

# 2025 YEAR IN REVIEW



The Erie County Industrial Development Agency provides tax incentives and low-interest business loans to encourage economic growth and job creation in Erie County. ECIDA tax incentives help keep our region competitive with other locations in the attraction and retention of quality employers.



# LETTER FROM PRESIDENT/CEO JOHN CAPPELLINO

I am pleased to report that the Erie County Industrial Development Agency had a busy 2025, incentivizing 14 projects that collectively invested more than \$728 million into Erie County's economy. It was a strong year for local manufacturers, marked by significant investment and expansion at several local manufacturing and food processing facilities. ECIDA incentives keep our region competitive not only in attracting quality employers but also in encouraging local companies to retain and create jobs right here in our community. In 2025, ECIDA-incentivized projects created 562 full-time/16 part-time jobs and retained 2,111 full-time/43 part-time positions (job counts must be maintained for the full terms of the incentive agreements with the ECIDA, some up to ten years). The projects incentivized by the ECIDA in 2025 will generate \$3.9 billion in projected local economic impact, including \$178 million in salaries that support local families and are spent locally on goods and services.

Our lending affiliate, the Regional Development Corporation [RDC], approved 11 small business expansion loans totaling \$4.1 million, and our land development arm, the Industrial Land Development Corporation [ILDC] had a very busy year completing more infrastructure projects at the Erie County Agribusiness Park. The ILDC also closed on a purchase agreement with New Jersey developer J.G. Petrucci for the first parcels in Phase 2 at Renaissance Commerce Park. Petrucci plans to build a future light-medium manufacturing or warehouse/distribution facility.

Longtime ECIDA/RDC Board member Richard Lipsitz, who served as our Board Vice Chair stepped down this year after 13 years of service to the ECIDA.

Richard joined the Board in 2012 as then-President of the Western New York Area Labor Federation, and he also served in a key role as our Policy Committee Chair. He brought a special insight and wisdom to the ECIDA, leading dozens of in-depth project application reviews and presiding over the adoption of several best-practices Policy improvements, including the agency's response to economic challenges brought on by the global pandemic, and other changing economic tides.

The ECIDA Board is made up of 19 volunteer positions, some of which are ex-officio by State Law. We are grateful to each Board member for however long they are able to serve in any capacity, and appreciate their contributions to the work we do. Whether a Board member serves for a few months or several years, each brings a valuable, unique expertise.

We wish Richard all the best in his retirement from the ECIDA Board and offer profound appreciation for his exemplary governance.

We look forward to continued insightful leadership from our new Policy Committee Chair, former Buffalo Central Labor Council AFL-CIO President Denise Abbott, and working toward even further economic growth for Erie County in 2026.

- John Cappellino, ECIDA President & CEO

# 2025 YEAR IN NUMBERS

**INCENTIVIZING  
ECONOMIC GROWTH &  
JOB CREATION / RETENTION  
IN ERIE COUNTY**



## TAX INCENTIVES

**TOTAL PROJECTS:  
14**

**TOTAL PRIVATE INVESTMENT GENERATED:  
\$728 MILLION**

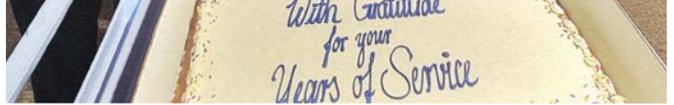
**TOTAL INCENTIVES:  
\$42.2 MILLION**

### JOB CREATION/ RETENTION:

**CREATED: 562 FULL-TIME JOBS • 16 PART-TIME JOBS**

**RETAINED: 2,111 FULL-TIME JOBS • 43 PART-TIME JOBS**

**CONSTRUCTION JOBS: 2,157**



**\$3.9 BILLION  
in Economic  
Impact**

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**Total Payroll  
invested in employing  
local workers annually**

**\$178 MILLION**

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**New PILOT Payments**

**\$15,817,665**  
(added revenue  
for taxing jurisdictions)



## SMALL BUSINESS LOANS

**11 LOANS  
TOTALING \$4.1 MILLION**



**PRIVATE INVESTMENT  
\$4.9 MILLION**

**NEW JOBS: 39  
RETAINED JOBS: 118**

## BOND FINANCING



**JOINT SCHOOLS CONSTRUCTION BOARD  
\$80 MILLION**



**ILDC BOND  
CANISIUS UNIVERSITY SERIES 2025  
\$55 MILLION**

Erie County Industrial Development Agency (ECIDA) incentives helped **14** capital expansion projects invest a total of **\$178 MILLION** right here in Erie County, retaining/creating **2,732** permanent jobs.

## 2025 ECIDA CLIENT HIGHLIGHTS



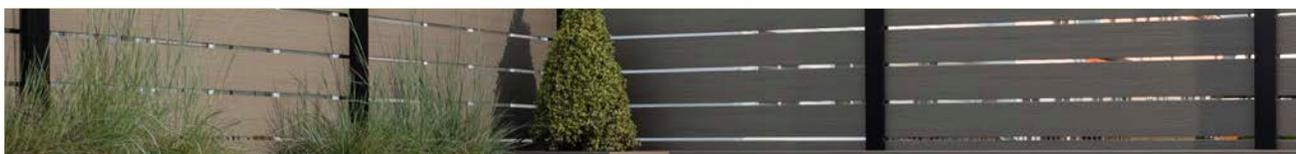
Erie I BOCES Groundbreaking, July 2025

### **ERIE I BOCES (BENDERSON DEVELOPMENT)** DEPEW, NY

*For every \$1 in incentives, \$103 is returned in economic benefit to Erie County*

The ECIDA Board approved approximately \$833,778 in future property tax savings (over a 10-year PILOT Term) and \$4.38 million in sales tax savings on purchases for Benderson Development's Erie 1 Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) expansion project in Depew. Benderson will renovate an existing 179,000 square foot building on Walden Avenue to allow the consolidation of three Erie 1 BOCES locations into one centralized facility that will serve 500 special-education students. A 40,000 square foot addition will also help accommodate the new facility's three gymnasiums and space to foster social and emotional development.

The project will retain/create 361 positions at BOCES, and create 329 temporary local jobs during construction. In July of 2025, Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz, who serves on the ECIDA Board, and ECIDA Business Development Director Grant Lesswing joined stakeholders and elected officials at the site for a groundbreaking ceremony, highlighting the expanded services that will be available to students. The new facility will open in 2027.



## **DECKORATORS, INC. LACKAWANNA, NY**

*For every \$1 in incentives, \$65 is returned in economic benefit to the community*

Deckorators, Inc., specializes in manufacturing outdoor living products including composite and mineral-based composite decking, railing systems and outdoor lighting. The company, founded in 1998 and acquired by UFP Industries in 2005, is expanding its manufacturing footprint into the Northeast U.S. with a \$77.2 million facility in Lackawanna to support production of their Surestone® mineral-based composite decking. To help attract the project to Erie County, the ECIDA Board approved approximately \$291,385 in future property tax savings (over a ten-year PILOT term) and up to \$1,531,250 in sales tax savings on project-related purchases. Deckorators, Inc. plans to renovate a 168,000 square-foot existing building and construct a new 19,000 square foot addition. A second 85,000 square foot existing building on the parcel will be considered for future growth opportunities and additional capacity. The completed facility will employ 50 full-time workers, including skilled manufacturing and management roles with annual salaries averaging \$90,000, investing an additional \$36 million in local payroll over the life of the PILOT benefit term.



**Deckorators®**

## **BIG HEART PET BRANDS / THE J.M. SMUCKER COMPANY BUFFALO, NY**

*For every \$1 in incentives, \$184 is returned in economic benefit to the community*

The ECIDA Board approved \$1,085,175 in sales tax savings on project-related purchases for Big Heart Pet Brands to complete a \$52.7 million modernization and expansion of their 550,000 square foot facility in Buffalo. The food and beverage manufacturer was acquired by the The J.M. Smucker Company in 2015, adding Big Heart's Meow Mix, Milk-Bone, Pup-Peroni and other national pet food products to the Smucker portfolio. Phase 1 of Big Heart's expansion will add approximately 900 square feet to the existing building to accommodate a new Soft & Chewy processing line. Phase 2 will increase biscuit volume and capacity. Big Heart Pet Brands currently employs 283 workers at its Urban Street facility in Buffalo, and the expansion will add 17 new full-time permanent positions, in addition to creating 208 temporary local construction jobs.

## **619 EXCHANGE STREET / PG LARKINVILLE, LLC BUFFALO, NY**

*For every \$1 in incentives, \$12 is returned in economic benefit to the community*

PG Larkinville, LLC applied for incentives under the ECIDA Adaptive Reuse program for its rehabilitation of 619 Exchange Street in east Buffalo. The formerly abandoned, blighted historic structure was originally designed by renowned architect Louise Bethune, and was once home to the Iroquois Door Company. PG Larkinville plans to create 64 one- and two-bedroom apartment homes, with 10 units set aside as affordable to residents earning 80% or less of the Area Median Income. The building will undergo a full interior/exterior rehab, with new mechanical and electrical systems and historic façade reconstruction. The new Iroquois Lofts will help continue the revitalization of Buffalo's Larkinville neighborhood, and create 226 temporary local building trade jobs during construction.

The Industrial Land Development Corporation (ILDC) is the land development arm of the ECIDA, addressing the need for shovel-ready sites by leading development efforts on **2** large-scale, shovel-ready campuses for advanced manufacturing and agribusiness employers.




  
**RENAISSANCE COMMERCE PARK PARCEL MAP**
  

  
**AERIAL VIEW, RENAISSANCE COMMERCE PARK**





## RENAISSANCE COMMERCE PARK

2025 was another year of extraordinary growth and success at Renaissance Commerce Park [RCP] in Lackawanna. Once an abandoned steel mill, RCP is now a thriving manufacturing and warehouse/distribution hub, home to eight businesses and more than 400 employees. Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz, who also serves as ILDC Board Chair, began leading the site's redevelopment efforts in 2012. ILDC has since managed the large coalition of public and private entities, all working together to rehabilitate the formerly blighted site into the successful, advanced manufacturing campus it is today.

In 2025 Empire State Development awarded the site its "FAST NY Shovel-ready" designation—an important distinction in the competitive global market for industrial sites.

Governor Kathy Hochul also included special legislation in her 2025 budget that extended critical RCP Gen. 1 Brownfield tax credits to 2037. The legislation preserved 78 acres at RCP under the Gen. 1 Brownfield tax credits, which were originally scheduled to expire in 2027. New York State legislators Senator Sean Ryan and Assemblyman Jon Rivera sponsored the legislation after the bill's original Senate sponsor, New York State Senator Tim Kennedy, was elected to the United States Congress before the bill could be passed.

Infrastructure development at RCP reached several important milestones in 2025:

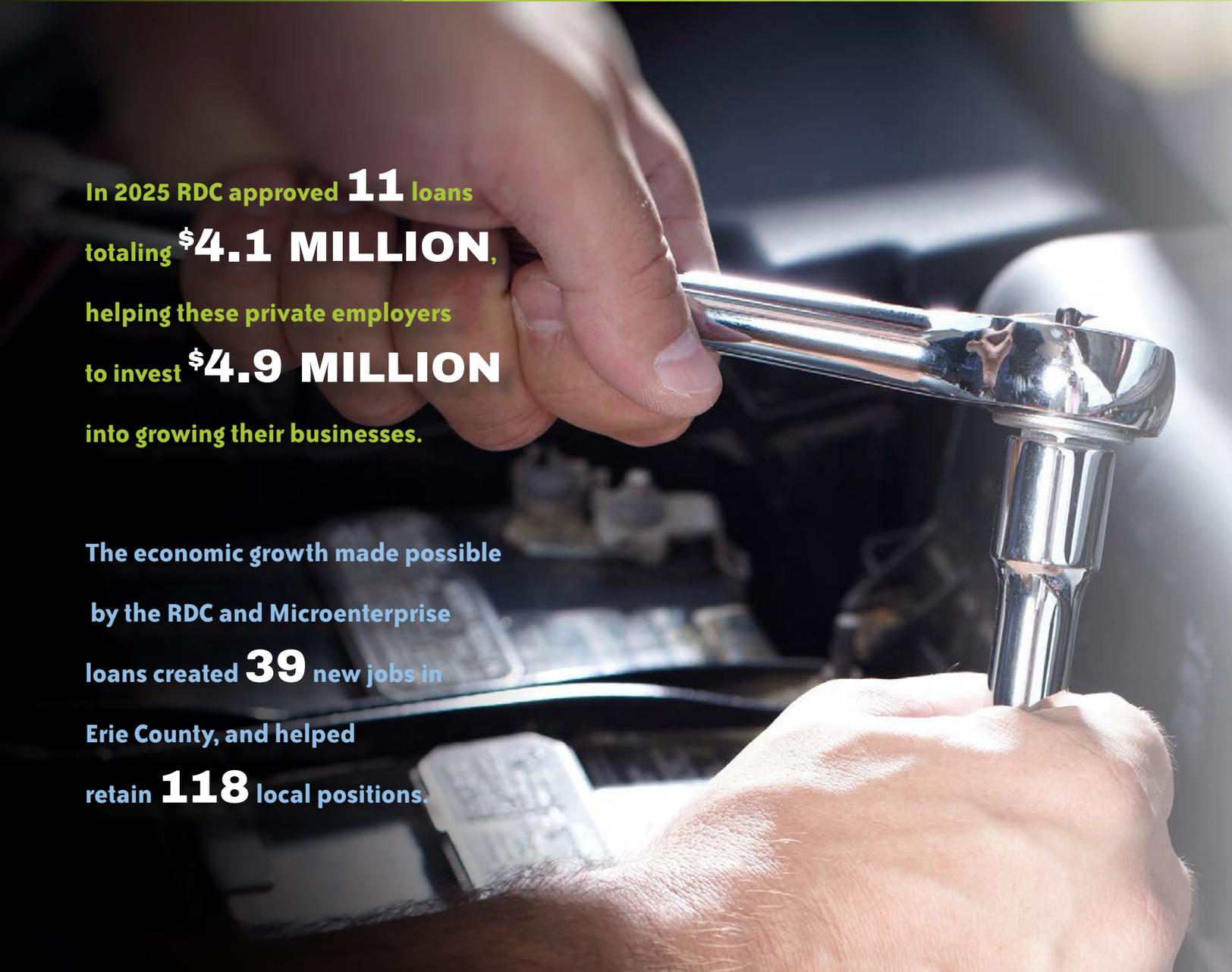
- **Design, engineering and bidding phases for Odell Street and Ridge Road extensions were completed; Pinto Construction Services will begin building the new roads in the spring of 2026.**
- **ILDC executed an extension of the Purchase Sale Agreement with Tecumseh Steel, which owns the remainder of the former Bethlehem Steel acreage surrounding RCP, for additional parcels west of RCP's Phase 2. WYE Railyards currently located on RCP Phase 2 parcels will be moved east to the newly purchased parcels, creating more developable acreage for RCP. Empire State Development approved \$6.5 million in grants to fund the rail relocation. Design and engineering phases are complete, and the project will go out to bid in early 2026.**
- **New Jersey developer J.G. Petrucci closed on a Phase 2 parcel that will soon be the site of a "spec" advanced manufacturing or warehouse/distribution facility just south of the Dona Street Extension. Construction will begin once a tenant has been identified.**



The ILDC continued progress at the new Erie County Agribusiness Park [ECAP], and in late 2025 received an \$11.5 million FAST NY grant from Empire State Development. The funds will go toward critical infrastructure improvements.

The Regional Development Corporation (RDC) is the lending arm of the ECIDA, administering low-interest business expansion loans up to **\$3 MILLION** to help Erie County businesses. The RDC shares a Board and staff with the ECIDA.

## LOAN CLIENT HIGHLIGHTS



In 2025 RDC approved **11** loans totaling **\$4.1 MILLION**, helping these private employers to invest **\$4.9 MILLION** into growing their businesses.

The economic growth made possible by the RDC and Microenterprise loans created **39** new jobs in Erie County, and helped retain **118** local positions.

### **FIVE STAR AUTOMOTIVE OF BUFFALO, INC. CHEEKTOWAGA, NY**

Family-owned Five Star Auto was approved for a \$200,000 loan for working capital while construction is completed at their Union Road auto repair shop in Cheektowaga. In addition to reconstruction of their front office and roof, owners Renato Testani and Lori Christopher are expanding with construction of a ten-bay automotive garage. RDC partnered with Lakeshore Savings Bank and Pursuit Lending to help meet the total project cost of \$1.8 million.



## **PREMIER AEROSPACE NY, LLC/EVERFAB** EAST AURORA, NY

RDC loans may be used to finance acquisition when the purchase of a company will prevent the loss of local jobs. Premier Aerospace NY was approved for a \$1.5 million RDC loan to help finance a \$2 million acquisition of EverFab, a manufacturer of ultra-precision equipment for the aerospace industry. After the recent passing of EverFab founder Alan Everett, the East Aurora company began receiving out-of-state offers from liquidators; but Everett's widow Susan wanted to keep the 45-year-old business and its long-time employees in East Aurora, so she chose local bidders Premier Aerospace NY. Premier will invest an additional \$500,000, saving 48 jobs and creating 12 new positions that would have otherwise gone out of state.

## **NICK & TIFF MUSIC** DERBY, NY

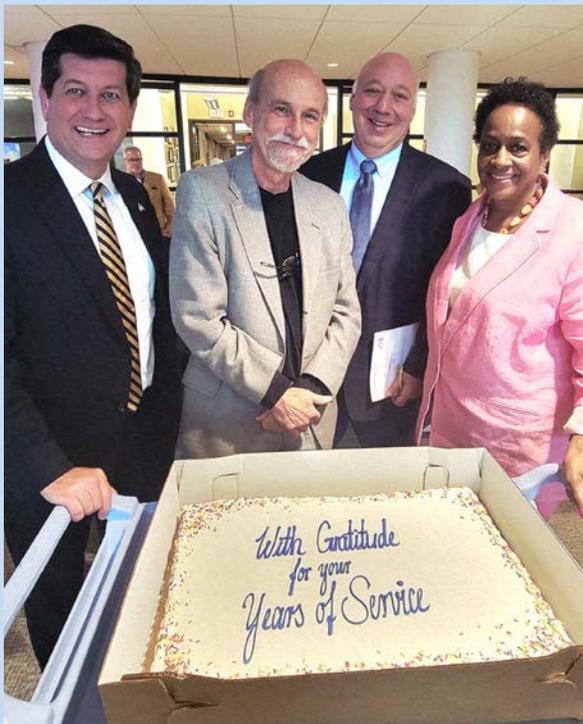
When the Sumitomo Rubber plant closed its Tonawanda facility in November 2024, the RDC created the Sumitomo Employee Loan Fund to help former employees start their own businesses. Former Sumitomo employee Nicholas Ciminelli, who worked at the facility for 21 years, lost his job in the closure. Ciminelli decided to pursue his passion for music, and he was approved for a \$30,000 loan to finance opening his own music instrument store and repair shop. Nick & Tiff Music will occupy 1600 square feet of storefront space, and offer instruments for sale or rent, sheet music, accessories and music lessons to nearby Lakeshore High School students.



RDC staff also administer Erie County's  
**MICROENTERPRISE LOAN/GRANT PROGRAM**  
and in 2025 serviced **4** business loans totaling **\$105,500**

## **PRO DOCK AND DOOR, LLC** NORTH COLLINS, NY

Woman-owned Pro Dock and Door specializes in furnishing and installing commercial overhead doors and loading dock equipment. Owner/President Megan Smaldino and her husband Michael were approved for a \$15,500 Microenterprise Loan to help finance the purchase of a \$20,500 scissor lift. Megan manages the daily accounting, contracts and financial duties, while Mike manages each job from bidding to final walk-through. Pro Dock currently employs four people, and without the limitation of having to rent a scissor lift for each job, will add two new positions with the increase in capacity.



Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz, Richard Lipsitz, ECIDA President and CEO John Cappellino, ECIDA Board Chair Brenda McDuffie

ECIDA Board Vice Chair and Policy Committee Chair Richard Lipsitz officially retired from his ECIDA-affiliated positions on May 28, 2025. During his 13 years of service, Richard has overseen thorough Policy Committee reviews of each incentives application, and the adoption of several "best-practice" improvements in ECIDA policies, including:

- Mandating use of local construction labor on ECIDA projects.
- Codifying a "Recapture" policy that facilitates return or termination of benefits when material conditions aren't met; this ECIDA policy pre-dated statewide statutory changes that were adopted the following year.
- An "Unpaid Tax" policy ensuring incentives will not be approved if an applicant owes any back property taxes.
- Adopting an Economic Inclusion Program opt-in policy that offers enhanced PILOT incentives to applicants who meet certain minority and women-owned business engagement goals.
- Requiring that adaptive reuse projects with housing units reserve a portion of the total units as affordable to households earning 80% or less of the Area Median Income.

*"Our community needs economic development that better the lives of Erie County's working people, and if my time at ECIDA helped to move that goal forward, it was time well used. As I step away from the ECIDA Board and look back on these great strides in policy and practice that the agency made during my term, I do so with pride and gratitude."*  
*—Richard Lipsitz*

## GRANT SERVICES

ECIDA staff provide expert guidance to municipalities and/or qualified organizations who are pursuing state, federal and private grant funding opportunities for priority economic development projects. In 2025, 6 grants were awarded for a total of \$16,275,801. ECIDA grant staff also provided ongoing technical/administrative support for 7 active grants totaling \$14.4 million in 2025.

### EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

**\$4,500,000** • Village of Angola • NY Forward

Leveraging the Village's historic Angola Theater as the anchor, the funds will support various downtown projects to increase tourism and bolster the local economy

**\$11,538,610** • Industrial Land Development Corporation / Erie County Agribusiness Park

FAST NY funding to support capital infrastructure and improve shovel-ready status at Erie County Agribusiness Park

### NATIONAL GRID

**\$25,000**

Funding request on behalf of NAACP and Buffalo Urban League to support Urban Land Institute Advisory Panel review and strategic economic development plan for Jefferson Corridor

### RALPH C. WILSON LEGACY FUND

**\$30,000** • Village of Angola

Funding for landscape design for park in the Village of Angola Business District

### NEW YORK STATE ENVIRONMENTAL FACILITY CORP.

**\$100,000** • Village of Lancaster

Sewer System Evaluation Survey (SSES) Investigation & Corrective Action Plan (CAP) for Infiltration and Improvements Flow study

### NEW YORK STATE OFFICE OF PARKS, RECREATION & HISTORIC PRESERVATION

**\$82,191** • Village of Angola

Funding to replace playground equipment at Frawley Park

The Erie County Industrial Development Agency Board of Directors is a 19-member, all-volunteer board made up of 14 ex-officio seats, and five seats jointly appointed by the County Executive and the Chair of the County Legislature. The Regional Development Corporation, which is the lending arm of the ECIDA, shares the same Board of Directors with the ECIDA. The Industrial Land Development Corporation, which is the land development arm of the ECIDA, is overseen by a separate board, Chaired by the Erie County Executive. The ECIDA, RDC and ILDC Boards meet monthly, and agendas and minutes can be viewed/downloaded at [www.ecidany.com](http://www.ecidany.com)



## ECIDA/RDC Board of Directors



<b>MS. DENISE ABBOTT * II</b> President, Buffalo Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO	<b>MS. LaVONNE ANSARI *</b> Chair, Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA)	<b>REV. MARK E. BLUE *</b> President, NAACP, Buffalo Chapter
<b>MS. GRACE BOGDANOVE *</b> President, Buffalo Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO	<b>MR. PATRICK BOYLE * II</b> President, Erie County Association of School Boards	<b>MR. JONATHAN DANDES *</b> Vice President, Gov. Relations & Special Projects, Rich Products Corporation
<b>MR. THOMAS EMMERLING * II</b> CPA, Dopkins & Company	<b>HON. JOSEPH EMMINGER *</b> Supervisor, Town of Tonawanda	<b>MS. DOTTIE GALLAGHER *</b> President & CEO, Buffalo Niagara Partnership
<b>MS. LORRY GOLDHAWK *</b> President, Erie County Association of School Boards	<b>MR. GREGORY INGLUT **</b> Business Manager/Financial Secretary, IBEW Local 41	<b>MS. TYRA JOHNSON HUX **</b> WNY Operations Director, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
<b>HON. BRIAN KULPA * II</b> Supervisor, Town of Amherst	<b>MR. RICHARD LIPSITZ, JR. ** II</b> <b>VICE CHAIR</b> President Emeritus, Western New York Area Labor Federation	<b>MS. BRENDA McDUFFIE **</b> <b>CHAIR</b> Retired, Buffalo Urban League
<b>HON. GLENN NELLIS **</b> Retired	<b>HON. BRIAN NOWAK *</b> Town Supervisor, Town of Cheektowaga	<b>HON. MARK POLONCARZ *</b> County Executive, County of Erie
<b>HON. CHRISTOPHER SCANLON * II</b> Mayor, City of Buffalo	<b>MR. KENNETH SCHOETZ **</b> Vice President, Healthcare Association of Western New York	<b>HON. TAISHA ST. JOHN TARD *</b> Chair, Economic Development Committee, Erie County Legislature

\* Ex-Officio: members who serve by virtue of their office, either private or public, according to New York State statute \*\* Jointly appointed by Erie County Executive & Chair of Erie County Legislature II Outgoing

## ILDC Board of Directors



<b>MS. DENISE ABBOTT * II</b> President, Buffalo Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO	<b>MS. GRACE BOGDANOVE *</b> President, Buffalo Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO	<b>MR. DANIEL CASTLE **</b> Commissioner, Dept. of Environment & Planning, Erie County
<b>MR. ZAQUE EVANS **</b> Deputy Commissioner, Dept. of Environment & Planning and Chief Economic Development Officer, County of Erie	<b>MR. RICHARD LIPSITZ, JR. II</b> President Emeritus, Western New York Area Labor Federation	<b>MR. TIMOTHY MEYERS *</b> Chair, Erie County Legislature
<b>HON. MARK POLONCARZ *</b> <b>CHAIR</b> County Executive, County of Erie	<b>HON. CHRISTOPHER SCANLON * II</b> Mayor, City of Buffalo	<b>HON. TAISHA ST. JEAN TARD *</b> Chair, Economic Development Committee, Erie County Legislature

\* Ex-Officio: members who serve by virtue of their office, either private or public, according to bylaws \*\* Appointed by ILDC Chair II Outgoing

## ECIDA Staff

<b>ATIQA ABIDI</b> Accounting Manager	<b>JOHN CAPPELLINO</b> President & CEO	<b>NOAH CLIFF</b> Business Development Officer
<b>ANDREW FEDERICK</b> Director of Property Development	<b>SOMA HAWRAMEE</b> Compliance Portfolio Manager	<b>LAURIE HENDRIX</b> Administrative Coordinator
<b>CARRIE HOCINIENEC</b> Operations Assistant	<b>TALIA JOHNSON-HUFF</b> Project Manager	<b>BRIAN KRYGIER</b> Director of Information Technology
<b>GRANT LESSWING</b> Director of Business Development	<b>GERALD MANHARD</b> Chief Lending Officer	<b>ROBBIE-ANN McPHERSON</b> Director, Marketing & Communications
<b>MICHELLE MOORE</b> Compliance Associate	<b>BETH O'KEEFE</b> Vice President of Operations	<b>MOLLIE PROFIC</b> Chief Financial Officer
<b>PAT SMITH</b> Bookkeeper, H.R./B.D.A.	<b>DARYL SPULECKI</b> Assistant Loan Manager	<b>LORI SZEWCZYK</b> Director of Grants
	<b>LYNETTE THOMPSON</b> Receptionist	

The ECIDA is a public benefit corporation, and does not receive any operating funds from any tax revenue source. Its operating funds are derived from fees charged to the private for-profit businesses who enter into contracts with the ECIDA. The ECIDA staff are not County, State or City employees.

# 2025 PROJECTS

## ECIDA TAX INCENTIVES

- 1 Benderson Development/ Erie 1 BOCES
- 2 Big Heart Pet Brands, Inc./ The J.M. Smucker Company
- 3 BPS Commissary Kitchen
- 4 Deckorators, Inc.
- 5 Eaton Mission Systems
- 6 Great Lakes Pressed Steel
- 7 IMA Life North America Phase I\*
- 8 IMA Life North America Phase II
- 9 Lactalis American Group\*
- 10 Pfannenberg, Inc.\*
- 11 PG Larkinville, LLC<sup>A</sup>
- 12 Rosina Food Products Company
- 13 Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc.
- 14 Wavepoint 3PL

## ECIDA BOND

- 15 Buffalo Joint Schools Construction Board

## ILDC BOND

- 16 Canisius University Series 2025

## RDC SMALL BUSINESS LOANS

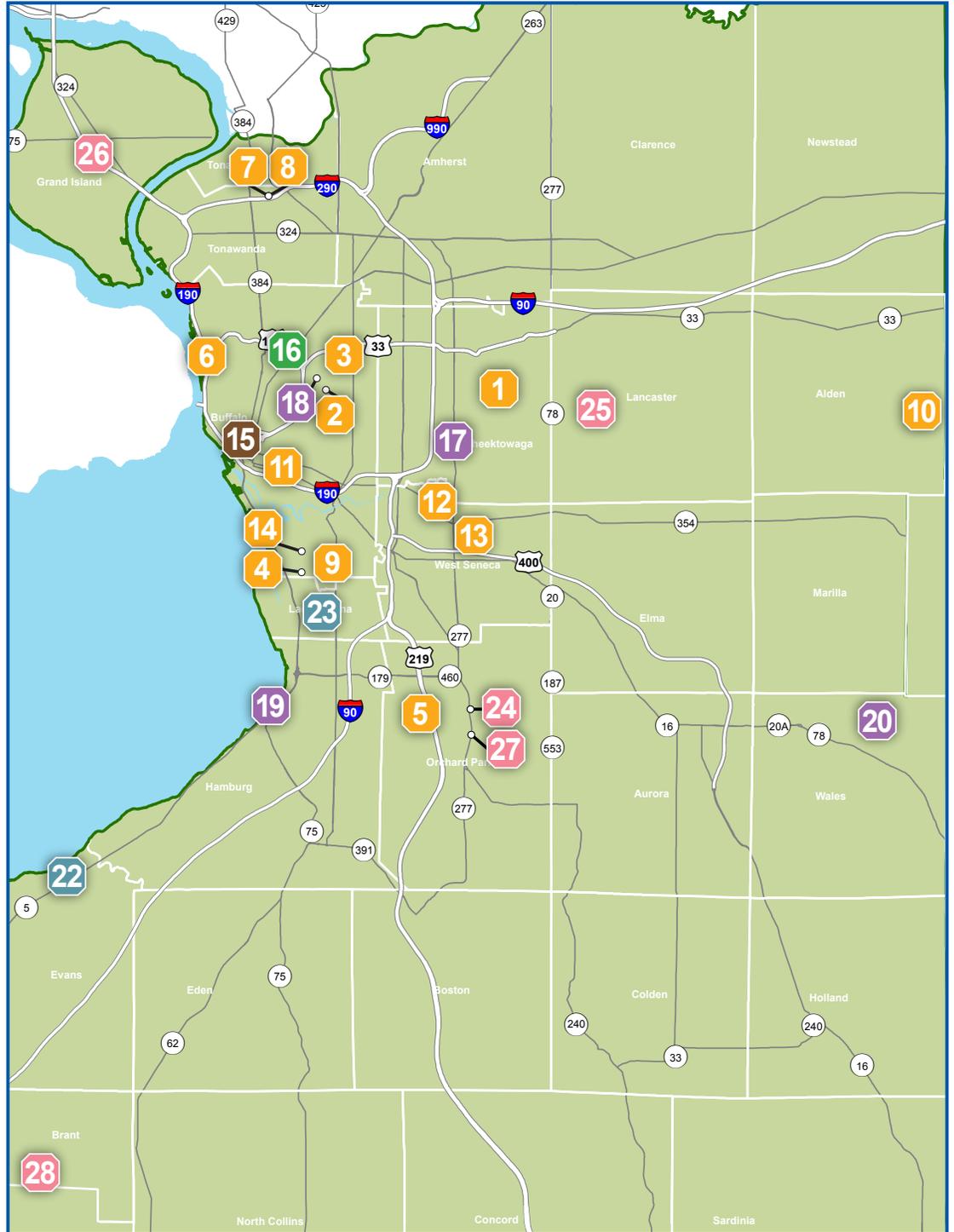
- 17 Five Star Automotive<sup>M</sup>
- 18 Highland Farms Industries
- 19 Johnson's Landing
- 20 Premier Aerospace NY, LLC/ EverFab
- 21 Anything Printed Inc.

## SUMITOMO EMPLOYEE LOAN PROGRAM (SELF)

- 22 Nick & Tiff Music
- 23 WNY Lawn Care

## ILDC/ERIE COUNTY MICROENTERPRISE LOANS

- 24 Aurora Custom Cabinets- Melissa Neri<sup>M</sup>
- 25 Bloomsbury Lane Toy Shoppe<sup>M</sup>
- 26 Full House Home Improvement Consultants, LLC<sup>M</sup>
- 27 Gregory R. Wollen - Chiropractor
- 28 Pro Dock and Door, LLC<sup>M</sup>



\* AMENDATORY INDUCEMENT    <sup>A</sup> ADAPTIVE REUSE    <sup>M</sup> MWBE



The mission of the Erie County IDA is to provide the resources that encourage investment, innovation and international trade - creating a successful business climate that improves the quality of life for the residents of the region.

## Erie County Industrial Development Agency

95 Perry Street, Suite 403 • Buffalo, NY 14203 • (716) 856-6525

For more details about these and other ECIDA projects, access the ECIDA project logs at [www.ecidany.com](http://www.ecidany.com)