

# The Ithaca Voice

## Tompkins projects receive \$3.2 million from economic development awards



by Kelsey O'Connor

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State funding from Gov. Andrew Cuomo's Regional Economic Development Council

initiative will give a financial boost to 11 projects in Tompkins County.

On Thursday, **Cuomo announced more than \$700 million** awarded to projects across the state for economic and community development. The REDC initiative is meant to empower community leaders across the state to develop strategic plans that will create jobs, improve quality of life and grow the economy, a news release said. The awards have taken place since 2011.

About \$3.2 million was awarded to projects in Tompkins County. The highest-funded project was Cargill in Lansing. The company received \$2 million to fund a new mine shaft. Local theater companies also received funding, as well as the History Center in Tompkins County, the Sciencenter and others.

“Through the Regional Economic Development Councils, we have replaced the ‘one-size fits all’ approach to economic growth with a ‘ground-up’ strategy that focuses on cooperation and investing in regional assets to generate opportunity,” Cuomo said in a news release. “By bringing together ideas from local government and community leaders with state resources, we are giving these councils the tools to create jobs and drive economic activity in their communities for generations to come. I congratulate the Regional Councils on their awards, and look forward to continuing to work together to build a stronger New York for all.”

The Southern Tier region — which includes Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Delaware, Schuyler, Steuben, Tioga and Tompkins counties — received \$60.4 million in total to support 63 projects. This year, the Southern Tier region received the least funding for the least amount of projects in the state.

**Brew Beats concert series** (Broome, Tompkins, Steuben) — \$65,500 — The series is a music TV and web show that follows the roads that connect Upstate New York dynamic and growing breweries and cideries, turning the spotlight on the story of the people behind these industries while highlighting the region’s rich history of musical traditions.

**Cayuga Lake Watershed Plan** (Schuyler, Tioga, Tompkins) — \$62,405 — The Town

of Ithaca will implement recommendations in the updated Cayuga Lake Watershed Restoration and Protection Plan, including re-defining organizational structure, identifying site-specific projects and preparing conceptual designs.

**Cargill mine shaft project** — \$2,000,000 — Cargill will install a new ventilation and access shaft equipped with a heavy duty mine elevator, change room facilities for miners, electrical upgrades and small maintenance shop.

**Hangar Theatre 2017 marketing campaign** — \$159,100 — Funds will be used to increase programming with a holiday show in 2017.

**Southern Tier Startup Alliance** — \$250,000 — The STSA is led by Cornell University, and operates region-wide via a network of “member incubators.” Member incubators serve as focal points for entrepreneurial communities and locations where mentors can deliver services to startups.

**Ithaca Shakespeare Company** — \$38,500 — The company will hire an executive director.

**Kitchen Theatre Company** — \$41,500 — Kitchen Theatre Company will hire a director of development to lead the organization’s efforts in fundraising, donor solicitation and stewardship.

**The History Center in Tompkins County** — \$28,500 — The History Center will develop a heritage education center, which will serve as a new community gathering place with exhibits, programs and resources to celebrate the county’s rich history, heritage and culture in “new, synergistic and inclusive ways.”

**The Sciencenter Discovery Museum** — \$150,000 — The Sciencenter will use grant funds to replace and renovate nearly all the museum’s indoor and outdoor exhibitions.

**Tompkins County Solid Waste Department** — \$355,000 — The department will establish a centralized transfer station to accept food scraps at its existing Recycling

and Solid Waste Center.

**Town of Ulysses land conservation** — \$57,205 — The town will purchase a 32-acre parcel of wetlands, mature forest and stream access for preservation of critical natural habitats. Funding will be used for flood prevention and water quality protection of Trumansburg Creek and Cayuga Lake.

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