



Orsi of Empire State Development speaks at NAIOP breakfast meeting

February 25, 2008 - Upstate New York

On January 23, the NAIOP upstate New York chapter kicked off the year with a sold out breakfast meeting at the Larkin Building in the downtown area. The topic was on the Empire State Development Agency and its regional plans for upstate New York. Guest speaker, Christina Orsi, regional director for the Western New York regional office spoke before a captive audience.

Orsi said that the old Empire State Development Agency was primarily New York City-based with regional offices that were more re-active rather than pro-active and restricted to a budget of \$2 million or less. This, however, changed when Elliot Spitzer was elected governor and he appointed Daniel Gunderson to be in charge of all upstate development. In his State of the State Speech he highlighted his Four Pillar Strategy which includes:

1. Reduction in the cost of doing business in New York state.
2. Developing the upstate economy through innovation.
3. Increase regional community based development in the upstate area.
4. Building on the infrastructure that already exists in the Upstate region.

Spitzer has supplied Dan Gunderson with a regional blueprint for upstate development, an upstate Revitalization Fund of \$1billion for Shovel Ready Development, city funding for brownfield re-development, start-up capital for new companies and investments in the Upstate Agra- Business. Some of the projects he has already committed funding for are the Peace Bridge upgrades and the Inner Harbor revitalization, the Midtown Plaza project in Rochester and projects in Lockport, Niagara Falls and Jamestown totaling over \$350 million so far. They are also working on an International Marketing Initiative to increase the Import and Export business with our neighbors in Canada. Orsi also said that they are working very hard on reducing energy costs for new jobs in the upstate area for at least a year and streamlining the application process for aide.

The message was very upbeat! The governor is very committed to development in the upstate region. The sell-out crowd all left the meeting with a good feeling of development, redevelopment and new government commitment to the upstate region.

For more information on upcoming programs and events for the upstate New York chapter, contact Karen McCready at (585) 249-9232.

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