

**Oneida County Empire Zone
Development Plan**

**Approved by the Oneida County Zone Administrative Board
October 10, 2006**

**Approved by Empire State Development Corporation
October 17, 2006**

Table of Contents

Section I: Overview – Page 3

Strategic Analysis – Page 3

Designation of Empire Zone Acreage – Page 6

Section II: Goals and Strategies – Page 8

Marketing Strategy – Page 10

Section III: Target Areas/Infrastructure Development – Page 11

Criteria for Determining Distinct and Separate Contiguous Areas – Page 11

Seven Distinct and Separate Contiguous Areas – Page 14

Previously Designated Acreage and Grandfathering Certified Businesses – Page 20

Regionally Significant Projects – Page 20

Inventories of real property located within the proposed Empire Zone that are owned by a municipality or the state and currently unused – Page 21

Summary – Page 22

Section IV: Targeted Businesses – Page 23

Section V: Business Development Assistance and Zone Administration – Page 28

Section VI: Human Resources Development/Training – Page 32

Section VII: Community Development – Page 38

Section VIII: Certification/Cost-Benefit Analysis – Page 39

Cost-Benefit Analysis - Benchmark – Page 41

Qualitative (Non-quantifiable) Factors – Page 43

Certification Process - Page 44

Decertification Processes – Page 44

Section IX: Program Performance Evaluation – Page 45

Section X: Definitions of Terms – Page 46

Appendix A: Zone Designation Mapping – Page 47

Appendix B: Oneida County Industrial Development Agency's criteria to assess the possible inclusion of retail into the Zone – Page 48

Appendix C: Project Narrative and Business Overview – Page 49

Oneida County Empire Zone Development Plan

Section I: Overview

The Oneida County Empire Zone Development Plan presents the strategic basis for how the Zone Administrative Board (hereafter referred to as “ZAB”) will use the Empire Zone Program as a tool to help attract new business, foster business expansion, assist in business retention and revitalize communities impacted by significant job loss. With foreign competition and other factors affecting the regional economy, the ZAB has re-assessed its targeted areas and strategic industries, and will seek to leverage Oneida County’s competitive strengths to fully develop the targeted areas and foster growth within the strategic industries. This Development Plan details how the ZAB identified and allocated Empire Zone acreage, the specific targeted industries, and the steps to be used to assist businesses by integrating the potential Empire Zone benefits with other regional economic development efforts.

Strategic Analysis:

To create the Oneida County Empire Zone Development Plan, the ZAB utilized components from several economic and community development plans and studies, listed below. These studies were sources of information which guided the ZAB in determining where to designate Empire Zone acreage within distinct and separate contiguous areas. A “distinct and separate contiguous area” is defined as a group of contiguous tax parcels identified within a specific location for the purpose of designating land as Empire Zone. The studies were used to define the goals and strategies for economic development and to integrate the Empire Zone Program with other economic development programs throughout the county. The studies utilized are as follows:

1. An Economic Development Strategy for the Oneida County – Herkimer County Region, (Deloitte & Touche Fantus Consulting, in association with Hamilton, Rabinovitz & Alschuler, Inc., March 1997);
2. Herkimer-Oneida Counties Transportation Study, adopted May 2001;
3. Economic Diversification Planning Study for Oneida & Herkimer Counties – Primary Site Inventories (Bergmann Associates and Walker Planning and Design, July 1999), hereafter referred to as the Oneida & Herkimer Counties 12-Site Assessment with amendments;
4. Update to Regional Clusters, a collaboration between Niagara Mohawk and Mohawk Valley EDGE, June 2003;
5. Mohawk Valley EDGE Annual Plan, updated annually;
6. Strategic Economic Development Program of the Mohawk Valley, New York for Mohawk Valley EDGE, February 2004;
7. A Master Reuse Strategy for Griffiss Air Force Base, prepared by Hamilton, Rabinovitz & Alschuler, Inc., January 1995;

8. Comprehensive Plan / Consistency Review for Griffiss Business and Technology Park, (Bergman Associates, August 1997);
9. Griffiss Business & Technology Park – Development Standards, Revision: September 23, 1998, as amended September 30, 1998, as amended February 28, 2001;
10. Economic Impact Analysis of the Air Force Research Lab (“AFRL”)-Rome Research Site and Defense Finance and Accounting Services (“DFAS”) – prepared by Hamilton, Rabinovitz & Alschuler, Inc., July 2005.

During 1996-97, area officials generated an action plan to enhance the economy of the Oneida-Herkimer Counties region and build consensus for appropriate action. The outcome, *An Economic Development Strategy for the Oneida-Herkimer County Region*, (Deloitte & Touche Fantus Consulting in association with Hamilton, Rabinovitz and Alschuler, Inc.) The report recommended the counties focus on these six priority economic development activities:

1. Growing Area Businesses – Making the support and retention of existing businesses a regional priority.
2. Nurturing High-Tech for the Future – Making the support of existing technology businesses and entrepreneurs a priority; maintaining and leveraging Air Force Research Lab/Rome Research Site’s presence in the region; and ensuring a continuous supply of well-trained workers with skills to meet the ever-changing needs of the Air Force Research Lab/Rome Research Site and other technology companies.
3. Education and Labor Force Development – Generating the number and quality of jobs necessary to retain the region’s youth; enhancing coordination between the region’s many educational and training institutions and developing an understanding of the business community’s work force needs; and ensuring the region’s education and training institutions are graduating students who can meet the changing needs of local employers and be knowledgeable workers.
4. Regional Image and Community Development – Developing an enhanced sense of pride and self-confidence in the region; and heightening the region’s profile by creating a strong national and international brand image.
5. Business Attraction – Creating a regional marketing message which clearly demonstrates to investors the potential benefits available by locating in the region; constructing a coordinated economic development network which identifies a primary point of contact for investment candidates; and leveraging a strong business outreach program to attract new investment from those companies without a regional presence, as well as from those already operating in the region.
6. Tourism and the Arts – Creating tourism jobs, attracting consumer spending within the region, and enhancing the region’s overall profile.

The ZAB in consultation with its economic development partners, members of the business community, service organizations and municipal officials, refined the above priority list and identified four priority economic development activities which would provide the greatest opportunities for regional growth:

1. Growing Area Businesses – Supporting and retaining existing businesses.
2. Nurturing High-Tech for the Future – Supporting existing technology businesses and entrepreneurs, and leveraging the Air Force Research Lab/Rome Research site’s presence.
3. Education and Labor Force Development – Creating quality jobs to retain the region’s youth and address local labor needs.
4. Business Attraction – Demonstrating the potential benefits available by investing and locating in the region.

The Update to Regional Clusters, prepared by National Grid and Mohawk Valley EDGE, June 2003, identified five key industrial clusters which continue to present opportunities for growth and expansion:

1. Data Security, Data Retention and Data Redundancy, Software Development, and Information Assurance,
2. Logistics and Distribution,
3. Supporting Aerospace and Aviation,
4. Nanotechnology,
5. Financial, Insurance and Hidden Back Office Industries.

The ZAB will build upon the strengths and assets of Oneida County and concentrate its efforts on promoting economic development within these five clusters.

In addition, the ZAB will nurture development in the following industries which continue to demonstrate viability, even though many face significant international competition:

1. Light and heavy manufacturing, including but not limited to: aerospace, computers and electronics, automotive, flatware, galvanizing, general industrial, metal products, plastic injection molding, powder coating, power generation, value-added agriculture and food processing, wood products and wood processing;
2. Emerging Technologies, defined by New York State Department of Taxation and Finance to be advanced materials and processing technologies, engineering, production and defense technologies, production of electronic and photonic devices and components for use in producing electronic, optoelectronic, mechanical equipment and products of electronic distribution with interactive media content, information and communication technologies, equipment and systems that involve advanced computer software and hardware or remanufacturing technologies;
3. Research and development;
4. Call centers;

5. Warehousing, e-commerce fulfillment centers, third party warehousing and handling services;
6. Printing, lithography and publishing; and
7. Application for real estate holding development projects will be considered only if the applicant can demonstrate that the project will result in job creation and building or land reuse or rehabilitation and lease to qualified businesses.

Utilizing the Update to Regional Clusters, prepared by Niagara Mohawk and Mohawk Valley EDGE, June 2003, the ZAB has identified Oneida County's competitive advantages to attract and expand business and disadvantages which prevent attraction and retention of businesses:

Competitive advantages are:

1. Quality and availability of work force.
2. Low wage scale, even among engineering and information technology jobs.
3. Central location – within a five- (5) hour drive of 60 million people.
4. Attractive development locations and competitive land costs.
5. Proximity to the AFRL – Nearly half of Central New York's \$1.2 billion in research and development funding is tied to AFRL, which is responsible for generating over 2,800 jobs in Central New York.
6. Proximity to numerous higher education institutions.
7. Low housing and food costs.
8. Ease of commuting.

Competitive disadvantages are:

1. High utility costs.
2. High property taxes.
3. High sales taxes.
4. High health insurance and workers' compensation costs.
5. High corporate and personal state income tax structure.
6. Negative perception of climate.

Designation of Empire Zone Acreage:

The amended Empire Zone law of 2005 requires that no more than 1,280 acres (two square miles) of zone lands be contained within up to six distinct and separate contiguous areas. A seventh area may be allowed provided the need can be justified. An analysis of the previously designated Empire Zone acreage currently distributed throughout the county and the Oneida & Herkimer Counties 12-Site Assessment with amendments were used to establish the criteria for the amended Empire Zone designation and to identify the acreage with the highest potential for future development in the chosen industry clusters.

The criteria for designation are:

1. Parcels with significant potential for future development.
2. Parcels with clusters of existing certified businesses that have significant potential for expansion or which are at risk because of international competition.
3. Parcels with vacant or underutilized buildings where reuse of these buildings will have a significant, positive effect within the locality.
4. Parcels in communities with significant job loss, such as Village of Boonville (closure of Ethan Allen furniture manufacturer) and City of Sherrill (downsizing of Oneida Limited flatware manufacturer).
5. Parcels with adequate infrastructure and/or in a municipality willing to commit resources to accommodate development.

Section II: Goals and Strategies

The ultimate goal of the ZAB is to increase the wealth of Oneida County by utilizing the Empire Zone Program as a primary incentive tool integrated with local economic development efforts to attract new business, foster business expansion, assist in business retention and revitalize communities impacted by significant job loss.

Increasing the wealth of the county will not be accomplished by any particular project or group of projects, but by the ripple effect of the projects which generate increases in: disposable income, local spending, suppliers to support the aggregate growth in business needs, and service businesses to support business and consumer needs.

The ZAB established the following goals, strategies and performance measures for utilizing the Empire Zone Program to maximize economic development within the distinct and separate contiguous areas:

Goal #1: Attracting and expanding High-Tech Businesses – By leveraging contacts and relationships with existing High-Tech businesses, the AFRL and the Griffiss Institute (“GI”), the Zone will attract, develop and expand additional technology businesses and entrepreneurs within Areas 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7.

Strategies: Facilitate communications between AFRL and contractors to broaden awareness of quality labor supply and low cost of doing business in the Mohawk Valley:

1. Meet with existing contractors to determine future plans for growth.
2. Meet with AFRL to determine the types of support and contractors needed to sustain operations.
3. Meet with AFRL and GI to determine technology ready for commercial opportunities.
4. Expose technology businesses, entrepreneurs and technology-focused groups to benefits and incentives available within Zone, through meetings, forums and marketing materials.

Performance Measures: Within the next 1-2 years, develop a working relationship with AFRL and its contractors, GI, local high-technology businesses and entrepreneurs.

Within the next 1-2 years, identify technology ready for entry into marketplace.

Within the next 3-5 years, identify support needed to sustain AFRL and existing high-tech businesses.

Within the next 3-5 years, attract two new or assist two existing businesses to establish or expand a permanent presence within Areas 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 or 7.

Goal #2: Education and Workforce Development – Identify and assist Zone certified businesses located within Areas 1-7, who are negatively affected by the lack of skilled workforce.

Strategy: Facilitate communication between Zone certified businesses and educational institutions to develop solutions to workforce issues.

In conjunction with workforce development organizations, expose secondary school and higher education students to the career opportunities available within Zone certified businesses.

Performance Measures: Within 1-2 years, identify current and future workforce needs within Zone certified businesses.

Within 3-5 years, promote career opportunities available in Zone certified businesses to secondary school and higher education students.

Goal #3: Attract industries to Areas 1, 3 and 4 to allow for the development of necessary infrastructure.

Strategy: Meet with Town Supervisors, municipal Planning Boards and School Boards to present the Zone’s goal and explain need for adequate infrastructure to promote and support industrial development.

Determine needs, design, cost and funding sources for infrastructure and improvements.

Utilize PILOT-TIF (Payment-in-Lieu-of-Taxes Program and Tax Increment Financing) to fund public portion of capital requirements.

Performance Measures: Within 1-2 years, meet with Town Supervisors, municipal Planning Boards and School Boards.

Within 1-2 years, perform site evaluations to identify necessary improvements which will support business development.

Within 1-2 years, work in conjunction with local, state and other organizations to create marketing materials to promote these Zone Areas for future development.

Within 3-5 years, Infrastructure will be constructed at these Areas through the attraction of four new business facilities.

Marketing Strategy:

Mohawk Valley EDGE is the county's leader for economic development, marketing the county's assets to encourage investment which leads to job growth at existing businesses and creation or relocation of new companies to the region. EDGE will continue to promote the Empire Zone Program as a major incentive. The ZAB will continue to work closely with all of its economic development partners to promote the Empire Zone Program. The Board's partners include: City of Utica's Empire Zone Coordinator, City of Rome's Empire Zone Coordinator, Herkimer County's Empire Zone Coordinator, Empire State Development Corporation's Regional Office, Oneida County Industrial Development Agency, Rome Industrial Development Corporation, Mohawk Valley Economic Development District, and Workforce Investment Board. Mohawk Valley EDGE, on behalf of the Zone Administrative Board, will include an Empire Zone section on its web site featuring: Oneida County Empire Zone maps, profiles of available Empire Zone lands and buildings, and links to Empire State Development Corporation, Empire Zone program information, and NYS Department of Taxation and Finance's Empire Zone information page.

Section III: Target Areas/Infrastructure Development

The new Empire Zone law allows Oneida County to designate up to 1,280 acres (two square miles) of zone lands, all contained within six distinct and separate contiguous areas. The law allows a seventh area if the need can be justified.

Criteria for Determining Distinct and Separate Contiguous Areas:

The ZAB developed criteria to assess the area in Oneida County that would support activities and projects that would make the greatest contribution to the local economy, support real growth for the area and enhance the wealth of the region. To determine the distinct and separate contiguous areas and to identify acreage with the highest potential for future development in the chosen industry clusters, consideration was given to designated Empire Zone acreage distributed throughout the county and the Oneida & Herkimer Counties 12-Site Assessment.

The criteria for designation are:

1. Parcels with significant potential for future development.
2. Parcels with clusters of existing certified businesses that have significant potential for expansion or which are at-risk due to international competition.
3. Parcels with vacant or underutilized buildings where reuse of these buildings will have a significant, positive effect.
4. Parcels in communities with recent significant job loss, such as Village of Boonville (closure of Ethan Allen furniture manufacturer) and City of Sherrill (downsizing of Oneida Limited flatware manufacturer).
5. Parcels must have adequate infrastructure and/or the municipality is willing to commit resources to accommodate development.

Twenty-six parcels were originally identified and considered for designation by the ZAB. The 26 parcels and the reasons they were considered are:

1. Village of New Hartford, Campion Road, including the New Hartford Shopping Center – contains a significant amount of Empire Zone acreage and a cluster of certified businesses.
2. Town of New Hartford, New Hartford Business Park, Woods Road and Route 5 - identified in the Oneida & Herkimer Counties 12-Site Assessment with amendments, this site has a facility with flexible office and industrial space and additional acreage for further development.
3. Town of New Hartford, Middle Settlement Road – contains two certified businesses, Special Metals and Hartford Insurance, located on a significant amount of Empire Zone acreage. Both businesses meet the criteria for targeted industry clusters originally identified in the Oneida-Herkimer Counties Empire Zone Development Policy (metals, aerospace and insurance back office) and have available acreage for potential expansion.

4. Town of New Hartford, Woods Road, adjacent to the New Hartford Business Park, connecting to the new Judd Road Extension (NYS Route 840).
5. Town of Boonville, Boonville Industrial Park - identified in the Oneida & Herkimer Counties 12-Site Assessment with amendments. This site contains two certified businesses and vacant land, some of which cannot be developed because of identified wetlands.
6. Town and Village of Boonville – Route 12 between Mercer’s Dairy on the north and the Boonville Industrial Park on the south, including the former Ethan Allen property.
7. Town of Sangerfield, Route 20 Corridor interconnecting Routes 8 and 20, including the intersection of Routes 12 and 20.
8. Town of Deerfield, Route 12, Elefante Site, identified in the Oneida & Herkimer Counties 12-Site Assessment with amendments, contains vacant, undeveloped land. There is no electric or gas on site but there are water lines along the parcel’s frontage.
9. City of Sherrill, Sherrill Commons and Sherrill Manufacturing (former Oneida Limited plant) – This site contains 1,000,000 square feet of building fabric which has been transformed into a mixed-use business center for light manufacturing, incubator, warehousing, research and development, and third party warehousing and handling services. Low cost power is available along with additional acreage for future expansion. Significant job loss occurred at this site from the downsizing of Oneida Limited.
10. Village of Boonville – This site contains the former Ethan Allen furniture manufacturing plant. Three buildings have a total of 333,500 square feet available with equipment for a saw mill and wood product manufacturing. Significant job loss occurred at this site with the closure of Ethan Allen, severely impacting the community.
11. City of Rome, Family Dollar Distribution Center site at Griffiss Business and Technology Park - identified in the Oneida & Herkimer Counties 12-Site Assessment with amendments.
12. Town of Whitestown, Oneida County Airport West - identified in the Oneida & Herkimer Counties 12-Site Assessment with amendments, this site contains undeveloped acreage owned by Oneida County and private individuals. Over the past four years there has been no known interest in developing this site. The size of site and lack of infrastructure eliminates this site from consideration for a distinct and separate contiguous area but at a later date, may meet the criteria for Regionally Significant Project.
13. Town of Whitestown, Oneida County Airport Business Park (formerly known as the Oneida County Airport Industrial Park) – contains numerous certified businesses and an abundance of acreage for future development. Conveniently located near the villages of Oriskany and Westmoreland, between Utica and Rome, with direct access to New Hartford on the new Route 840 (Judd Road Extension).
14. Town of Whitestown, Oneida County Airfield – The county airport operations, located at this 2,000-acre site, will shift to Griffiss AirPark in

2007. A re-use study is under way for the development of this site. This parcel will not be ready for development until the spring of 2007.
15. Town of Whitestown, Utica Corp. site, between Gibson Road and Judd Road - identified in the Oneida & Herkimer Counties 12-Site Assessment with amendments.
 16. Town of Whitestown, Halsey Road – contains three certified businesses, Oneida Research Services, Prevalere Life Sciences, and Tect Utica. There is plenty acreage available for development.
 17. Town of Whitestown, corner of Judd and Halsey Roads – The construction of the new Route 840 (Judd Road Extension) connecting Routes 5, 8 and 12 in the Town of New Hartford to the Oneida County Airport Business Park, makes these four corners attractive and accessible for development. The area has been re-zoned to attract targeted industries and strategic clusters.
 18. Town of Remsen, Route 12 Pritchard Road – contains an abundance of land close to good sources of wood for wood products manufacturing, and close to numerous dairy farms, which are sources of milk and beef cattle. The Remsen Development Council is seeking planning assistance to reassess sites to accommodate food processing facilities.
 19. Town of Marcy, Chip Fab Site – a 280-acre, Greenfield site on the campus of the State University of New York Institute of Technology (“SUNYIT”). This site is zoned for planned development, high technology development and is ready to support the semiconductor industry. This location is marketed for a semi-conductor facility as part of the region’s effort under New York State’s SEMI-NY Program.
 20. Town of Kirkland, Robinson Road – This may be an attractive site once public water supply is available.
 21. Town of Kirkland, Route 12B - J.H. Rhodes wishes to upgrade, expand and build a 50,000-square-foot facility to accommodate cost-efficient equipment.
 22. Town of Whitestown, Village of Yorkville – The former Bonide Chemical facility has been vacant for several years and currently is under a purchase contract with an adjacent manufacturing company.
 23. Town of Whitestown, Village of New York Mills, Commercial Drive, commercial district – contains a cluster of certified businesses which are identified as targeted industry clusters by the ZAB.
 24. Town of Marcy, Benton Road - identified in the Oneida & Herkimer Counties 12-Site Assessment with amendments, this 126.6 acres is zoned agriculture.
 25. Town of Marcy, Becker Road - identified in the Oneida & Herkimer Counties 12-Site Assessment with amendments.
 26. Town of Westmoreland I-90 Interchange Site - identified in the Oneida & Herkimer Counties 12-Site Assessment with amendments. No infrastructure is available to support development.

Ten out of the above twenty-six identified parcels were selected:

1. Parcel 2 - Town of New Hartford, New Hartford Business Park, Woods Road and Route 5.
2. Parcel 3 - Town of New Hartford, Middle Settlement Road (Special Metals and Hartford Insurance).
3. Parcel 9 - City of Sherrill, Sherrill Commons and Sherrill Manufacturing (former Oneida Limited plant).
4. Parcel 10 - Village of Boonville (former Ethan Allen furniture manufacturing plant).
5. Parcel 11 - City of Rome, Family Dollar Distribution Center site at the Griffiss Business and Technology Park.
6. Parcel 13 -Town of Whitestown, Oneida County Airport Business Park (formerly known as the Oneida County Airport Industrial Park).
7. Parcel 15 - Town of Whitestown, Utica Corp. site, between Gibson Road and Judd Road.
8. Parcel 16 - Town of Whitestown, Halsey Road (Oneida Research Services, Prevalere Life Sciences, and Tect Utica).
9. Parcel 17 - Town of Whitestown, corner of Judd and Halsey Roads
10. Parcel 23 - Town of Whitestown, Village of New York Mills, Commercial Drive, commercial district.

Seven Distinct and Separate Contiguous Areas were incorporated from the above 10 sites:

Area 1 (Judd Road – Parcels 15, 16 and 17 - 371.7 acres):

- a. This area includes existing Empire Zone businesses and acreage including Oneida Research Services; Prevalere Life Sciences; 9.2 ± acres of developable land adjacent to Prevalere Life Sciences; Tect Utica; the Utica Corp. Site (14.3 acres of developable land adjacent to Tect Utica) and .092 acres owned by Joseph P. Cifarelli. This cluster of currently certified businesses employs 280 people.
- b. The construction of the new State Highway 840 extends Judd Road from the Oneida County Airport Business Park to the commercial district of New Hartford. The intersection of Judd and Halsey Roads has become a highly visible four corners for commercial and industrial development.
- c. The developable acreage in this area was recently re-zoned by the Town of Whitestown for commercial and industrial uses, greatly enhancing the potential for future development.
- d. This area is a collection of various parcels which have easy access to and from a great number of other businesses, suppliers, vendors and the local employment base. The area is in close proximity to major state highways (840, 5, 8, 12 & 233), county roads, and the New York State Thruway (I-90).
- e. The northwestern, western and southern parcels of this area, west of Judd Road and south of Halsey Road, are zoned for commercial use, including

research and development, back office, warehousing and storage, printing, lithography, or publishing, manufacturing and food processing, all targeted industries and strategic clusters identified by the ZAB, making this area a strong candidate for a multi-tenant business park. The southeastern portion of this area, at the intersection of Halsey and Clark Mills Roads, is headquarters for two zone certified research and development businesses.

- f. The Utica Corp. site, in the eastern portion of the proposed area, between Gibson Road and Judd Road, was identified in the Oneida & Herkimer Counties 12-Site Assessment with amendments and included in the original Oneida-Herkimer Counties Empire Zone designation of 1999.
- g. The eastern portion of the area, east of Judd Road and north of Halsey Road, is zoned for manufacturing, and a portion is occupied by a zone certified manufacturer, Tect Utica.
- h. Public water is available on both Judd and Halsey Roads.
- i. Although not specified within the Town of Whitestown zoning definitions, uses for these parcels may include distribution operations, logistics providers and e-commerce fulfillment centers.

Area 2 (Griffiss – Parcel 11 – 86.8 acres):

- a. Family Dollar Services, Inc. purchased this 86.8-acre site and constructed a 907,000-square-foot distribution center to employ 460 people. The potential Empire Zone Program benefits were vital components in leading the company to this decision.
- b. This prime location is a warehouse and distribution center which the ZAB has identified as a targeted industry and is a hub within a transportation system connecting this distribution center to 60 million potential customers within a five-hour drive. The indirect benefits of this project include substantial taxes paid to local municipalities, locally purchased construction materials, improved roadways and utilities within Griffiss Business and Technology Park and increased disposable income within the county. The goal of this area is to maximize the employment at the facility and assist in any future expansions.
- c. The City of Rome had insufficient available acreage to include this site in its Empire Zone. In a contractual agreement between Family Dollar Services, Mohawk Valley EDGE, Griffiss Local Development Corporation and Oneida County Industrial Development Agency, executed on June 15, 2005, EDGE agreed to “use its best efforts to take all action necessary to maintain the current status of the Empire Zone boundaries as they relate to or affect the Family Dollar Site so that Family Dollar can maintain its eligibility for all benefits currently available through the Empire Zone.” On the advice of EDGE legal counsel, the contractual obligations of the June 15, 2005, agreement created another compelling reason to keep this parcel within the highest level of Empire Zone designation available.

- d. The continued Empire Zone designation at this location will accommodate any future business expansion by Family Dollar or any future owner of the site, which could not be accommodated under the “grandfathering” provision of the law.
- e. Utilities available to this site include public water and sewer, electric, gas, steam and fiber optic service.

Area 3 (Oneida County Airport Business Park -Parcel 13 – 449.7 acres):

- a. Located in the Town of Whitestown, conveniently situated between the cities of Utica and Rome, this area contains approximately 320 acres with infrastructure for immediate development. Targeted businesses include “traded” industrial, distribution, agricultural, back-office, financial and insurance uses.
- b. This area captures a diverse mix of Empire Zone certified businesses, the majority conforming to the ZAB’s targeted industries and strategic clusters, along with highly developable land to accommodate new development or expansion.
- c. The certified businesses currently located in the business park participate in the following industries: manufacturing, electronics, communications, financial, insurance, back office, commercial printing, and powder coating. All of these industries are targeted by the ZAB and all are vulnerable to international competition. This cluster of businesses employs 2,000 people.
- d. The targeted industries and uses for the Oneida County Airport Business Park correspond with Town of Whitestown zoning.
- e. The Oneida County Airport Business Park is located eight miles from Griffiss Business and Technology Park and the future site of the Oneida County Airport.
- f. A major factor in attracting future development in the Oneida County Airport Business Park is the easy access to the New York State Thruway (I-90) Interchange 32; Route 233 from the Village of Clinton to Westmoreland and Rome; the Judd Road Extension (Route 840) to New Hartford; Route 49, east to Utica and Route 365, Interchange 33, west to Verona and Oneida.
- g. Infrastructure includes public water and sewer, electric, natural gas and fiber optic service. The Mohawk Valley Water Authority has plans to implement increased water storage capacity at the Oneida County Airport Business Park. Financing opportunities are currently being investigated.
- h. Lands not to be included:
 - 1) A portion of the Bank of New York parcel (17 ± acres) was not included because of a low likelihood of development by the current owner or adjacent businesses.
 - 2) Another portion of land, owned by Oneida County, (14 ± acres to the northerly portion of a 66.4 ± tax parcel) cannot be developed

and a natural boundary (drainage ditch) was used to define the proposed area for designation.

Area 4 (New Hartford – Parcels 2 and 3 – 222.1 acres):

- a. This area, located in the Town of New Hartford, includes the New Hartford Business Park, Woods Road, Route 5 and Middle Settlement Road, and consists of a concentration of certified businesses and open acreage immediately available for development, and is identified in the Oneida & Herkimer Counties 12-Site Assessment with amendments. This area has easy access to Route 5 west to Syracuse and east to Utica, and is a short distance from the New York State Thruway Interchange 32.
- b. The New Hartford Business Park is home to the PAR Technology Industrial Park.
- c. The PAR Technology Industrial Park contains several certified businesses which are targeted by the ZAB.
- d. Located in the heart of a predominately retail district, this area offers a prime, visible and highly accessible location for technology, research and development, back office and light industrial.
- e. Infrastructure includes public water and sewer, electric, natural gas and fiber optic service. A high traffic count on Route 5 (Seneca Turnpike) may require additional traffic controls.
- f. The certified businesses located in the business park participate in electronics manufacturing and check processing for financial institutions (back office), both targeted by the Zone Administrative Board. Electronics manufacturing is vulnerable to international competition. This cluster of businesses employs 362 people.
- g. Approximately 44 acres are available in the northern most portion of the park with adjacent infrastructure along Woods Road sufficient to support future development.
- h. Targeted development includes research and development, back office and light manufacturing, which will complement the existing businesses while not impacting residential neighborhoods to the northwest and southeast.
- i. Middle Settlement Road contains Empire Zone acreage and two certified businesses, Special Metals Corporation and The Hartford Insurance, industries targeted by the ZAB (metals, aerospace and insurance back office). Combined employment totals 1,075 people.
- j. The parcel adjacent to Special Metals is occupied by insurance, back office operations of The Hartford Insurance. This parcel has ample acreage with adequate infrastructure for potential future development.
- k. Lands not to be included - A man-made border (drainage ditch) located on the Special Metal's tax parcel was used to separate the designated area from land which cannot be developed.

Area 5 (New York Mills – Parcel 23 – 31.6 acres):

- a. This area, located in the Town of Whitestown, Village of New York Mills, contains a concentration of certified businesses, the majority participating in metal and electrical manufacturing but based on square footage, the largest business is a commercial printer. Combined, the six certified businesses in this Area employ 267 people.
- b. These value-added, certified businesses are locally owned and need the Empire Zone benefits to continue to invest, expand and compete in their respective global markets. All of these manufacturing and printing businesses are vulnerable to international competition.
- c. This area has easy access to the New York State Thruway Interchange 32, to Route 49 to Utica and Rome, to Route 5, to the new Judd Road Extension (Route 840), and to Route 69 to Utica, Oriskany and Rome.
- d. Infrastructure includes public water and sewer, electric and natural gas. This area also has rail access.

Area 6 (Sherrill – Parcel 9 – 102.0 acres):

- a. Located in the City of Sherrill, the smallest city in New York State, Oneida Limited, an internationally known flatware manufacturer, was one of Oneida County's largest employers. This 102-acre area consists of Oneida Limited's former main manufacturing plant (now known as Sherrill Commons), an adjacent parcel with a fully operational warehouse and vacant land just southeast of the main plant.
- b. Oneida Limited stopped producing flatware in the first quarter of 2005, and released approximately 440 employees from its payroll. Lower cost production capabilities in China forced the company to shift 85 percent of its production off-shore. This move was a significant blow to the area.
- c. Sherrill Commons, formerly known as the main plant of Oneida Limited, was purchased by Sherrill Manufacturing Inc., which is a certified business. Sherrill Manufacturing and Oneida Limited occupy 600,000 square feet of Sherrill Commons, and 400,000 square feet has been transformed into a mixed-use business center, which can easily serve the needs of a variety of businesses. Sherrill Commons is uniquely positioned to provide space for light manufacturing, warehousing, research and development and third party warehousing and handling services.
- d. Adjacent to Sherrill Commons is Oneida Limited's zone certified warehouse, a 210,000-square-foot building on 23 acres. The future of Oneida Limited's operations in the United States remains turbulent. Transportation costs may require the realignment of Oneida Limited's U.S. distribution operations, justifying the need for this Empire Zone designation to provide incentives to potential buyers or tenants of this facility.
- e. Approximately 4.5 acres, located just southeast of Sherrill Commons on Route 5, are available for development to complement operations at Sherrill Commons. Adjacent infrastructure along Route 5 is more than sufficient to support future development.

- f. This area is 30 miles east of Syracuse and 15 miles west of Utica/Rome. The property is south of the New York State Thruway Interchange 33, which connects Sherrill with Boston to the east, New York City to the south and Buffalo to the west.
- g. In addition to potential Empire Zone benefits and the Oneida County Industrial Development Agency PILOT program, this area offers three-cent per kilowatt hour municipal power (more than 80 percent less than electrical rates throughout the county), making this area very attractive for business development.

Area 7 (Boonville – Parcel 10 – 14.5 acres):

- a. This seventh distinct and separate contiguous area, located in the Village of Boonville, warrants Empire Zone designation as a result of the sudden closure of Boonville's major employer, Ethan Allen furniture manufacturing, which displaced 109 residents of the Town of Boonville.
- b. On April 19, 2004, Ethan Allen announced it would lay off 300 employees. Although outsourcing furniture manufacturing has been practiced over the past 30 years, the closure of this plant had not been disclosed to the public prior to this announcement and was a significant blow to the area. The former Ethan Allen employees were forced to commute to new jobs outside of their locality, accept jobs with lower pay scales or in unrelated fields, or accept unemployment benefits.
- c. The Ethan Allen manufacturing facility, on 14.54 acres, is close to quality sources of both hard and soft woods and is equipped for immediate re-use for wood processing and wood product manufacturing.
- d. The facility can support one major business or several smaller tenants and offers easy access to highway infrastructure (Routes 12, 26 and 46) for trucking.
- e. The manufacturing facility includes the 310,000-square-foot main building, equipped with 3-phase electric, dust collectors and blowers, air compressors, air-exchange, wood fired steam boilers and five loading docks; a second 8,500-square-foot building containing a fully operational sawmill, capable of producing 16,000 to 18,000 board feet per eight-hour shift; and a 15,000-square-foot building with five computer controlled kilns with 40,000 board feet capacity per kiln.
- f. Infrastructure includes municipal power (between three and four cents per kilowatt hour), public water and sewer.
- g. The designation of this seventh distinct and separate contiguous area will provide needed incentives for the redevelopment of a former, certified furniture manufacturing plant. This designation is needed to help revitalize the economy of a community affected by the closure of a significant employer and the displacement of highly skilled workers.

Maps of the Seven Distinct and Separate Contiguous Areas are located in Appendix A.

Previously Designated Acreage and Grandfathering Certified Businesses:

In preparing this Development Plan and identifying the Zone's seven distinct and separate contiguous areas, the ZAB recognized acreage, parcels or buildings which would not be included within the specified areas. Zone certified businesses residing outside of the distinct and separate contiguous areas will remain certified and eligible for benefits as allowed under the "grandfathering" provision of the new Empire Zone law.

In general, certified businesses located outside of the Seven Distinct and Separate Contiguous Areas were not included because:

1. There was not enough Zone acreage available to accommodate such lands.
2. These locations were too remote to include without use of "stringers."
3. There was no appreciable commercial activity or capital improvement initiated within two years of the original Empire Zone designation.
4. The existing and future uses will be retail in nature, which is not an eligible industry for certification within this Development Plan.

The City of Rome's Empire Zone Administrative Board has included 156.1 acres of land located at Griffiss Business and Technology Park, formerly designated within the Oneida-Herkimer Empire Zone, into its Empire Zone. This acreage, which will now be included within an Investment Zone, will provide the existing certified businesses eligibility to claim enhanced benefits not offered within a Development Zone. In addition, the Rome Empire Zone will offer certification to a broad range of businesses which may otherwise not have chosen Griffiss Business and Technology Park as a place to invest in and operate.

In addition to the acreage at Griffiss Business and Technology Park being encompassed into the City of Rome Zone, several parcels were excluded from designation because the business never applied for certification as provided within the 2005 Empire Zone legislation; designation may be removed if there has been no appreciable commercial activity or capital improvement within two years of designation. Parcels include: the Chip Fab site in Marcy; Titan Home Manufacturing in Sangerfield; Town of New Hartford sites including New Hartford Post Office, Smurfit Stone, Jefferson Smurfit Corp., XL Realty, Williams Tool, Pharmhouse; Fraternal Composite in Yorkville; Jet Sew Corporation in Barneveld; Mid-State Raceway Inc. in Vernon; Beaton Industrial in Marcy; and Steffen Publishing and Oneida County Rural Telephone Co. in Holland Patent.

Regionally Significant Projects

With the passage of the 2005 Empire Zone Legislation, a Zone may identify a project located outside of its Distinct and Separate Contiguous Areas as a Regionally Significant Project ("RSP"). An RSP is defined as: a manufacturer creating 50 jobs; an agri-business or high tech or biotech business investing \$10 million and creating 20 jobs; a financial or

insurance services company; a distribution center creating 300 jobs; clean energy research and development enterprises or other projects defined by ESD via rules and regulations.

Of the 26 parcels identified in Oneida County for Zone consideration, five parcels are likely to be developed for businesses that would meet the criteria for RSP. The five parcels are:

- 1) Parcel 19 - Town of Marcy, Chip Fab Site – a 280-acre, greenfield site on the campus of the State University of New York Institute of Technology. This site is zoned for planned development, high technology development and is ready to support the semiconductor industry. Environmental review, title search, property survey, and preliminary permitting is in place. The area has an abundance of land, surplus public water, redundant power supply, a transportation network and meets strict interference electro-magnetic and vibrations standards for high-tech manufacturing. This location is marketed for a semi-conductor facility as part of the region’s effort under the Governor’s SEMI-NY Program.
- 2) Parcel 12 - Town of Whitestown, Oneida County Airport West - this site contains 251 ± undeveloped acreage owned by Oneida County and private individuals. The Oneida County Airport Business Park and the Oneida County Airfield are both adjacent to this site on the east. This site is zoned A-M (Airport Manufacturing) and has limited infrastructure.
- 3) Parcel 14 - Town of Whitestown, Oneida County Airfield – The county airport, located at this 900-acre site, will shift to Griffiss Business and Technology Park in 2007. This site is currently zoned A-M (Airport Manufacturing) and will require some infrastructure upgrades. Once the site is available for development it will be a prime site for an RSP.
- 4) Parcel 26 - Town of Westmoreland I-90 Interchange Site – this parcel consisting of 89 ± acres is located west of the NYS Thruway Exit 32 off Route 233. No infrastructure is available to support development but can be put in place.
- 5) Parcel 18 - Town of Remsen, Route 12 and Pritchard Road – contains an abundance of land close to good sources of wood for wood products manufacturing, and close to numerous dairy farms, which are sources of milk and beef cattle.

Inventories of real property located within the proposed Empire Zone that are owned by a municipality or the state and currently unused:

Area 1 – (Judd Road)

Tax parcel 304.000-1-63, owned by the Town of Whitestown.

Area 3 – (Oneida County Business Park)

Tax parcel 290.000-2-24, owned by Oneida County.

Portion of tax parcel 290-000-2-61 (northeast-corner intersection of Airport and Judd Roads) owned by Oneida County.

Summary:

Historically, Oneida County has relied heavily on manufacturing and government employment. Since the early 1960s, the region has seen a major decline in employment in both of these sectors which has resulted in the loss of high-paying jobs, abundance of vacant buildings, emigration of workers to southern and western states, and shrinkage in the tax base. Empire Zone designation, in combination with other economic development programs, marketing programs and local community efforts, can revitalize Oneida County with real growth as measured by job growth, property investment, disposable income and net wealth. The areas identified for zone designation are properties available for development which can support new business entries to the County and help strengthen viable local value-added businesses with expansion plans. Empire Zone designation will enhance the ability to attract new industries to Oneida County and can be a deciding factor in a business's final decision as to where to locate or expand. Empire Zone designation will have an immense impact in the future economic development throughout Oneida County.

Section IV: Targeted Businesses

Over the last six years, collectively working with the Mohawk Valley Economic Development Team, regional business partners, such as National Grid, workforce development partners, and other service organizations the ZAB has identified the following five Strategic Industry Clusters which have and will continue to grow and foster by building upon the strengths and assets of Oneida and surrounding counties:

1. Data Security, Data Retention and Data Redundancy, Software Development, and Information Assurance,
2. Logistics and Distribution,
3. Supporting Aerospace and Aviation
4. Nanotechnology,
5. Financial and Insurance and Hidden Back Office Industries.

Priority consideration will be given to certify those businesses involved in the above identified industry clusters, as well as suppliers, vendors and major customers to these businesses, provided each project fits the criteria of this Development Plan. In addition to examining the industry potential, the ZAB will consider the highest and best use of Empire Zone designated acreage in order to maximize future re-use potential. Basis for identifying the six industrial clusters are:

1) Data Security, Data Retention and Data Redundancy; Software Development, and Information Assurance – Assets within the region to support this cluster include: accessible locations, presence of the Griffiss Institute for Information Assurance at Griffiss Business and Technology Park, shovel ready sites, existing buildings, abundant availability of utilities (redundant power), and communication infrastructure with T-1 bandwidth. Liabilities which impede progress in this cluster include the perception of bad weather, high local and state taxes, and rusty image. 250 jobs are projected through 2012. Growth in this industry cluster is supported by the knowledge base of local partners, such as: Air Force Research Laboratory, Griffiss Institute, TelCove, AT&T, MCI, Northland Communications, Verizon, Sprint, Time Warner, and others. Local higher education facilities can provide a skilled work force to support labor demands.

2) Logistics and Distribution – The assets available to boost this industrial cluster include Foreign Trade Zone, shovel ready sites, affordable and productive labor force, abundant utilities, and accessibility to major transportation infrastructure (interstate highway, airports and railroads). Liabilities which impede progress in this cluster include the perception of bad weather, high local and state taxes, and transportation costs. 500 jobs are projected through 2012. Growth in this industry is supported by continuing partnerships with New York State Department of Transportation, Genesee Valley Transportation, CSX, New York Susquehanna and Western Railroad, FedEx, DHL, and UPS. Locations adjacent to interstate highways and primary state and county routes make certain sites attractive for development and investment.

3) Supporting Aerospace and Aviation – Griffiss Business and Technology Park provides numerous assets, including infrastructure, an 11,820-foot-long, well maintained operational runway, hundreds of acres of developable land, existing hangars, low cost electric, abundant public water supply, skilled work force, the presence of a wide body aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul facility, and the future relocation of the Oneida County Airport. These assets will attract businesses involved in, or in support of the aviation industry. Liabilities which impede progress in this cluster include the perception of bad weather, old buildings and the relocation of the County Airport. 500 jobs are projected through 2012. Organizations that assist in the development of this cluster include New York State Department of Transportation, FAA, GLDC, Oneida County, and Empire State Development Corporation. In support of aviation, the Oneida County Airport Business Park and the Judd Road area make premier locations for development.

4) Nanotechnology – Assets essential to this industry include abundance of land and public water, quality transportation network, and redundant power supply. Liabilities which impede progress in this cluster include the perception of: overall higher cost of building a facility in the United States vs. a foreign location, bad weather, high local, state and federal taxes and rusty image. 250 jobs are projected through 2012. The SUNYIT site in Marcy is zoned for this industry and locations at the Oneida County Airport Business Park, the Judd Road Areas, New Hartford and Sherrill Areas are desirable locations that can house spin off businesses of this industry cluster because of significant available acreage, buildings for re-use and infrastructure.

5) Financial, Insurance and Hidden Back Office Industries – The Utica-Rome MSA is an active hub of national financial and insurance operations, such as Utica National, Metropolitan Life Insurance, Bank of New York, Bank of America, Federal Reserve Center, The Hartford Insurance, and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (“DFAS”) in the City of Rome Empire Zone. Assets include a skilled, knowledgeable and reliable work force, shovel ready sites, accessible locations, communication infrastructure with T-1 bandwidth, and redundant power. Liabilities which impede progress in this cluster include the perception of high cost of utilities, bad weather, high local and state taxes and rusty image. 300 jobs are projected through 2012. Opportunities to help national companies vertically integrate operations will help further expand growth within this cluster. In support of this cluster, the Oneida County Airport Business Park, the Judd Road and New Hartford Areas make premier locations for business development.

In addition, the ZAB will nurture development in the following industries which continue to demonstrate viability, even though many face international competition:

1. Light and heavy manufacturing, including but not limited to: aerospace, computer and electronics, automotive, flatware, galvanizing, general industrial, metal products, plastic injection molding, powder coating, power generation, value-added agriculture and food processing, wood products and wood processing,

2. Emerging Technologies (advanced materials and processing technologies; engineering, production, and defense technologies; production of electronic, optoelectronic, mechanical equipment and products of electronic distribution with interactive media content; information and communication technologies, equipment and systems that involve advanced computer software and hardware or remanufacturing technologies),
3. Research and development,
4. Call centers,
5. Warehousing, e-commerce fulfillment centers, third party warehousing and handling services,
6. Printing, lithography and publishing.

All types of manufacturing, call centers, as well as printing, lithography and publishing are deemed “at-risk” industries primarily because all are labor intensive and the lower cost of doing business abroad continues to threaten Oneida County’s ability to attract and retain these employers. The ZAB will focus all efforts in utilizing the Empire Zone benefits to maintain, if not expand, a viable base of employers within these categories.

Businesses and sectors **excluded** from this development policy are retail establishments, professional service firms (legal, medical, banks, hospitals and nursing homes) commercial services and personal services. In certain circumstances, the ZAB will use the Oneida County Industrial Development Agency’s criteria to assess the possible inclusion of retail into the Zone. See Appendix B for criteria. The ZAB will ask the Oneida County Industrial Development Agency’s legal counsel to provide an opinion of the qualifications of any proposed project in the Empire Zone.

The ZAB will continue to consult with the Regional Empire State Development Corporation office to track business clusters which the ZAB seeks to attract or retain, using Empire Zone incentives as a business attraction mechanism.

Six of the Seven Distinct and Separate Contiguous Areas presented below require significant capital investment to fully develop and utilize the acreage or facilities. The potential incentives from the Empire Zone Program are critical in enticing a business to invest in Oneida County. The strategy for maximizing the wealth of the county is focused on the development of these seven specified areas:

- 1) **Area 1 (Judd Road – 371.7 acres):** The construction of the new State Highway 840 extends Judd Road to connect the Oneida County Airport Business Park with the commercial district of New Hartford and junctions of NY State Routes 5, 8, 12 and future connection to Route 233. This new Judd Road corridor has a large concentration of developable acreage, and recent re-zoning makes this area a candidate for research and development, back office operations, call centers, manufacturing, food processing, warehousing, distribution operations, logistics providers, e-commerce fulfillment centers, printing, lithography, and publishing, all of which are targeted industries.

- 2) **Area 2 (Griffiss – 86.8 acres):** Family Dollar Services Inc. purchased this 86.8-acre site and constructed a 907,000-square-foot distribution center to employ 460 people. The potential Empire Zone Program benefits were vital in leading the company to this decision. This prime location is a hub within a transportation system connecting this distribution center to 60 million potential customers, all within a five-hour drive. The indirect benefits of this project include substantial taxes paid to local municipalities, locally purchased construction materials, improved roadways and utilities in Griffiss Business and Technology Park, and increased disposable income in the county. The goal is to maximize the employment at the facility and assist in any future expansion efforts.
- 3) **Area 3 (Oneida County Airport Business Park – 449.7 acres):** This 320-acre business park is conveniently situated between the cities of Utica and Rome. It has complete infrastructure (water, sewer, electric, gas and fiber optic sonet-rings) for immediate development for “traded” manufacturing, industrial, distribution, agricultural, back office, financial and insurance uses. Infrastructure and developable land can accommodate any expansion or new construction.
- 4) **Area 4 (New Hartford – 222.1 acres):** This area is a combination of two strategic development sites, both with expansion potential:
 1. The New Hartford Business Park, Woods Road and Route 5, which includes the PAR Technology Industrial Park, is located in the heart of a predominately retail district, offering a prime, visible and highly accessible location for technology, research and development, back office and light industrial.
 - 2) Middle Settlement Road, which is the location of a metals manufacturer serving the aerospace and power generation industries, and an insurance back office operation.
- 5) **Area 5 (New York Mills – 31.6 acres):** This area is an industrial corridor with certified, value-added businesses operating in at-risk industries, including commercial publishing, sign manufacturing, galvanizing and powder coating. The Empire Zone Program will help encourage investment to increase productivity, retain employment, reduce operating expenses and improve overall global competitiveness.
- 6) **Area 6 (Sherrill – 102.0 acres):** The goal in this area is to continue supporting the redevelopment of vacant and underutilized Empire Zone property formerly occupied by a flatware manufacturer, and to develop 4.5 acres of additional, available land.
- 7) **Area 7 (Boonville – 14.5 acres):** The goal of this area is to provide incentives for the redevelopment of a former furniture manufacturing plant, previously occupied by a certified business. Located close to quality sources of hard and soft woods, this plant is equipped for immediate re-use for wood processing and wood product manufacturing. This facility can support one major business or several smaller tenants. Continued Empire Zone designation of this site will help revitalize a

community impacted by the closure of this plant and displacement of highly skilled workers.

Maps of the Seven Distinct and Separate Contiguous Areas are located in Appendix A.

Section V: Business Development Assistance and Zone Administration

As a result of the regional economic development strategy devised by area officials in 1997, Mohawk Valley EDGE (EDGE) has coordinated the economic development efforts for Oneida County and is designated by the County of Oneida to administer the Oneida County Empire Zone Program. EDGE recognizes that the Zone Program is a significant resource that must be used in conjunction with other agencies and organizations and other programs in the region to attract and retain businesses in Oneida County.

EDGE works closely with the Mohawk Valley Economic Development Team and holds monthly meetings to discuss the region's business performance and potential projects. Efforts include an extensively coordinated visitation program to businesses, including Empire Zone businesses. Representatives include the Zone Coordinators from the Cities of Utica and Rome and the Counties of Oneida and Herkimer, Regional New York State Empire State Development, Mohawk Valley Economic Development District, Mohawk Valley Applied Technology Corporation, Rome Industrial Development Corporation, Herkimer County Industrial Development Agency, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Workforce Investment Board, New York State Department of Labor, and National Grid.

Oneida County Industrial Development Agency (OCIDA) provides taxable and tax-exempt financing options for eligible bond projects located within Oneida County. The IDA bonding capabilities are, and will be, presented to Empire Zone businesses as a financing mechanism. Manufacturing and industrial projects are generally eligible for OCIDA assistance. Retail commercial projects tend to not meet the eligibility criteria for access to IDA bonding.

Local tax incentives may be offered through the OCIDA to businesses located within the Empire Zone. The tax incentives offered through the OCIDA include:

- PILOT (Payment-in-Lieu-of-Tax) Program,
- PILOT-TIF (Tax Increment Financing),
- Sales and Use Tax Exemption,
- Mortgage Tax Exemption.

Coordination and assistance will be provided to Zone businesses through the Planning and Development Department of EDGE and Oneida County Planning Department to obtain local permits or licenses required. Each municipality within the Zone has its own Zoning and Planning Departments and any issues will be handled by the respective municipality.

To encourage the creation of new, small businesses, including minority and women business enterprises, EDGE offers several business development programs. The Oneida County Micro-Enterprise Loan Program is available to assist small businesses and start-up companies in Oneida County that create new job opportunities for low and moderate income persons. The Rural Development and Agri-Business Loan Program is a low

interest loan for rural economic development and agri-business ventures which would not normally have funds available through traditional channels. The Job Development Loan Fund is designed to support private sector investments in projects that result in job growth in Oneida County.

Partnering with the members of the Mohawk Valley Chamber of Commerce's Small Business Council, EDGE sponsors regular seminars on a variety of topics of interest to small businesses in Oneida County. The series is marketed to all small businesses and Women and Minority Business Enterprises and includes one event specific to the Empire Zone.

In addition to these loan programs, EDGE works closely with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at SUNYIT and Cornell Cooperative Extension to assist prospective small businesses in the Empire Zone to complete business plans and provide needed technical assistance. EDGE coordinates services from other economic development partners with Zone businesses to build financing packages, provide work force training and business counseling. By working with the businesses and Empire State Development Corporation, Mohawk Valley Economic Development District, Women's Business Center, Working Solutions-One Stop System, and the Small Business Development Center, Empire Zone businesses can receive the optimal resources for all aspects of their project.

Oneida County and EDGE have entered into a contract for EDGE to implement the Development Plan and administer the Zone. The Zone Coordinator will be from the Mohawk Valley EDGE staff and will be critical to implement the Development Plan and the day to day administration of the Zone. The ZAB consists of two representatives of local businesses; one representative of organized labor; two representatives of community organizations; one representative of a local financial institution; one representative of a local educational institution; a local Empire Zone resident; and one representative who shall be an officer or employee of Oneida County and who serves as the Chairman of the ZAB. All nine members shall be appointed by the Oneida County Executive. A Vice Chairman was elected at the Organizational meeting of the ZAB and shall operate in the Chairman's absence. The diverse membership of the ZAB ensures that the affected municipalities, involved economic development entities, and community service organizations are represented. This well versed group is involved in various aspects of economic development throughout Oneida County and the members' vast knowledge and experience offer a variety of perspectives toward every projects, business certification and Zone Capital Credit requests based on their background.

The ZAB may establish sub-committees comprised of ZAB members and non-ZAB members to gather and assess information, review Empire Zone certification applications and any other task requested by the ZAB. A Local Advisory Committee may be established to provide communication between the ZAB and local municipalities for the purpose of advising, giving feedback and guidance on current projects within their community.

The duties of the ZAB include, but are not limited to:

1. Prepare, review and approve organizational by-laws.
2. Convene on a monthly basis to discuss and act on Zone related matters and prepare written records of all meetings.
3. Prepare, review and approve Development Plan to set policy and direction of Zone activities.
4. Review and approve all applications for certifications, applications for additional location(s), and cost/benefit analyses.
5. Review and approve boundary revisions and acreage designation.
6. Initiate and approve requests for designation of lands as an RSP and submit final paperwork
7. Prepare and approve Zone Annual Report.
8. Make recommendations to the Oneida County Executive with regards to vacancies and appointments to the ZAB.

As previously stated, EDGE is the lead economic development organization within Oneida County coordinating economic development support, outreach and projects for the region. This allows for coordination of all resources available to Zone businesses.

Oneida County, the applicant, through the services of EDGE, utilizes the Zone designation and other economic development benefits to ensure economic development support to businesses located within the Zone.

In coordination with its economic development partners Mohawk Valley EDGE guides Zone businesses in obtaining all available assistance, incentives and funding to make capital investments, create jobs, retain jobs or revitalize vacant or unused real property. The integration of services through the Mohawk Valley Economic Development Team provides the best possible economic development support for the Zone and area thus ensuring all programs and services are brought to the table to meet the needs and expansion potential of all businesses. The following state, regional and local partners and agencies will be engaged to fulfill business needs by providing the following services:

1. Mohawk Valley EDGE – Business outreach, marketing and business recruitment, loans and financing, special projects, project development and management and grant administration.
2. Oneida County Industrial Development Agency – Tax-exempt bond financing and tax incentives.
3. Mohawk Valley Economic Development District – Business outreach, regional clearinghouse for Economic Development Agency grants, financing for business expansion and retention projects.
4. Workforce Investment Board – Service delivery for 20 partner agencies including on-the-job training and employee recruitment and screening.
5. Workforce Investment Board and the Working Solutions Centers offer services to help employers, oversee the service delivery system, and set strategies for work force development.

6. Empire State Development Corporation (“ESD”) – Business outreach, loans, grants and project assistance to companies, real estate and infrastructure projects tied to specific economic development projects.
7. New York State Department of Labor – Provides hiring services to businesses and assists individuals with job placement.
8. Board of Cooperative Educational Services (“BOCES”) – training to meet employers needs.
9. School and Business Alliance (“SABA”) – assessing what skill sets are needed for specific industry clusters and local businesses; conduit with local school districts to ensure skilled labor force available.
10. New York State Energy Research Development Authority (“NYSERDA”).
11. Mohawk Valley Applied Technology Corporation (“MVATC”)
12. Utica Industrial Development Corporation – Financing assistance through loans for business retention and expansion projects.
13. Rome Industrial Development Corporation – Financing assistance through loans for business retention and expansion projects.
14. Small Business Development Center – providing business consulting, technical assistance and preparing business plans.
15. Service Corps of Retired Executives (“SCORE”) – providing business consultation.
16. Statewide Zone Capital Corporation (“SZCC”) – providing low interest financing to Empire Zoned businesses.
17. Local commercial lending institutions.
18. Local Angel Investor Networks.
19. Regional private equity and venture capital investors.
20. National Grid – providing discounts for electric and gas distribution costs as well as providing funding for projects.
21. Local colleges and universities providing education and training to local workforce.

Section VI: Human Resources Development and Training

Over the past several years Oneida County has been confronted with a number of issues with regards to the local workforce. There is an aged population in Oneida County. The workforce is not growing at a rate that will assist the region and supplying an adequate replacement workforce that can meet the needs of area employers. Additionally, the workforce has aged within key manufacturing sectors and there is a need to secure a well trained replacement workforce for these manufacturers. With an influx of a large immigrant population to Oneida County and their entrance into the local labor market, programs were needed to remove barriers that limit the ability of this population to enter and remain a vital instrument of the region's workforce. There is a need to ensure that the region's current and future workforce can meet the challenges and requirements of local employers and prospective employers who wish to locate operations within Oneida County.

The Oneida County Empire Zone lies within the region of the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) of Herkimer, Madison and Oneida counties, which was created as a result of the Federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA). The WIB is the agency responsible for setting the regional workforce development strategy and the operation of the region's four One-Stop Career Centers. One-Stop Centers are strategically located in the Cities of Utica, Rome and Oneida and the Village of Herkimer.

With the appointment of a WIB representative to the ZAB communication and cooperation has been enhanced and allows WIB to be more aware of Zone projects and be an active partner in their development and needs.

WIB's success in developing a demand-driven workforce and connecting employers and job-seekers within the Oneida County Empire Zone is reflected in its continued attainment of WIA performance standards for hiring adult or dislocated workers. The establishment of a strong partnership between workforce development and economic development agencies and employers in Oneida County has resulted in over \$14 million in grant funds to help employers upgrade the skills of existing employees. As a result of meeting the needs of health care employers, WIB was awarded the 2004 Business Collaboration Award from U.S. Department of Labor.

The One-Stop System's creation of a Business Services Team has developed a pro-active approach to working with employers. This extensive network of access points allows for Zone employers to be in close working contact with the One-Stop System, and for job-seekers who are interested in positions advertised by these employers to be able to connect with these openings. The One-Stop System is available throughout Oneida County at a number of faith-based and community-based organizations, the campus of Mohawk Valley Community College, and the BOCES ACCESS facility in Utica. The collaboration between the WIB and employers in the Oneida County Empire Zone provide continued listings of new positions created by Empire Zone certified businesses with the NYS Department of Labor as required under State regulations. Economic development agencies and business leaders are kept informed by WIB of One-Stop

System opportunities to ensure that businesses receive the highest quality of service from the system. Business Services team members routinely inform employers on the use of available tax credit programs.

The One-Stop System extends beyond the One Stop Centers, enabling employers and job seekers within Oneida County's Zone to have multiple access points for interacting with the workforce system. As a result of the One-Stop System extension, strong community partnerships have been developed which have realized an increase in the number of employers and people served. By securing Federal grants, the One-Stop Systems have been able to provide services beyond those offered through WIA. Grant funding provided the means to connect agencies that serve people with disabilities, faith-based organizations, colleges, schools and employers.

With its extensive experience, the WIB is working in partnership with local employers to develop a long-term solution of ensuring that the region's current and future workforce can meet the challenges and requirements of local employers and prospective employers. As part of its workforce development visioning process, the WIB conducted month-long interviews with employers in key sectors to identify their workforce and training needs. This has helped increase alignment between education and training programs that are offered by local education providers and businesses. EDGE has established a program with the local colleges and vocational/technical schools to address future workforce needs that have been communicated in the business outreach meetings. EDGE works directly with the local colleges, secondary schools and BOCES to integrate into their curriculum the needed skill sets of the businesses in Oneida County. This program will prepare non-Zone residents for those jobs which WIB has set forth as in demand as well as the jobs within the Zone's identified industry clusters.

Extraordinary efforts have been undertaken to integrate under-used segments of the population into the workforce to maximize the potential of Zone employers to grow using the local labor force. These efforts include the Jobs and Hope effort by the WIB, which focuses on the needs of individuals with disabilities, and the Second Chance project, which connects individuals, who are either ex-offenders or homeless, with the One-Stop System. These programs assist these populations with training or work experience as necessary. Agencies and organizations responsible for economic and workforce development activities, including human-service agencies, have developed common objectives and strategic plans. The WIB has considerable experience in building employer partnerships and in administering Federal grants. A High Technology Employer Consortium was formed in 2000 in an effort to increase business-government partnerships to assist high technology employers on training and other workforce issues.

The Oneida County Zone will use the WIB to help Zone employers access a wide range of training activities. The training options available change as new grant funds are accessed and existing grant funds are spent, but the following is a list of major WIB efforts that will assist the Zone:

Mohawk Valley Construction Industry Development: In 2000, the Workforce Investment Board began working with local construction industry employers who were facing a crisis in recruitment for new apprentices and for students to enter the region's major training program. The WIB provided leadership to bring unions, employers and training providers together to address this short-term need. The partnership, now led by industry and labor, remains active to develop the construction workforce of the future.

Customized Employment: With unemployment for people with disabilities hovering around 55 percent, the WIB has worked with more than 15 partners across the tri-county region to meet the needs of people with disabilities and increase employer awareness of the various skill sets that people with disabilities bring to the job.

Transportation Connections: The WIB's latest policy effort has focused on developing strategies to connect local workers (mostly low-income individuals) with the rapidly growing employers in suburban and rural business parks. This partnership has been developed with CENTRO to provide regional transportation needs in the form of vans and car-pooling. The first initiative started in January 2006 with the Family Dollar Distribution Center at the Griffiss Business and Technology Park in Rome.

Health Care / Career Ladders: As a result of a Mohawk Valley Economic Development Team business outreach visits, the economic development group addressed the short-term needs for Certified Nurses Aide's and other entry level positions in the health care industry. WIB became increasingly pro-active to develop career ladders, management tracks and regional partnerships to address the needs of this major employment sector. The WIB received the 2004 One-Stop-Business Collaboration Award from Region One of the U.S. Department of Labor for its multi-year, multi-phase health care plan.

Information Technology Skills Pipeline: With a need for a workforce with skills in the Information Technology Sector, the WIB in 2004 began efforts to work with local colleges to increase high-level skills training for this business sector. This effort was implemented to meet employer needs while also developing a skills pipeline that would begin in high school to connect disadvantaged youth with the supports needed to enter this career path in which minorities are grossly under-represented. WIB was able to begin implementing the National Information Technology Apprenticeship System (NITAS) which had been developed by U.S. Department of Labor and CompTIA. This system used the resources of New York's SUNY institutions to allow small and mid-size employers to implement a system designed for massive employers. What began as a pilot with one college has now been embraced by the SUNY System, which is seeking funding to replicate the project statewide. The WIB further partnered with Mohawk Valley Community College to secure state funding for STEP and CTEP programs that help minority young people increase their ability to succeed in math, science and technology courses at both the high school and college levels.

Second Chance/Jobs and Hope: Disconnected populations such as the homeless or ex-offenders may not come to the One-Stops; the system must come to the array of agencies

that deliver services to these hard-to-reach and hard-to-serve customers. After more than six months of efforts, and meetings involving more than 100 potential partners and agencies, the WIB has developed programs to address these populations, forging stronger community partnerships that increase the reach of the workforce system.

Technology Center: In 2002, the WIB secured the first Federal grant to fund a community technology center that would serve the needs of adults and youths seeking to increase basic literacy and computer literacy. Partnering with other agencies the WIB has tapped into HUD funding that supports technology centers, increasing the system's ability to serve immigrants, unemployed adults, in-school and out-of-school youth and to do so by leveraging resources outside of WIA funding.

The WIB offers Customized Training and On-the-Job Training for employers, as well as the ability to help Zone employers hire individuals who are dislocated by closings covered by the Federal Trade Act.

Following is a summary of services offered to employers by One Stop System Partners:

1. Training Assistance.
2. Training Funding.
3. Liaison to Training Providers.
4. Information on Incentives for Hiring Individuals with Disabilities.
5. Customized Job Fairs/Recruiting.
6. Computerized Job Match to Workers.
7. Job Posting Options.
8. Labor Law Interpretation.
9. Labor Market Information.

A partnership of community-based organizations, local employers, Oneida County Workforce Development and the Oneida County Department of Social Services, worked with employers to transition long-term public assistance recipients into employment by providing job skills training and extensive support. Oneida County Workforce Development works with many local training providers in Oneida County to prepare public assistance recipients for jobs and place them in unsubsidized employment. The program includes group and individualized training and job search help.

Probation Employment Program: This program assists youths between the ages of 14 and 21 who have come to the attention of the justice system. Services include individualized, pre-employment skills training, subsidized work experience and follow-up retention counseling.

Transition Program: Incarcerated youth aged 16-21 are linked with community, educational and employment opportunities as they are released. They receive skills training, counseling and other support services as necessary.

Project CONNECT: BOCES, through this tri-county project, assists out-of-school students in returning to school or obtaining a General Education Diploma to learn the skills they need to become employed. This program has been deemed a “Promising Practice” by the New York State Department of Labor.

Summer Youth Employment Program: Oneida County Workforce Development also supports several summer youth employment programs that include an educational component. Employers can access this pool and be summer “work sites.” The Oneida County College Student Corps – funded by the Oneida County Board of Legislators and Oneida County employers – matches Oneida County’s young people with summer job opportunities in a wide variety of local employers. The program began in 1998 with funding from the Board of Legislators. Since then, more than 600 Oneida County young people have been College Student Corps interns. The program targets college juniors and seniors.

Customized Employment Program: A \$2.7 million five-year grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, has allowed the WIB to take steps to make the One-Stop System better for hard-to-serve individuals with disabilities through pilot projects and new partnerships.

Senior Community Service Employment Program: Through this program, older adults put their skills to work helping community agencies.

Although training is not directly carried out by the WIB, it coordinates the training efforts by using a list of regional Eligible Training Providers who have met the standards set by the New York Department of Labor. With this structure in place the WIB is able to work for and with employers to secure the lowest possible costs and greatest possible value in terms of training being developed for the employer. If no one provider can match an employer’s needs the WIB is able to work with multiple providers to develop a program to meet the training needed. The success of this approach was confirmed by the success of WIB’s invest project, which trained over 300 people for employment in the private sector, many of whom were employed by employers in the Oneida County Zone. As a result of WIB’s relationship with training providers, it can work with employers to provide customized training programs that may not currently be offered by local providers. The WIB worked with Empire Aero Center in Rome which needed customized training for its workforce. WIB brought together key partners to both fund and develop the training so the employer received a program to meet its needs in a timely and cost-effective manner.

The One-Stop System in the WIB’s tri-county region is an integrated, universally accessible workforce development system that is customer and community driven, and that supports the local economy in an innovative and efficient manner. The philosophy for workforce development in the Herkimer-Madison-Oneida Counties Region is to leverage human and financial resources and knowledge to develop a unified system. This system integrates all partner services which seek to assist employers in meeting their need for a skilled workforce and further integrates services designed to assist the

unemployed and underemployed of the region in attaining the skills they need to gain meaningful and self-sufficient employment.

The need for adequate child care services is a major issue for the local labor force that works in the Zone. The most recent Oneida/Herkimer Human Needs Assessment found that child care was an important problem for a large percentage of the people in the area with cost of child care being a major factor. The study found that individuals were effectively priced out of the regulated child care system and therefore forced to rely on untrained relatives and strangers. Many families find it necessary to have both parents working and in single-parent households this is unavoidable. Additionally, there is a major gap of child care available to families with infants. While larger towns and cities within Oneida County continue to have more child care slots available to fit the needs of most children within these areas, there remains limited need for infant and school-age slots. There is also a growing demand throughout the County for second-shift, weekend and other non-traditional hour care.

There are a number of child care centers and services provided throughout Oneida County including the Neighborhood Center, the Masonic Home, Charles T. Sitrin Health Care Center and New Discoveries Learning Centers. Although there are numerous child care centers, the majority of the child care slots in Oneida County are made available through family daycare homes. Mid-York Child Care Council is the intermediary for child care providers and provides training for child care providers, licensing assistance and referrals.

In addition to the child care centers and family daycare homes, Oneida County provides low-income child care subsidies which are administered by The Neighborhood Center in Utica through a contract with Oneida County Department of Social Services (DDS). The programs provided are: Employment-Related Child Care, Transitional Child Care, Title XX Income Eligible Child Care, Low Income Daycare, and At Risk Low Income Child Care. The Oneida County DSS also administers JOBS Child Care, protective child care and preventive child care.

The ZAB will bring the needs and findings from local businesses to the attention of the Mid-York Child Care Council to expand child care services for Zone employees and residents. To further the quality of care children receive the Council will provide education and additional support to informal child care providers. The Child Care Council will provide outreach and education on child care to local employers, including information on the Child Care Council's referral services and on-site "lunch and learn" workshops addressing child care and parenting concerns. EDGE will work to establish a link between the Childcare Council, Zone employers and certified child care services so Zone employees have direct access to available child care service in area. Additionally, EDGE will encourage Mid-York Child Care Council to explore the cooperative venture of on-site child services for companies located in the Zone and current child care providers.

Section VII: Community Development

The requirements associated with a Community Development project shall include leverage for private funds versus other public funds that enhance the area targeted for services by the project. The key factors will be whether the New York State eligibility criteria is met and whether the area faces general economic distress. All Community Development projects will be presented to the ZAB to ensure the project meets the leverage criteria and also helps sustain the region's economic development efforts.

The ZAB will allocate Zone Capital Credits to those projects that will increase employment and improve the economic and social surroundings of the County. The ZAB will give the highest priority for Zone Capital Credit requests to education institutions, cultural organizations and projects which support secondary and regional business growth.

Section VIII: Certification and Cost-Benefit Analysis

All businesses that desire to become Zone certified must meet the criteria as established under General Municipal Law (“GML”) Section 963 and the prerequisites as set forth in the Development Plan. The Zone Coordinator will provide all businesses that desire to become Zone certified with a copy of the Zone’s Development Plan, the Project Narrative and Business Overview request (Appendix C) and the application for Zone certification. A follow up meeting will be scheduled to meet with the business to discuss the project and review the paperwork prior to processing and submission of the application to the ZAB for approval.

The ZAB will certify businesses within its designated areas that are consistent or will be consistent with local planning, zoning, and the expectations of the community.

Criteria for business certification include, but are not limited to:

1. Parcel or building must be located within the established Oneida County Empire Zone boundaries.
2. Number of jobs to be created or retained during the initial five years of certification as determined by the ZAB.
3. Meet the wage and pay rate for employees based on current, published HUD Section VIII, “very low income limit” for one person living within the Utica-Rome MSA. The Zone Coordinator will use the “very low income limit” in effect at the time of the completed certification application, as published on <http://www.huduser.org/datasets/il.html>.
4. Timeliness of project (to start hiring or making capital expenditures within six months and be fully completed within 24 months from the date the application is approved by the ZAB.)
5. Amount of capital investment required will be 10 percent growth above net fixed assets as reported on the business’s last Federal Income Tax Return. For new or start up businesses, a minimum capital investment of \$10,000 is required.
6. Workforce training opportunities and training programs available.
7. Project is consistent with regional and economic development planning.
8. Business must meet the cost-benefit requirements for its location per SECTION VIII: CERTIFICATION/COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS.
9. New Businesses must meet the New York State New Business Test.
10. The business owner is current on real property taxes and special district charges for all property in Oneida County.
11. The Zone Coordinator and ZAB will consider whether certification will result in the transfer of employment from an existing business enterprise to similar employment with the business seeking certification.

Special concentration will be placed on business which:

1. Are part of the identified industry clusters;
2. Add value to raw materials or products anywhere within the manufacturing, warehousing and distribution process and create jobs, which will generate higher levels of disposable income;
3. Focus on data security, retention and redundancy, software development, information technology and information assurance;
4. Focus on logistics and distribution;
5. Are involved in specific aspects of nanotechnology, such as research and development, manufacturing and distribution.
6. Are within the financial, insurance and hidden back office industries.
7. Are a qualified emerging technology company (advanced materials and processing technologies; engineering, production, and defense technologies; production of electronic, optoelectronic, mechanical equipment and products of electronic distribution with interactive media content; information and communication technologies, equipment and systems that involve advanced computer software and hardware or remanufacturing technologies);
8. Have been impacted by off-shore, out-of-state or international competition, including but not limited to plastic injection molding, wood products, metal products, software development and call center;
9. Have suffered high job loss or have the potential for significant job loss;
10. "Traded" businesses - those businesses which import wealth into Utica-Rome Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) by exporting 60 percent or more of their goods and services outside the Utica-Rome MSA;
11. Businesses involved in, directly or as suppliers of materials or parts, or are major customers of any business in identified clusters;
12. Non-traded businesses who have demonstrated that the Zone program is essential to making the project economically feasible or approval to proceed with the project is based on Zone benefits or the business is the only provider of its goods or services within the Utica-Rome MSA;
13. Businesses that demonstrate they are "at-risk" of being purchased by a competitor, closing or moving out of the State or region;
14. Application for real estate holding development projects will be considered only if the applicant can demonstrate that the project will result in job creation and building or land reuse or rehabilitation and lease to qualified businesses.

The Zone Coordinator will verify through Oneida County Department of Finance that real property taxes are paid-in-full, including municipal real property taxes, PILOTs, school taxes and special district taxes. Applications for Zone Certification for companies that have real property taxes in arrears to any taxing jurisdiction will be deemed incomplete. The Zone Coordinator will notify the company's responsible officer to inform him/her that the application is being returned until such time as the taxes are paid in full or a payment plan is in place. If a business has an approved payment plan in place

with the applicable taxing jurisdiction, the Zone Coordinator will request in writing verification that the payment plan has been approved and payments are being made as agreed. The application may be re-submitted for processing once the issue is resolved.

The 2005 Empire Zone Legislation requires local Zones to include a cost-benefits analysis in their Development Plan as well as the establishment of desired job and investment thresholds for a business. To encourage the enhancement of the economic climate of the Zone the following desired levels of job creation and investment for all businesses have been established.

Because the cost-benefit analysis defined in Section 957 (q) of the GML calls for an estimation of state tax credits, value of wages and benefits, and value of capital investments for the first five-years of a business certification, the level of job creation established by the Oneida County Zone is based on the initial five-years of certification.

For a new or startup business, a minimum job creation of two (2) full-time equivalents is required during the initial five years of certification. For an existing business, the desired job creation threshold during the initial five-years following certification shall be a percentage above an average of the last five-years of full time employment as reported to New York State Department of Labor as set forth below:

Desired Percentage of Job Growth	Average Employment Last Five-Years
10%	Less than 100
7%	Between 100 and 500
5%	Greater than 500

The desired capital investment threshold established by the Oneida County Zone for businesses applying for certification is 10 percent growth above net fixed assets as reported on the business's last Federal Income Tax Return.

Although the creation of new jobs is vital to the economy of Oneida County, the retention of existing jobs is just as critical. Contingent upon meeting the certification criteria, the ZAB will give priority attention to businesses located within the Zone that can demonstrate they are in jeopardy of closing a facility or relocating a facility out of the State or the region or are at-risk of downsizing or where significant downsizing has occurred because of less expensive off-shore production capabilities. At-risk industries are identified as all types of manufacturing, call centers, as well as printing, lithography, and publishing. Businesses that will not create new jobs must demonstrate that they will retain their workforce to the extent feasible.

Cost-Benefit Analysis - Benchmark:

Section 963 of the GML establishes criteria for certification. Subdivision (a) paragraph (vi) of this section adds a cost-benefit analysis as an additional criteria. All projects still must comply with the other certification requirements. The purpose of the benchmark is

to simply establish a test to determine whether a project meets, exceeds, or is below the cost-benefit ratio. Projects that meet or exceed the benchmark established by the ZAB will be determined to comply with the cost-benefit criteria required for certification. Projects that fall below the benchmark must be further justified based on non-quantifiable factors.

Basis for the Benchmark - The benchmark was set by New York State Empire State Development and is based on statistical analyses using wages, employment, investment and tax credit data reported by existing certified businesses on their business annual reports (BARs). The benchmark of 15:1 represents a value from a sample of 752 companies where 75 percent of the companies were at or above the 15:1 ratio, and 25 percent were below.

Each Zone was directed to and has established appropriate benchmarks for each Zone Area and each Targeted Industry within the Areas. As previously cited, Section 963 (a) of the GML Subdivision (vi) requires that all businesses must meet the requirements of the cost-benefit analysis established by the local ZAB. The cost-benefit analysis will be used by the local Zone Certification Officer when determining whether to certify a business.

A benchmark of 10:1 for manufacturing has been set by the ZAB. This strategic industry cluster has migrated out of the region, leaving numerous skilled people without an avenue for employment. The cost of doing business abroad continues to threaten the Oneida County's ability to attract and retain employers. The 10:1 benchmark for manufacturing will assist in the retention of Oneida's existing manufacturing businesses and the attraction of new manufacturers. Therefore, the ZAB will utilize a 10:1 benchmark when reviewing applications from manufacturing businesses which reside or will locate in Oneida County, New York State.

A benchmark of 15:1 for traded industries and 15:1 for non-traded industries has been set by the ZAB. Businesses seeking certification must meet the requirements of the cost benefit formula that takes into consideration the following:

1. Parcel or building must be located within the established Oneida County Empire Zone boundaries.
2. Number of jobs to be created or retained during the initial five years of certification as determined by the ZAB.
3. Meet the wage and pay rate for employees based on current, published HUD Section VIII, "very low income limit" for one person living within the Utica-Rome MSA. The Zone Coordinator will use the "very low income limit" in effect at the time of the completed certification application as published on <http://www.huduser.org/datasets/il.html>.
4. Timeliness of project, must start hiring or making capital expenditures within six months and be fully completed within 24 months from the date the application is approved by the ZAB.
5. Amount of capital investment required will be 10 percent growth above net fixed assets as reported on the business's last Federal Income Tax Return. For

new or start up businesses, a minimum capital investment of \$10,000 is required.

6. Workforce training opportunities and training programs available.
7. Project is consistent with regional and economic development planning.
8. Business must meet the cost benefit requirements for its location per SECTION VIII: CERTIFICATION/COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS.
9. New Businesses must meet the New York State New Business Test.
10. The business owner is current on real property taxes and special district charges for all property in Oneida County.
11. The Zone Coordinator and ZAB will consider whether certification will result in the transfer of employment from an existing business enterprise to similar employment with the business seeking certification.

Qualitative (Non-quantifiable) Factors

When a business/project does not meet the required cost-benefit benchmark, a qualitative (non-quantifiable) analysis must be done by the Zone Coordinator and approved by the ZAB prior to the submission to the Zone Certification Officer and the State to justify the certification of the application. The justification for projects shall be based on the non-quantifiable factors as identified by the New York State Legislature in the new zone law. The justifications must address one of the following factors:

- Business's positive impact on an area that has high commercial vacancy rates, and/or is characterized by blight and disinvestment:

The sub-areas in SECTION III identified as Area 6 (Sherrill) and Area 7 (Boonville) are characterized by disinvestment and high vacancy as a result of two major manufacturers ceasing operations. In addition to the Empire Zone Program, there is available to businesses the Rural Development and Agri-Business Loan program which offers low-interest loans for real estate, machinery and equipment and working capital. Financing options are available for eligible bond projects.

- Business is part of a strategic industry cluster or supply chain.

Identified in SECTION IV of this Plan are the industry and business sectors which the ZAB has determined are the strategic industry clusters for the Oneida County Zone. A detailed description of each cluster and the justification for each is outlined in SECTION IV of this Plan. The section additionally identifies other businesses sectors in addition to the strategic clusters.

- Business is anticipated to access zone capital credits.

SECTION VII outlines the ZAB's process and justification for the allocation of Zone Capital Credits.

For any business/project that does not meet the required benchmark a justification analysis and statement must accompany the submission of the application for certification and the cost-benefit analysis to the Zone Certification Officer and the Commissioner of Economic Development for approval.

Certification Process:

The Zone Coordinator will present to the ZAB all applications for certification. The ZAB will determine that the business/project meets all requirements of the Development Plan including the cost-benefit ratio and will approve or deny certification by a recorded vote. Upon approval of the ZAB, the Zone Certification Officer, in conjunction with the Commissioners of Economic Development and Labor, shall jointly certify businesses that have received local ZAB approval.

Decertification Process:

It is the policy of the ZAB to revoke the certification of a business as outlined in New York State Economic Law Section 11.9. In addition the ZAB may decertify a business for the following:

The business failed to submit a Business Annual Report, or other required information, after it has become Zone certified,

The business has failed to construct, expand, rehabilitate or operate its facility in accordance with the representation contained in its application for certification,

Upon review of the Business Annual Report, it is determined that the business after three (3) years has failed to increase employment, make a significant investment in the operation of the business, or has not accessed any of the tax credits as to warrant the need of the Empire Zone certification.

The Zone Coordinator will comply with all procedures for decertification as outlined in Section 11.9 of the Empire Zone regulations. A list of businesses to be decertified shall be presented to the ZAB and ESD Program Staff for acknowledgment.

Section IX: Program Performance Evaluation

The ZAB is charged with implementing the State's primary business incentive program, in combination with local economic development incentives and programs, to revitalize and raise the economic condition of Oneida County, as measured by job creation, job retention, capital investment, strengthening value-added businesses and attracting new businesses. The Seven Distinct and Separate Contiguous Areas identified within Oneida County have many acres of developable, commercial land that could accommodate growth within the chosen targeted industries and strategic clusters

The ZAB, or a sub-committee of the ZAB, will perform annual and semi-annual evaluations of the performance measures as identified in Section II: Goals and Strategies. The performance measures required to be accomplished within 1-2 years will be evaluated semi-annually and the performance measures required to be accomplished within 3-5 years will be evaluated annually. Upon reaching the 3rd year milestone, the performance measures will be evaluated semi-annually.

In addition to the evaluation and discussion of performance measures, the effectiveness of the program will be based on the following information provided from the Business Annual Reports and the expertise of the regional economic development professionals of Oneida County:

- Number of jobs created,
- Number of jobs retained,
- Amount of private capital investment,
- Amount of public and private funding secured,
- Number of businesses created or expanded, and
- Type of businesses created or expanded.

The information gathered will be presented to the ZAB as per the timelines discussed above.

Section X: Definitions of Terms

“Distinct and Separate Contiguous Area” - defined as a group of contiguous tax parcels identified within a specific location for the purpose of designating land as Empire Zone.

“Emerging Technologies” - defined by New York State Department of Taxation and Finance to be advanced materials and processing technologies, engineering, production and defense technologies, production of electronic and photonic devices and components for use in producing electronic, optoelectronic, mechanical equipment and products of electronic distribution with interactive media content, information and communication technologies, equipment and systems that involve advanced computer software and hardware or remanufacturing technologies;

“Manufacturing” – defined as a business principally engaged in the production of goods by manufacturing, processing, assembling, refining, mining, extracting, farming, agriculture, horticulture, floriculture, viticulture, or commercial fishing or a business engaged in emerging technologies pursuant to section thirty-one hundred two-e of the public authorities’ law

“Traded” businesses - those businesses who import wealth into Utica-Rome Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) by exporting 60 percent or more of their goods and services outside the Utica-Rome MSA;

“Stringers” – A thin strip of land, such as a sidewalk or a road, which in the past was used to connect Empire Zone parcels.

The Mohawk Valley Economic Development Team includes the following partners:

Cornell Cooperative Extension,
Empire State Development Corporation,
Herkimer County Industrial Development Agency,
Mohawk Valley Economic Development District,
Mohawk Valley EDGE,
NYS Department of Labor,
Oneida County Industrial Development Agency,
Rome Industrial Development Corporation,
Utica Industrial Development Agency,
Utica Urban and Economic Development, and
Workforce Investment Board.

Appendix A: Zone Designation Mapping

Appendix B:

Oneida County Industrial Development Agency's criteria to assess the possible inclusion of retail into the Zone:

The retail restriction is also inapplicable where (i) the project occupant would, but for the financial assistance being provided by the IDA, locate outside the State; (ii) the predominant purpose of the project to make available goods or services which would not be, but for the project, reasonably accessible to residents of the municipality where the project is located; or (iii) the project is located within a "highly distressed area", as defined by Section 854 of the GML. Projects located in an Empire Zone qualify as being in a highly distressed area.

Appendix C: PROJECT AND BUSINESS OVERVIEW

To assist the Zone Coordinator in the Empire Zone business certification process, each applicant must provide a detailed overview of the business and upcoming project(s). Information **required** is outline below:

- 1) Company name?
- 2) Project details outlining what the business wants to do, projected start date of project, projected completion date of project, what will the project accomplish (increase in productivity, increase in employment, etc.) and how will this project impact the region?
- 3) The goal of the Oneida County Empire Zone is to assist businesses that have expansion projects which will increase the wealth of the region. How will the project assist Oneida County Empire Zone achieve its goal?
- 4) Projected capital investment within the Empire Zone for this project? Please provide total cost of land and an estimated capital cost of planned improvements at the project site, including building construction, renovations, leasehold improvements, site preparation/infrastructure costs, and telecom and information infrastructure. (Include only items that are fixed or attached to walls and floor, such as wiring and fixed partitions – not separate mobile computer and phone equipment, furniture or other non-capital items.) Type of machinery and equipment to be purchased and the total cost?
- 5) Percentage of the property within the project is attributed to new construction, expansion or rehabilitation to the property?
- 6) Projected number of new jobs which will be created at project site for each of the five years after completion of the construction or beginning of occupancy?
- 7) Job titles for the new jobs created? (Engineer, machinist, data entry, etc).
- 8) Average annual base salary for new hires at project site? (Base salary excludes benefits and overtime).
- 9) Average annual benefits for new hires?
- 10) Percentage of targeted workers to be hired?
- 11) Projected annual taxable purchases for project location? (include services such as utilities)
- 12) History of business, ownership and operations?
- 13) Nature of the business and the products and services offered?
- 14) Strengths and advantages which make your company successful?
- 15) Weaknesses and obstacles which impede your ability to increase sales and maintain profitability?
- 16) Aspects of the business which have experienced significant changes during the past three (3) to five (5) years? Have these changes helped or hindered the businesses ability to do business in Oneida County?
- 17) List other locations in NYS and the **average employment for each of the past four years** for each location.

- 18) Is the company Empire Zone certified at any of the above locations? If yes, which locations and date certified.
- 19) Will any jobs that currently exist elsewhere in NYS be transferred to this project site? If so how many, from which location and time frame for transferring these jobs. (Within one year, three years or other time period)
- 20) Company's total payroll for all locations in NYS and total payroll for location in Empire Zone?
- 21) Financial performance over the past five (5) years? (To include total assets, total liabilities, net worth, cash flow, sales, gross profit, earnings before interest, depreciation, amortization, taxes and net profit.)
- 22) Percentage of goods and services exported outside of the Oneida-Herkimer County MSA?
- 23) Percentage of goods and services exported outside of NY State?
- 24) Top five (5) competitors?
- 25) Percentage of competition from companies located outside of Oneida County, outside of NY State and outside of the USA?
- 26) Top five (5) suppliers and vendors? Percentage of cost of goods they represent?
- 27) Top five (5) customers or clients? Percentage of revenue or sales they represent?