblyman Bob Sweeney, chair of the Assembly Committee on Environmental Conservation. "The ultimate goal of the BOA Program is to turn contaminated properties that have become financial burdens on communities into assets. After cleanup, these sites can become engines for economic vitality, community pride, supporting new investment, redevelopment, and job creation."

The 21 projects receiving funds are dispersed throughout the state including eight in Western New York and the Southern tier, seven in Northern and Central New York, and six in Downstate. BOA activities are authorized in three program steps:

- Step 1- The ***Pre-Nomination Study*** enables communities to complete a preliminary analysis of issues and opportunities so communities can gain a basic assessment and understanding about existing conditions, brownfields and the area's potential for revitalization.
- Step 2 -The ***Nomination*** enables communities to conduct an in-depth assessment and evaluation of existing conditions and assets in the study area including an economic and market trends analysis to determine the best opportunities and reuse potential for strategic sites and to identify steps for revitalization.
- Step 3 - The ***Implementation Strategy*** funds a range of techniques and actions to achieve revitalization objectives by advancing redevelopment on strategic sites, improving supporting infrastructure, and overall neighborhood revitalization.

Key benefits of participating in the BOA Program include:

Redevelopment and investment - establishes a clear strategy to redevelop strategic sites back to productive use to spur community revitalization.

Empowerment – provides resources to community leaders to be proactive and serve as catalysts for positive change.

Predictability - removes uncertainty and increases predictability regarding site conditions, ownership, contamination, future uses, supporting infrastructure, and development cost.

Advocacy - the Department of State provides advocacy and support to participating communities by connecting the community's revitalization needs with resources from various programs and sources.

Priority and preference- designated Brownfield Opportunity Areas receive priority and preference from the state's Environmental Protection Fund and Environmental Restoration Programs. Designated areas also may receive priority and preference from other local, state, and federal programs.*

Tax credits - development projects that are proposed consistent with the BOA plan may receive a two percent tax credit bonus if the site has been accepted in the Brownfield Clean-up Program.*

*These benefits are in effect when the Brownfield Opportunity Area is designated by the Secretary of State upon receipt of a Nomination and Implementation Strategy.

"Today's announcement about BOA awards affirms the Cuomo administration's commitment to work with municipalities and neighborhoods to reverse the cycle of disinvestment and decay that has disproportionately impacted many low and moderate income neighborhoods and communities of color," said Jody Kass, executive director of New Partners for Community Revitalization. "These are smart investments that will help revitalize neighborhoods plagued by multiple brownfields and will create thousands of jobs.

"We applaud Governor Cuomo for his support of the Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) program, a key component to the revitalization of so many low-income communities of color throughout the state," said Eddie Bautista, executive director of the NYC Environmental Justice Alliance. "For neighborhoods riddled with multiple

brownfields and legacies of disinvestment, BOA offers an unmatched opportunity for community leaders to articulate a vision for local revitalization that can galvanize both the public and private sectors. Governor Cuomo's commitment ensures New York State will continue to lead the way in smart policies that lift entire communities."

The BOA grant recipients are:

Western New York and Southern Tier

City of Batavia, Batavia Central Corridor – Step 2 \$266,508

The City of Batavia will complete a Nomination for an approximately 250-acre area characterized with an estimated 59 potential brownfield sites located within the Batavia Central Corridor. The primary community revitalization objectives include: cleaning-up and redeveloping underutilized, vacant and brownfield properties with appropriate uses; stabilizing existing neighborhoods; and continuing the revitalization of the downtown business district.

City of Binghamton, First Ward Neighborhood – Step 2 \$347,000

The City of Binghamton will complete a Nomination for an approximately 474-acre study area with approximately 136 brownfields and vacant sites located in the First Ward neighborhood. The primary community revitalization objective is to improve the First Ward by planning for and fostering the redevelopment of strategic neighborhood based projects that will induce investments to rehabilitate existing buildings, remediate contaminated sites, and create business and employment opportunities.

"This program plays an important role for Upstate cities seeking to revitalize their local economies in sustainable ways, and that's certainly true for Binghamton," said Binghamton Mayor Matthew T. Ryan. "As we transition from a manufacturing hub to a more diversified regional economy, we must center development within Binghamton and our other urban cores instead of sprawling farther afield, and that means cleaning up polluted industrial sites that otherwise will sit underutilized, drag on the local tax base and deter investment. This approach not only improves our urban quality of life and saves money on municipal infrastructure, but also protects our agricultural sectors and our natural environment, which are also critical to our economic vitality. We look forward to carrying forward these efforts in Binghamton First Ward, as well as our two other BOA sites, on the North Side and East Side."

City of Elmira, Southside Rising - Step 2 \$239,886

The City of Elmira will complete a Nomination for an approximately 386-acre area characterized by 51 potential brownfield and vacant properties located in the south-east portion of the City. The primary community revitalization objectives include: investigating the presence of potential contaminants on strategic sites; undertaking an in-depth analysis of existing land use, supporting infrastructure and zoning; formulating market-based strategies to revitalize residential areas; and completing redevelopment strategies for strategic brownfield and vacant parcels to generate employment and revenues.

"This Brownfield Opportunity Areas grant will help transform an area of Elmira's south side from a largely overlooked hodgepodge of commercial, industrial and residential tracts into a center for new business development," said Elmira Mayor John Tonello. "Our aim in seeking this money was to develop a long-term plan for reshaping these brownfield neighborhoods, and we couldn't be happier that the Southside Rising Project was chosen to be part of this powerful statewide initiative to spur economic investment and job growth."

City of Geneva, North End – Step 1 \$67,500

The City of Geneva will complete a Pre-Nomination Study for an approximately 280- acre area characterized with at least six potential brownfield sites that are located in the City's economically distressed North End. The primary revitalization objectives include: cleaning-up and redeveloping brownfields and other vacant sites with commercial and industrial businesses that are appropriate for and will benefit the North End community; and evaluating existing structures to determine which can be rehabilitated and reused.

City of Niagara Falls, Buffalo Avenue Industrial Corridor – Step 2 \$403,632

The City of Niagara Falls will complete a Nomination for the Buffalo Avenue Industrial Corridor, an area of approximately 1,800 acres characterized by 47 potential brownfield sites located in the City's southeast corner. The area borders the northern bank of the Niagara River and includes economically challenged communities

suffering from close proximity to heavy industry and associated contamination. Primary revitalization objectives include: fostering redevelopment of strategic sites for commercial and residential use; and improving access to the Niagara River waterfront for residents and visitors.

Town of Clay, Three Rivers Point - Step 2 \$278,712

The Town of Clay will complete a Nomination for an approximately 79-acre area characterized with four potential brownfield sites that are located on Maider Road at Three Rivers Point. The primary community revitalization objective is to redevelop the formerly active but now idle industrial properties at Three Rivers Point for appropriate recreational, commercial and residential uses.

Village of Holley, Erie Canal – Step 1, \$67,500

The Village of Holley will complete a Pre-Nomination for an approximately 749-acre area characterized with at least 5 potential brownfield sites that are located within the Village and near the Erie Canal.

Village of Macedon, Main Street and Erie Canal – Step 2 \$182,160

The Village of Macedon will complete a Nomination for an approximately 206-acre area characterized with 42 potential brownfield and vacant sites. These sites are located within the Village core and include lands around the Erie Canal, Ganargua Creek, and the Main Street business district. The primary community revitalization objectives include: increasing the tax base by redeveloping brownfield and vacant sites for mixed use development and business expansion; and revitalizing the Village's business district for commerce and to increase tourism.

Northern and Central New York.

City of Amsterdam, Downtown Via Ponte – Step 2 \$87,982

The City of Amsterdam will complete a Nomination for an approximately 381 acre area characterized with 28 brownfields and vacant sites that are located in the City's downtown. The primary community revitalization objectives to be achieved include: strengthening the downtown's commercial core and tax base with new residential, commercial, and office uses; identifying rail transportation options; establishing a definitive pedestrian and vehicular connection between the southside neighborhoods and the waterfront and downtown.

City of Cohoes, Interstate I-787 Corridor – Step 2 \$150,015

The City of Cohoes will complete a Nomination for an approximately 413-acre area characterized with several potential brownfields sites that are located in the Interstate 787 corridor and adjacent communities. The primary community revitalization objectives include: improving and building on the City's unique urban character as a place to reside, work and recreate; establishing conditions to attract appropriate commercial development in easily accessible areas adjacent to the City's historic downtown, business district and major transportation corridors; and improving recreational use opportunities associated with the Mohawk and Hudson River waterfronts.

"The City of Cohoes is pleased to be awarded the Brownfield Opportunity Areas grant for Cohoes Boulevard," said Mayor John McDonald. "It is through this program that the city is continuing to involve the public on how 'we' as a community think best to transform properties that have been underutilized for generations into tomorrow's best opportunities for the community. This study will assist in community-wide acceptance of the future transformation of these properties into the highest and best use for our community and our region."

City of Rome, Downtown Rome – Step 3 \$500,400

The City of Rome will complete an Implementation Strategy for the Downtown Rome Brownfield Opportunity Area which consists of a 513 acre area characterized by 364 potential brownfield and vacant sites. These sites are located within the City center, near the Erie Canal and Mohawk Rive, and the East Rome industrial park. The primary revitalization objective is to clean-up and redevelop strategic brownfield and vacant sites for a variety of residential, commercial, office and recreational uses. The Implementation Strategy will include: land use implementation techniques including: revised zoning and urban design guidelines; marketing of strategic sites to attract developer interest; developing a local management structure to ensure plan implementation; and compliance with the New York State Environmental Quality Review requirements.

"The City of Rome has been pro-active, tackling brownfield issues head-on; and not waiting around for someone else to fix our problems," said Mayor James Brown of Rome. "Our primary goal is to assist existing businesses and homeowners in the area, while continuing to attract new investment along the waterfront. We have an excellent record in these areas precisely because we have worked with the Department of State, the Department of Environmental Conservation, and all of our elected representatives to develop strong partnerships, aggressively pursue funding, and to consistently execute," he added. "This announcement is good for our neighborhoods, good for the environment, and good for everyone's bottom line."

Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council, Genesee Finger Lakes - Step 1 \$202,292

The Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council will complete a Pre-Nomination Study that identifies and provides an assessment of areas throughout the nine county Genesee Finger Lakes Region that are affected by concentrations of brownfields and economic distress. The Pre-Nomination Study will be conducted in partnership with municipalities within the region and will assess and profile existing conditions, identify opportunities for brownfield reuse and economic development, and establish priorities for revitalization.

David Zorn, Executive Director of the Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council said, "We appreciate the opportunity for the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region to participate in the Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program. Funding will be critical to identify opportunities for significant or catalytic economic development throughout the region including waterfronts, downtowns, brownfields, and areas affected by environmental and economic distress, as well as those that are in need of additional planning assistance."

Village of Frankfort, Main Street and Mohawk River – Step 1 \$56,700

The Village and Town of Frankfort will complete a Pre-Nomination Study for an approximately 470-acre area located along Main Street and the Mohawk River characterized by several brownfield and vacant sites. The primary objective to be achieved is to establish a common vision to return dormant sites back to productive use with businesses and recreational uses that best serve the two municipalities.

Village of Hudson Falls, Downtown and Waterfront – Step 2 \$54,000

The Village of Hudson Falls will complete a Nomination for an approximately 286-acre area characterized with 20 potential brownfield and vacant sites that are located in the Village's commercial and residential areas and along historical transportation routes including Route 5 and the historic Feeder Canal. The primary community revitalization objectives to be achieved include: redeveloping brownfields to establish new businesses and housing opportunities; improving the downtown's appearance, including the attractiveness of main transportation routes into the Village; spurring commercial and residential growth; and creating increased recreational opportunities.

Village of Tupper Lake, Tupper Lake Downtown – Step 2 \$63,000

The Village of Tupper Lake will complete a Nomination for an approximately 290-acre area characterized by seven potential brownfield sites within the Village's downtown and waterfront commercial area. The primary objectives include: enhancing the community's appeal for year round tourism; attracting and retaining private sector industries; and providing job opportunities for the community's youth.

Mayor Mickey Desmarais of Tupper Lake stated, "The Brownfield Opportunity Areas grant award will be an essential component in achieving the community's revitalization goals for the Demars Boulevard/Route 3 Corridor, which due to its proximity to the Raquette River waterfront and its location on a Scenic Byway, is a key redevelopment target area. The Village of Tupper Lake looks forward to working in partnership with the Department of State to develop a strategic implementation plan to use the community's waterfront resources and brownfield site opportunities to leverage private reinvestment along this key commercial corridor."

Downstate

City of Mount Vernon, Canal Village - Step 2, \$435,160

The City of Mount Vernon will complete a Nomination for an approximately 231-acre area characterized with 20 potential brownfield sites that are located in the City's south-eastern section in the Canal Village area. The primary community revitalization objectives include: identifying key redevelopment opportunities; revitalizing the entire

Canal Village area by cleaning-up and redeveloping sites for appropriate commercial businesses and enterprises; upgrading the area's existing infrastructure; and increasing the City's tax base and employment.

"We are pleased that Governor Cuomo and the Department of State recognize that Mount Vernon and its largest industrial area are primed for environmentally responsible growth and greater economic development," said Mayor Clinton I. Young, Jr., City of Mount Vernon. "The funding provided through the Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program Grant will assist the city in understanding how to enhance the co-existence of area businesses and natural resources as we improve the area's infrastructure and identify future land uses to foster sustainable development that will mutually benefit property and business owners, the City and its residents."

Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation, East New York – Step 2 \$412,743

Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation will complete a Nomination for an approximately 275-acre area that includes 30 potential brownfield sites located in East New York's northern section in Brooklyn Community Board 5. The primary community revitalization objectives include: stabilizing and expanding affordable housing; creating viable economic opportunities including green manufacturing and job training; improving transportation routes; and improving access to open space.

Greater Jamaica Development Corporation, Jamaica Queens – Step 3 \$1,241,312

The Greater Jamaica Development Corporation will complete an Implementation Strategy for an approximately 40-acre area characterized with 70 potential brownfield sites that are located in Jamaica Queens near the rail station. Primary objectives include fostering mixed-use, sustainable transit-oriented development near the AirTrain that provides a rail connection for downtown Jamaica and JFK airport. The Implementation Strategy will focus on land use implementation techniques such as urban design guidelines; creation of targeted and effective development incentives to attract desired land uses; redevelopment feasibility studies and site plan alternatives for specific strategic sites; site marketing to attract developer interest; developing a local management structure to ensure implementation of the BOA; and compliance with New York State Environmental Quality Review requirements.

Carlisle Towery, president of Greater Jamaica Development Corporation said, "New York's Brownfield Opportunity Areas program supports a compelling initiative in Jamaica to advance transit oriented development around JFK's Air Train and the LIRR's Jamaica Station, where, together with major public investments, private investments in significant sustainable mixed-use development will strengthen downtown Jamaica's growth and development into a regional center and enhance economic opportunity and quality of life for Southeast Queens."

South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation, Port Morris and Harlem River – Step 3 \$433,800

The South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation will complete an Implementation Strategy for an approximate 200-acre area characterized with 10 brownfield and underutilized that are located in Port Morris near the Harlem River. The primary community revitalization objectives include: redeveloping underutilized, former industrial properties for commercial and residential use; removing environmentally hazardous substances; and increasing waterfront access opportunities to the Harlem River. The Implementation Strategy will include: land use implementation techniques including urban design guidelines; creation of targeted and effective development incentives to attract desired land uses; redevelopment feasibility studies and site plan alternatives for specific strategic sites; site marketing to attract developer interest; developing a local management structure to ensure implementation of the Port Morris and Harlem River BOA; and compliance with the New York State Environmental Quality Review requirements.

South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation, Port Morris and East River - Step 2, \$374,000

The South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation will complete a Nomination for a 145-acre area with approximately 20 potential brownfield sites that are located in Port Morris near the East River. The primary community revitalization objectives include: planning for the redevelopment and reuse of former gas stations and industrial properties for commercial and residential use; and removing environmentally hazardous substances.

Phillip Morrow, president of the South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation said, "SoBRO strongly believes that the work supported by the State on BOA strategic sites will create a needed pathway for new investment from both the public and private sectors. The BOA program has been an instrumental tool in engaging property owners and the local community in a meaningful planning process that facilitates revitalization of

underutilized lots in the historically underserved neighborhoods of the Bronx. Leveraging this program allows us to bring critical and sustainable economic development practices to address sites that are among the most challenging yet have tremendous potential for positive impact into our communities. We commend New York State for prioritizing this important program, and pledge to continue our efforts to bring Brownfield sites back to productive uses for the Bronx."

Town of Riverhead, Downtown Riverhead – Step 2 \$567,000

The Town of Riverhead will complete a Nomination for an approximately 452-acre area characterized with 18 potential brownfield or vacant sites that are located in downtown Riverhead and along the Peconic River. Primary community revitalization objectives include: revitalizing downtown by attracting development that emphasizes and accommodates agricultural and ecosystem related tourism; enhancing Main Street as well as the Arts and Historic Districts; making downtown more walkable; providing unique cultural attractions; and improving waterfront access and range of recreational opportunities.

Town of Riverhead Supervisor Sean Walter said, "This generous BOA grant is fantastic timely news as Downtown Riverhead is seeing a wave of new development through both public and private investment. BOA funding for planning and economic assistance will target reuse and development opportunities to attract investment and support coordinated, triple bottom line redevelopment that enhances economic, environmental and social strengths by emphasizing our unique cultural attractions such as a new Hyatt Place Hotel at Atlantis Aquarium, the Suffolk County Culinary Arts School, the East End Arts Council, and improved access to the Peconic River and Great Peconic Bay including a nationally recognized migratory fish passage in Grangebel Park."



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