



**MEMORANDUM  
COUNTY OF ERIE  
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

**TO:** Mark C. Poloncarz, Erie County Executive  
Maria Whyte, Deputy County Executive

**FROM:** Siobhan Maloney

**DATE:** October 20, 2015

**RE:** Initiatives for a Smart Economy – August 2015 Reports

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In August 2015, departmental staff provided updated reports on the 64 initiatives comprising Initiatives for a Smart Economy. The reporting period is January 2015-July 2015. This memo will summarize the reports and highlight the successes already achieved as well as any areas of concern.

Please refer to the attached spreadsheet for a complete listing of the initiatives and the status of each. A full compilation of the reports is also available for your review.

Completed Initiatives

To date, 15 initiatives have been fully completed, representing 24% of the total. The newly completed initiatives are: 3.24 Niagara River Greenway Funding, 3.43 Food Hub Feasibility Study, and 4.45 Division of Park Rangers – Feasibility.

In Progress Initiatives

41 of 64 initiatives are in progress, representing 64% of the total. There are initiatives in progress in all twelve sectors. 7 of the in-progress initiatives are at least 75% complete so the total number of completed initiatives is expected to increase again substantially within the next six months. 3.34 M/WBE Participation for Ralph Wilson Stadium Project is 99% complete with only the punch list stage remaining, and will likely be completed by the date of next reports. (Seven of the in-progress initiatives are classified as “on-going” or “annual” obligations and are unlikely to ever be classified as completed.)

See the attached spreadsheet for notes on individual projects, including suggestions by initiative supervisors as to how the Administration can help advance projects that may be encountering challenges.

### Initiatives Not Yet Begun

11 initiatives have not yet begun, representing 17% of the total. These initiatives are generally evenly distributed throughout the twelve sectors; however, there are no yet-to-be-started initiatives in Tourism, ECIDA Reform, or Land Development.

### Areas of Concern

There are no areas of concern to report at this time.

### Conclusion

Of the 64 initiatives, a total of 51 (87%) are completed or underway. Substantial progress has been made since the last periodic report and is expected by the next reports, which will be due in January 2016.

**Initiatives for a Smart Economy  
January 2015 Progress**

Initiative Number	Initiative	Complete	In Progress	Not Yet Begun	% complete at last report	% complete at this report	Notes
3.12	Regional Workforce Advancement Center - Buffalo Billion/Advance Buffalo	X			Pilot phase 100% complete, scale up/permanent facility just beginning	100%	WIB is no longer directly involved but stands ready to assist NYS DOL as the department evaluates the successes and failures of the pilot and makes plans for the future.
3.22	Main Street Blight Demolition	X			66%	100%	Three initial projects are complete. Departmental staff will develop additional candidate sites to use appropriate available resources.
3.24	Niagara River Greenway Funding	X			75%	100%	Completed - 7/21/15
3.32	Support of LaunchNY	X			10%	100%	Board approved disbursement of 2014 and 2015 allocation effective January 2015. 2016 allocation expected in January 2016.
3.43	Food Hub Feasibility Study	X			80%	100%	Completed in June 2015, Eden Valley Growers was selected as the Hub.
3.61	Erie County Energy Management Office	X			10%	100%	Energy Officer has been hired and has begun work of drafting an energy plan.
4.11	Implementation of new State law	X			100%	100%	
4.15	ECIDA Move	X			100%	100%	
4.16	New ECIDA CEO	X			100%	100%	
4.17	ECIDA Local Labor Policy	X			100%	100%	
4.21	Economic Development Office in GTA	X			75%	100%	Contract with PSD Global executed 11/1/14.
4.24	EB-5 Capital	X			100%	100%	

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January 2015 Progress**

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4.34.3	3445 River Road, Polymer Applications Site	X			98%	100%	
4.34.5	1815 Eggert Road, abandoned dry cleaner	X			90%	100%	
4.45	Division of Park Rangers-Feasibility	X			0%	100%	Completed 8/3/15 when last of three Rangers started. A consultant was not hired, as originally proposed.
3.11	Academic Building for ECC		X		25%	30%	Article 78 challenge resolved. Architect selection and CM selection expected to be completed in Q1 2015.
3.13	Apprenticeship Law		X		Ongoing	Ongoing	
3.15	Employment Training Resource Guide		X		Annual	Annual	
3.16	Workforce Development Summits		X		Annual	Annual	2015 events focused in two areas: travel/tourism and construction. See report for detailed info.
3.17	Vocational ESL Program		X		5%	10%	Preliminary discussions held to tie in to Travel and Tourism Training program in development at WDC.
3.21	Smart Growth Fund		X		25%	66%	
3.25	Cherry Farm Feasibility Analysis		X		5%	7%	estimated date of project completion is June of 2016
3.31	Niagara Region Ventures Fund		X		75%	85%	50% of necessary funding has been secured.
3.32	Support of LaunchNY		X			60%	Anticipate completion in 2016
3.33	Entrepreneurship Boot camp Event		X		0%	5%	Project not prioritized, expected to begin after reactivation of Niagara Region Venture Fund.
3.34	M/WBE Ralph Wilson Stadium		X		85%	99%	Punch list stage remaining.

Initiatives for a Smart Economy  
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3.41	Agribusiness Park		X		10%	15%	Clark Patterson Lee was selected as the consultant.
3.42	ECIDA Agribusiness Development		X		25%	25%	
3.44	Food Policy Council		X		90%	90%	Strategic plan has been developed, Board of Health has formally adopted as subcommittee. Grant funding has ended, so staff are exploring other funding mechanisms.
3.45	Regional Agricultural Brand		X		20%	20%	NYS Ag & Markets has indicated that regional efforts should be put on hold in light of state efforts. Still awaiting direction from Ag & Markets.
3.51	Downtown Convention Center Feasibility Study		X		10%	10%	Draft RFP prepared.
3.52	VBN Funding Advisory Board		X		10%	10%	
3.62	Interdepartmental Green Team		X		0%	Less than 10%	Project has been funded and staff are working with NYSERDA to develop a final work plan for grant contract.
3.63	Energy Conservation Revolving Loan Program		X		25%	25%	Staff are exploring the risks/rewards of the PACE program as well as opportunities to collaborate with SolarCity.
3.64	WNY Sustainable Business Roundtable		X		50%	50%	Received two years of USEPA grant funding.
3.71	EC International Marketing Campaign		X		0%	33%	ECIDA has organized initial stakeholder efforts and will coordinate an inventory of resources in the international marketing arena.
3.72	Manufacturing Distribution Capacity		x		35%	35%	
3.74	Portageville Road Bridge		X		30%	40%	Final design and engineering complete. Funding is secure.
4.12	Adaptive Reuse Policy		X		20%	20%	High project volume has slowed policy development.
4.13	"But-for" Test		X		10%	15%	High project volume has slowed policy development.

Initiatives for a Smart Economy  
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4.14	Cooperation with Town IDAs		X		50%	Ongoing	Improved collaboration on policy work, especially Senior Housing Policy
4.22	Cross-border influence		X		Ongoing	Ongoing	
4.25	ECIDA International Program		X		50%	75%	Focus on effective marketing of Foreign Trade Zones and collaboration with WTCBN.
4.31	Bethlehem Steel		X		30%	35%	Rail rationalization plan expected to be complete in March 2015. Land acquisition funds awarded in 2014 CFA. Negotiations underway with Tecumseh.
4.32	North Youngmann Commerce Center Industrial Park		X		15%	40%	Construction to resume after winter break.
4.34	Brownfield Remediation		X		Ongoing	85%	Four of five projects are completed and the fifth is 25% complete. Staff will continue to identify additional candidate sites for remediation.
4.42	Buffalo Bills Lease		X		86% (renovations); annual obligations ongoing	100% (renovations); annual obligations ongoing	
4.43	New Stadium Working Group		X		5%	5%	On hold following purchase of team by Pegulas.
4.44	Erie County Parks Master Plan Update and Implementation		X		0%	5%	Funding is secure.
4.51	Lackawanna Wastewater Treatment Plant		X		15%	15%	Awaiting comments on draft final study from NYSDEC.
4.52	Rush Creek Interceptor Project		X		55%	65%	First phase of construction in progress. Second phase bid opening in February 2015.
4.53	Southtowns Advanced Wastewater Treatment Facility		X		10%	10%	

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4.54	Beach Closure Forecasting		X		90%	90%	Weather related delays and technical difficulties lead to need for additional year of data collection to produce workable statistical models. 2015 effort will be scaled back from 2011-2014 work, but still significant. Next milestone is expected to be achieved on 10/30/15
4.34.4	5565 River Road unlicensed landfill		X		25%	25%	Remediation design for brownfield has been completed.
4.57	Buffalo River Habitat and Corridor Public Access		X		0%	35%	
3.14	Employment Resource Coordinating Council			X	0%	0%	Project not prioritized, expected to begin Q3 2015.
3.23	Erie County Complete Streets Policy			X	0%	0%	Project not prioritized, expected to begin June 2015.
3.35	M/WBE ECC STEM Building			X	0%	0%	Contract agreement nearing final stages.
3.46	Agritourism			X	0%	0%	Project not prioritized, expected to begin Q2 2015.
3.65	Feed-in-Tariff Feasibility Study			X	0%	0%	Funding not secured. There seems to be a move away from this initiative by the environmental community as the PSC is working on other ways to promote renewables through REV.
3.66	Climate Smart Communities Coordinator			X	0%	0%	Funding not secured, will apply through 2015 CFA.
3.73	Canadian Pacific Draw Bridge			X	0%	0%	Funding not secured.
4.23	Insourcing Initiatives			X	0%	0%	Project not prioritized.
4.45	Division of Park Rangers-Feasibility			X	0%	0%	Requesting 2016 Operating and Capital Budget support.
4.55	Identification of Beach Bacteria Source			X	0%	0%	Funding not secured.
4.56	Eliminate Bacteria Sources			X	0%	0%	Project dependent on outcome of Initiative 4.55.