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From: Press Office <Press.Office@exec.ny.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2019 4:53 PM
To: Press Office
Subject: REDI COMMISSION CO-CHAIRS ISSUE LETTER TO LAKE ONTARIO MUNICIPALITIES PROVIDING PROGRESS UPDATE

For Immediate Release: 10/1/2019 **GOVERNOR ANDREW M. CUOMO**

REDI COMMISSION CO-CHAIRS ISSUE LETTER TO LAKE ONTARIO MUNICIPALITIES PROVIDING PROGRESS UPDATE

The Commission Will Lower the Local Contribution from 15 to 5 Percent for All Qualifying Projects

Today, the co-chairs of the Resiliency and Economic Development Initiative commissioner, DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos and ESD Acting Commissioner Eric Gertler, issued a letter to Lake Ontario municipalities providing a progress update on the Lake Ontario community planning process.

The full text of the letter is available below:

October 1, 2019

Dear REDI Municipalities/ Grantees:

With the public consultation phase of the Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI) concluded, we are pleased to provide an important update. First, we wish to thank you for your engagement and support for this process which involved dozens of meetings and hundreds of people across eight counties and five regions. It is because of your engagement and support that we were able to identify projects that will address the immediate and long-term resiliency of the Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River communities and identify concerns to improve the program.

As you know, the REDI program, and the $300M allocated for this effort, has focused on resiliency and sustainability given the ongoing environmental challenges. On August 7, 2019 we announced we would earmark up to $20 million of the $300 million for an expansion of our Department of Housing and Community Renewal Residential Home Repair Program. In addition, we announced we would award each of the eight counties with up to $15 million in qualifying projects per county and additional funding of up to $160 million in total for regionally significant large-scale economic development and resiliency projects.

As the participation and responsibility of our local government partners is essential to help determine a project's public purpose and priority needs, we originally proposed a 15% local or county government match to our municipal project awards. Throughout this process we heard concerns regarding the 15% local contribution. In response to the financial concerns expressed, the Commission has decided to uniformly lower the local contribution from 15% to 5% for all qualifying projects. Local participation is essential as it assures the bona fide government priority and efficiency.

Secondarily, while the focus of the REDI work has always been on investing in municipal resiliency infrastructure, we heard from many communities about the value of private businesses, especially marinas, to their local economies. In recognizing that value, we have decided to allocate $30 million of the $160 million toward private business projects focused on resiliency. The REDI program will contribute up to 50% of the total cost of the private resiliency projects capped at $200,000 with a local match expected to be 5% of the state contribution.

Finally, we have also heard concerns from second home owners who have property damage. While the program will prioritize primary homeowners in the residential program, we will fund secondary homeownership claims to the extent funds are available once primary homes have been addressed.

Working together we believe this approach addresses the major issues brought to our attention. Obviously, this is a difficult situation for all involved but we are on our way to making real progress.

On behalf of the REDI Commission, we are grateful for the tremendous participation of the Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River communities and look forward to announcing the awards soon.

Sincerely,

Commissioner Basil Seggos Acting Commissioner Eric Gertler

REDI Commission Co-Chairs

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