

Press Release:

**Land Use Law Center's
"Mayors' Redevelopment Roundtable"
Recognized as Regional Demonstration Program for Local Government Efficiency**

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White Plains, NY

Through the City of Peekskill, the Land Use Law Center's "Mayors' Redevelopment Roundtable" program has received a share of \$4 million in grant funding from New York State. Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced last fall that 68 local governments throughout the State would share this funding to study and implement initiatives to streamline government operations and ultimately save taxpayer money. Peekskill is one of many cities in the Mid-Hudson Valley Region that have been participating in the Roundtable since its inception in 2009.

The Local Government Efficiency Grant award recognizes work of the Land Use Law Center, operating as policy researchers and advisors to the cities and their legal, development, and planning departments, in identifying urban redevelopment barriers, developing best practices to overcome them, and implementing these practices in each of the twelve participating cities to create job-producing, sustainable neighborhoods. The efficiencies involved include the savings achieved by coordinating the work of city staff with that of the Land Use Law Center, in developing and implementing shared strategies for revitalization and sustainable growth.

This grant to the Mayors' Redevelopment Roundtable enables the continuation and enhancement of the Roundtable's work in developing a regional economic development strategy based on urban redevelopment, which was adopted by the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council, and a regional sustainability plan, also adopted by the Council.

"The Council's strategy and this grant recognize the importance of these urban communities to the Mid-Hudson Region and New York State," said Jennie Nolon Blanchard, Senior Attorney and Urban Program Specialist at the Land Use Law Center. "Through the leadership of the mayors involved, the Roundtable cities, working together, have become an effective regional demonstration program for urban revitalization, sustainability, and economic development."

The Roundtable's mayors, attorneys, planners, and economic development staffers will work closely with the Land Use Law Center, as well as state agencies, and other experts and professional partners to ensure that the cities engage in transformative initiatives, build a base for continued and efficient intermunicipal and regional cooperation, and develop incentives and regulatory strategies to further an efficient, sustainable, and economically viable pattern of human settlement. "The work proposed under this project will lay the

foundation for truly transformative change in the communities where it is most needed,” Blanchard says.

The Mayors Redevelopment Roundtable carries out the policies of several recently-launched state efforts, including the regional economic development and sustainability plans, smart growth infrastructure funding, complete streets initiatives, land bank creation, and several energy conserving policies contained in Governor Cuomo’s executive orders and funding programs of other state agencies.

“The communities in the Roundtable,” says Blanchard, “have over six years of trust and collaboration with each other and the Land Use Law Center. Our work over the next two years will focus on accelerating the momentum of this network, expanding its collaboration to enhance local efficiencies, achieve economic and sustainable development goals, build efficiency through the development of shared resources and strategies, grow the local tax base, lay a foundation for investment in and revitalization of urban centers that will bolster regional and State economic prosperity, and develop best practice models for other communities in the State to emulate—further enhancing efficiencies at the local level.”

The communities participating in the Roundtable include Yonkers, Mount Vernon, New Rochelle, White Plains, Port Chester, Rye, Peekskill, Beacon, Poughkeepsie, Brewster, Ossining, and Newburgh. Former Peekskill Mayor Mary Foster who, along with the Peekskill City Council, submitted the grant application on behalf of the Roundtable said when receiving the grant, “This support for the Mayor’s Redevelopment Roundtable is of critical importance to the economic health to the Hudson Valley region. Through the roundtable, the mayors, their senior development staff, and the Land Use Law Center work together on strategies that make cities dynamic engines of regional economic growth.”