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GOVERNOR ANDREW M. CUOMO

**GOVERNOR CUOMO ANNOUNCES \$5 MILLION FOR THE JUST TRANSITION SITE REUSE PLANNING PROGRAM**

***Resources Available to Communities Facing Fossil Fuel Power Plant Closures, Including Disadvantaged Communities***

***Toolkit Will be Developed as an Additional Resource to Help Communities Statewide Realize a Just Transition***

***Supports Governor Cuomo's Nation-Leading Goals in the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act***

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced \$5 million for the Just Transition Site Reuse Planning Program to facilitate site reuse planning services and support for communities facing fossil fuel power plant closures. The program will provide eligible communities with resources to begin charting a sustainable and economically viable path forward through site reuse planning services from [designated experts](#), the development of a toolkit as a resource, and enhanced assistance for disadvantaged communities. This announcement supports Governor Cuomo's nation-leading goal of a 100 percent zero-emissions electric grid by 2040 and a just transition under the under the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act.

"This administration is empowering local governments and residents to fight climate change with resources that will help amplify their voices in the clean energy transition," **Governor Cuomo said**. "This program will lead to greater engagement from the community to chart a greener future that strengthens economic growth, particularly disadvantaged communities that have been disproportionately impacted by harmful emissions in the past."

Ensuring a just transition for communities as New York State grows its renewable energy future provides opportunities for communities hosting conventional energy infrastructure to proactively plan to address site reuse. Under this [new program](#), administered by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), New York State is providing vital support to help enhance locally based engagement and help improve community transition outcomes. A Statewide Site Reuse Toolkit utilizing the information from the site planning processes will be developed as an online resource to provide tools to help other communities facing or planning for site reuse. It will include information on local, regional, state, and federal programs to assist

communities with economic development, brownfield reuse, and other aspects supporting successful site redevelopment.

**Doreen M. Harris, President & CEO, NYSERDA, said,** "Communities across New York deserve a just transition, and we are taking a proactive approach to equip them with the support and resources needed for effective planning and reuse. Helping communities build a sustainable, economically viable, and environmentally friendly future is a priority as we move to a clean electric grid to meet our climate and clean energy goals."

Eligible communities are local governments that have a fossil fuel power plant located in their community, including those that have had a power plant close in the last five years, are facing current or future known closures, or are home to other operating fossil fuel facilities that commenced operations prior to 1990. Applicants may apply for planning services valued up to \$150,000. Services awarded will be scaled based on site characteristics, and areas where plant closures impact a [disadvantaged community](#) may qualify for additional assistance valued at up to \$10,000.

Planning services may include, but are not limited to, site reuse planning, environmental assessments, economic analysis, demolition and abatement assessments, and public health impact evaluation. To apply, [click here](#). Applications will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis until August 5, 2024, or until funds are no longer available. If selected for the program, local governments must sign a participation agreement and appoint a project liaison to ensure community participation in planning the transition from a conventional energy facility and toward community-wide environmental and economic health. The liaison will work with NYSERDA to select and be matched with a designated site reuse planning expert from a pre-determined list of companies that were chosen through a competitive process.

For communities and plants that have already undertaken preliminary analyses, support under this program may also include next-phase steps that maximize community engagement and proper site reuse, including but not limited to a detailed infrastructure assessment, further environmental assessment, marketing and community engagement strategies, and workforce development strategies, in addition to other designated support as determined by NYSERDA and the site reuse experts.

Bergman Associates, P.C. was selected through a competitive process to help develop the statewide toolkit. The toolkit, individual site reuse plans, and community strategies under consideration will seek to reflect and align with the issues and opportunities for site reuse identified by the Just Transition Working Group, and presented to the [Climate Action Council](#) on April 12, 2021, as required by the Climate Act.

**Public Service Commission Chair John B. Howard said,** "Smart cessation funds are in the public interest. As we transition from older, existing generation to zero carbon generation, we will create a cleaner grid of the future that requires a comprehensive approach to ease the financial implications for impacted communities, including those that are disadvantaged, and are in the interest of all electric customers."

**New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Basil Seggos said,** "The State-led closure of coal-burning power plants and the ongoing transition from fossil fuels to cleaner energy will be a boon to our economy, our environment, and the health of our communities. As we continue to prioritize the just transition to clean technologies and help develop plans for reuse that is consistent with the nation-leading CLCPA, DEC applauds this investment and looks forward to working with our partners to revitalize Environmental Justice communities to create bright futures for all."

**New York State Department of Labor Commissioner Roberta Reardon said,** "Governor Cuomo remains committed to ensuring equality for all communities as we move forward in our journey toward a bold, climate-friendly future. In order to successfully usher in this clean energy era, supports must be in place to ensure that no community is left behind. These resources will be essential to communities as they develop environmentally-friendly economic opportunities for New Yorkers."

**New York State Secretary of State Rossana Rosado said,** "The path to a just and equitable clean energy economy must be paved with the type of effective community-based planning, outreach and technical assistance that NYSERDA is offering through this innovative program. The way we use and re-use the built environment will have a tremendous impact on our ability to curtail climate change. Through our Brownfield Opportunity Area program, which has a proven track record of re-purposing contaminated and underutilized industrial facilities, the Department of State looks forward to working with NYSERDA to support the Just Transition initiatives."

**Empire State Development Chief Operating Officer and Executive Deputy Commissioner Kevin Younis said,** "Ensuring that local governments across the state have the needed resources to plan for their own green energy future will ultimately help to grow the local economy and further Governor Cuomo's nation-leading clean energy goals, while building vibrant and sustainable communities across New York State."

**Senator Kevin Parker, Chair, Senate Energy Committee said,** "I applaud Governor Cuomo and NYSERDA for investing in the Just Transition Site Reuse Planning Technical Assistance Program. The investment will propel our state to reach our goal of a 100 percent zero-emissions grid by 2040, while providing resources for disadvantaged communities."

**Assembly Member Michael Cusick, Chair, Assembly Energy Committee said,** "This announcement highlights the importance of ensuring that our communities are adequately equipped to embrace our transition to a clean energy grid. The closure of fossil fuel plants is a necessary step in building the energy grid of the future and it is crucial that we provide resources for the communities directly impacted by these closures. This program will guide these communities through this process and assist in ensuring that our energy grid works for all New Yorkers."

**Senator Todd Kaminsky, Chair of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee, said,** "The Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act calls for a carbon-free electrical grid by 2040 — but getting there requires exchanging our aging

power plants for a green, sustainable future. This funding will help communities plan for the transformation of its power plants and make bold plans for the future."

**Stephen J. Acquario, Executive Director of the New York State Association of Counties** said, "As New York State moves toward a clean energy economy, it is important that we not leave behind communities that will face power plant closures and the loss of economic opportunities. A just transition will not happen by itself; it requires strategic planning and investments in creating new jobs, industries, and skills in counties across the state. We applaud the Governor and NYSERDA for launching this program to prepare New Yorkers for a clean energy future and build our climate resilience."

**Ryan M. Silva, Executive Director, New York State Economic Development Council (NYSEDC)**, said, "Transitioning from fossil fuel energy generation to clean energy solutions provides a tremendous opportunity for innovation and economic growth at decommissioned sites throughout New York State. NYSERDA's funding to help communities study how to best adapt these facilities will help modernize economic development efforts and engage local communities on how to best use these sites moving forward. We thank NYSERDA for launching this important program and encourage NYSEDC members to work closely with NYSERDA and local municipalities to effectively and efficiently bring these facilities back on-line."

New York's transition to a clean power grid is well underway, combining a strong existing baseline of renewable facilities and a robust pipeline of new renewables already under contract. Together these efforts will power 50 percent of New York's electricity once operational. The services provided to communities under this program will also look to help communities position themselves to seek other support resources including any that may become available under the Biden Administration's newly established Interagency [Working Group on Coal and Power Plant Communities and Economic Revitalization](#).

New York State continues to invest in resources to ensure the impact of the closure of power plants on local communities will be mitigated to the fullest extent possible. Additional financial assistance is available for eligible jurisdictions facing power plant closures through the State's [Electric Generation Facility Cessation Mitigation Program](#) administered by Empire State Development. The program offers seven years of funding to aid in transition, and earlier this year, the state Public Service Commission adopted a stable mechanism that provides a longer-term funding source for the program should local communities continue to need that support.

### **New York State's Nation-Leading Climate Plan**

Governor Cuomo's nation-leading climate agenda is the most aggressive climate and clean energy initiative in the nation, calling for an orderly and just transition to clean energy that creates jobs and continues fostering a green economy as New York State recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic. Enshrined into law through the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, New York is on a path to achieve its mandated goal of a zero-emission electricity sector by 2040, including 70 percent renewable energy generation by 2030, and to reach economy wide carbon neutrality. It builds on New York's unprecedented investments to ramp-up clean energy including

over \$21 billion in 91 large-scale renewable projects across the state, \$6.8 billion to reduce buildings emissions, \$1.8 billion to scale up solar, more than \$1 billion for clean transportation initiatives, and over \$1.2 billion in NY Green Bank commitments. Combined, these investments are supporting more than 150,000 jobs in New York's clean energy sector in 2019, a 2,100 percent growth in the distributed solar sector since 2011 and a commitment to develop 9,000 megawatts of offshore wind by 2035. Under Governor Cuomo's leadership, New York will build on this progress and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 85 percent from 1990 levels by 2050, while ensuring that at least 35 percent with a goal of 40 percent of the benefits of clean energy investments are directed to disadvantaged communities, and advance progress towards the state's 2025 energy efficiency target of reducing on-site energy consumption by 185 trillion BTUs of end-use energy savings.

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