



STATE OF NEW YORK  
**DEPARTMENT OF STATE**  
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ANDREW M. CUOMO  
GOVERNOR

CESAR A. PERALES  
SECRETARY OF STATE

January 17, 2012

Jody Kass  
Executive Director  
New Partners for Community Revitalization  
151 West 30th Street  
11th Floor  
New York, NY 10001

Dear Friends,

Good afternoon. It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Brownfield Forum sponsored by New Partners for Community Revitalization. Unfortunately, I am unable to be here in person due to a previous commitment in Albany, but I know that Peter will do an excellent job of representing the Department of State in my absence.

I'd like to thank Jody Kass and her staff for their support of the Department of State, the BOA Program and for being an effective advocate for communities that strive to improve economically and environmentally. New Partners has been a leading advocacy organization for affordable housing and brownfields since its inception 10 years ago. Congratulations on your 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary and keep up the good work!

It is my privilege to be part of Governor Andrew Cuomo's administration by leading an agency whose core mission is to work as a cooperative partner with local governments and community based organizations to make their communities more prosperous and better places to live.

I am especially proud of the Department of State's integral support in implementing Governor Cuomo's bold vision for a new economic development model in New York State.

Last July, the Governor launched ten Regional Economic Development Councils and charged them with developing an initial strategic plan in less than 4 months. As you may know, the Councils are comprised of local experts and stakeholders from business, academia, local government, and non-government organizations.

With remarkable efficiency and enthusiasm, each Council delivered their initial five-year strategic plan on time. Each plan emphasizes its region's unique assets, strengths, and promising economic opportunities.

Each plan includes:

- A comprehensive vision for economic development.
- Regional strategies to achieve the vision.
- Specific priority projects capable of stimulating economic investment and job growth.
- A roadmap for implementation in the years ahead.

It has been an honor to serve as a member of the Strategic Plan Review Committee. The Committee was very impressed and inspired by the results of the collaborative strategic planning process. Each plan is a powerful blueprint for economic growth and job creation across the state's geographically and economically diverse regions. Let me reinforce what you may already know, each region in this state is rich with talent, resources, innovation and promise.

In December, following this review, Governor Cuomo announced over \$785 million in awards to the Regional Councils for priority projects to drive economic growth and create jobs.

It will not surprise you to know that brownfields are a critical issue and opportunity for all ten regions. Each and every strategic plan recognizes that brownfields are the primary areas of economic development and growth.

The BOA Program fulfills an important role by providing a steady pipeline of community supported redevelopment projects in all 10 regions. It is a bottom-up, community driven program that enables the completion of needed pre-development work to make redevelopment happen and catalyze positive change.

This predevelopment work removes the uncertainty associated with brownfields. By doing so, the BOA process brings predictability to the community, investors and developers, clearing the way for the development of new or expanding businesses, housing, and community facilities that enrich neighborhoods and make them more desirable and livable.

The BOA program's principle goal and most important performance measure, is to ensure that program resources generate an effective revitalization strategy, one that leverages significant public and private investment for community improvement.

I am very pleased to say that the ground work you are undertaking through the program is advancing many of the regional council identified priority projects. Some examples include: Wyandanch's transit oriented development project on Long Island; the Lyon's Falls Mill sites in the North Country; business and housing redevelopment in New York City's opportunity zones; and Mohawk Valley's Main Street Initiative including downtown redevelopment projects in Amsterdam, Rome and Johnstown.

Achieving a community's vision through tangible redevelopment projects for business, commerce, housing or recreation is not an easy task. All of you are leading the charge towards rebuilding our communities and contributing to a more prosperous future for your New York.

I have a great appreciation for the dialogue you are engaged in today. I fully support this forum's focus on ways to leverage public and private resources to achieve successful economic development.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cesar A. Perales". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned centrally below the word "Sincerely,".

Cesar A. Perales  
Secretary of State