



APRIL 7, 2016 Albany, NY

## **Governor Cuomo Launches \$100 Million Downtown Revitalization Initiative**

### State to Collaborate With Regional Economic Development Councils to Revitalize Ten Designated Downtowns in Communities Across New York

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today launched the \$100 million Downtown Revitalization Initiative – a comprehensive approach to transform communities ripe for development into vibrant neighborhoods where the next generation of New Yorkers will want to live and work. The program, first presented in the Governor’s 2016 State of the State Address, will invest \$10 million into ten downtown neighborhoods across the state. The downtown areas will be selected by the state’s Regional Economic Development Councils.

“A thriving downtown can provide a tremendous boost to the local economy,” **said Governor Cuomo.** “This initiative will transform selected downtown neighborhoods into vibrant places for people to live, work and raise a family – which will also help attract new investments and businesses for years to come. The Regional Councils have been key to generating new opportunities for local economies, and I am excited to have them spearhead this new effort to build on that progress from the ground up.”

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Former New York Secretary of State Cesar A. Perales will chair this initiative and lead the effort with a team of private sector experts and planners from the Department of State, with support from the Division of Homes and Community Renewal, as well as other state agencies. The state will assist selected municipalities in building strategic investment plans and identifying key projects consistent with the initiative's goals.

**Acting New York Secretary of State Rossana Rosado said:** “The Governor’s Downtown Revitalization Initiative will help reinvigorate our communities by leveraging private investment with existing state resources. Under the Chairmanship of former Secretary Perales, this program will rehabilitate downtowns by housing new and growing small businesses to anchor these areas and make them more livable.”

**NYS Homes and Community Renewal Commissioner James S. Rubin said:** “In New York State, we are guided by the Governor’s comprehensive economic development vision. This Downtown Revitalization Initiative is an incredibly important strategic investment for New Yorkers and will make these communities magnets for redevelopment, growth, job creation, broader economic and housing diversity, and opportunity.”

**Downtown Revitalization Initiative Chairman Cesar A. Perales said:** “I am honored to be tasked by Governor Cuomo to chair this vital initiative. I look forward to working with the REDCs and the various State agencies to reinvigorate communities throughout New York State.”

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Each Regional Council will weigh seven proposed criteria to select their nominee:

1. The targeted neighborhood should be compact and well-defined.
2. The downtown, or its center, should be of a size sufficient to support an active, year-round downtown and should have a sizeable existing or increasing population within easy reach for whom this would be the primary downtown.
3. The downtown should capitalize on prior, and catalyze future, private and public investment in the neighborhood and surrounding areas.
4. There should be recent or impending job growth within, or in close proximity to the downtown that can attract workers to the downtown, support redevelopment and make growth sustainable.
5. The downtown must contain properties or characteristics that contribute or that could contribute, if enhanced, to the attractiveness and livability of the downtown, including the presence of developable mixed-use spaces, housing at different levels of affordability and type, commercial and retail main street businesses, including healthy and affordable food markets, walkability and bikeability, and public parks and gathering spaces.
6. The downtown should contain or articulate how it can create policies that enhance quality of life, including the use of local land banks, modern zoning codes, complete streets plans, or transit-oriented development.
7. Local and community support must exist for revitalization of the downtown. There must be a commitment among local leaders and stakeholders to build and implement a strategic investment plan for the downtown.

Following Council nominations, selected communities will establish local planning committees with technical support from both private sector and state experts to build a Strategic Investment Plan for the designated downtown area. Completed

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plans will include identification of economic development, transportation, housing, and community projects that align with the community's plan and can leverage and expand upon the State's \$10 million investment. Plans will be complete in early 2017.

To review the nominating criteria, please click [here](#).

## Contact the Governor's Press Office



**Contact us by phone:**

Albany: (518) 474 - 8418

New York City: (212) 681 - 4640



**Contact us by email:**

[Press.Office@exec.ny.gov](mailto:Press.Office@exec.ny.gov)

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