

## Improvement project at Dunkirk Pier and harbor completed; Supported by Smart Growth Community Fund

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Dunkirk, NY According to Governor Andrew Cuomo, improvements at Dunkirk Pier and harborfront have been completed. The project—supported by funding from the Smart Growth Community Fund—provides improved pedestrian access to Lake Erie, better connections to the city’s waterfront trails, increased seating and green space, improved fishing and water recreation opportunities, new lighting, and new wayfinding and signage.

“Establishing accessible, vibrant and sustainable communities is central to our regionally-focused economic development strategy,” Cuomo said. “These improvements will create beautiful new greenspace and a more pedestrian-friendly area for recreation and events, driving even more tourism and private investment to Dunkirk.”

The Pier Improvements Project has transformed a once solely vehicle accessible pier into a pedestrian-friendly destination, with 50% of the Pier dedicated to green space offering more outdoor activities and recreation amenities, increased seating, and improved connections between the pier and waterfront trail system. The waterfront has trails to the east and west of the Pier, where there was previously a disconnect between both sides, creating better trail connectivity. It also provides increased amenities for fisherman and boaters such as additional seating, new tie-up railings, new lighting, and new safety ladders.

This project is a part of a \$2.5 million grant provided by Empire State Development’s Smart Growth Community Fund, awarded in 2017. The project is one of three major revitalization projects in the city supported by this grant. The private development of Pier 30, which is expected to be completed

in fall at the entrance of the Pier, will provide an area to enjoy drinks and snacks while experiencing the picturesque views of Lake Erie. The Pier Improvements Project and Pier 30 will better connect downtown to the waterfront through the third funded project along Central Ave.

The Central Connection Project includes four major intersection improvements, new crosswalks, paving, bike lanes, striping, banners and signage to better connect the city's waterfront, Fredonia College and the village of Fredonia. This project is 75% complete and will be finished in fall.

"Thank you governor Cuomo and your staff for all of the attention and support you have given the city of Dunkirk. I want to thank all of our city departments that have helped implement this exciting project. To see it completed is a good feeling," said city mayor Wilfred Rosas. "This project will draw more city residents and visitors to our newly enhanced Pier and gives our fishermen an exciting place to host fishing tournaments."

Empire State Development president, CEO and commissioner Howard Zemsky said, "Our strategic investment in this smart growth project has increased access to the waterfront, offering additional open space and recreational opportunities to visitors and residents and ultimately boosting the regional economy."

Western New York Regional Economic Development Council co-chair and SolEpoxy president Jeff Belt said, "The transformational Dunkirk Pier project boasts improved connections between the pier, the waterfront trail system and downtown Dunkirk that will increase recreation opportunities and bring more people to the pier and harbor."

In 2017 and 2018 in Western New York, applicants to the statewide DRI competition not selected as regional winners were automatically eligible for funding through the Smart Growth Community Fund, a \$20 million initiative to fund ready projects in municipalities that revive traditional main streets, preserve historic buildings and foster mixed-use private investment, and encourage walkability and increase access to waterfronts and green space. Funding has been awarded to eight Western New York communities, each receiving up to \$2.5 million. Funding awards were recommended and approved by the WNYREDC. Projects selected within each community are shovel-ready and can be completed within one to two years.