



Schuyler County Partnership for Economic Development

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**Village of Watkins Glen ‘Races Ahead’ on the
International Motor Racing Research Center with \$2M Restore New York Grant**

Watkins Glen, NY:

On May 22, 2023, Governor Kathy Hochul announced more than \$112.9 million has been awarded to 70 projects through the Restore New York Communities Initiative. Restore New York supports municipal revitalization efforts across the state, helping to remove blight, reinvigorate downtowns and generate economic opportunity in communities statewide. The program, administered by Empire State Development, is designed to help local governments revitalize their communities and encourage commercial investment, improve the local housing stock, put properties back on the tax rolls, and increase the local tax base.

With the assistance of the Schuyler County Partnership for Economic Development and the Schuyler County Planning Department, three applications were submitted for projects in Schuyler County. Application sponsors included the Village of Montour Falls, the Village of Watkins Glen, and the Schuyler County Legislature.

The Village of Watkins Glen was pleased to be notified that the application on behalf of the International Motor Racing Research Center was awarded a \$2 million dollar grant towards the redevelopment of the property located at 111 North Franklin Street in Watkins Glen. Prior to its recent demolition, this building was home to Rooster Fish, which had been relocated to 223 N Franklin Street.

Mayor Laurie DeNardo remarked, “Thank you Governor Hochul as the Village of Watkins Glen acknowledges the contribution of 2 million dollars from the Restore New York Communities Initiative. The project with the International Motor Racing Research Center will be transformational for our downtown. I’m honored and proud to represent a community that respects our wonderful history, including motor racing, and embraces the future. This project aligns with both.”

Mark Steigerwald, Executive Director, International Motor Racing Research Center commented, “The International Motor Racing Research Center is thrilled to be the recipient of funding from the Restore NY Communities initiative. In partnership with the village of Watkins Glen, these funds will have a profound impact on the implementation of our vision for the future, for the benefit of the thousands of tourists who visit the area each year and who appreciate our unique racing heritage.”



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The creation of the International Motor Racing Research Center will be a draw for tourists and the local community. The impact of this project will have a ripple effect throughout Watkins Glen and all of Schuyler County.

Judy McKinney Cherry, Executive Director of the Schuyler County Partnership for Economic Development commented, "Schuyler County Partnership was pleased to work with Kristin VanHorn, Schuyler County Director of Planning, Mayor Denardo and Mark Steigerwald on this Restore NY Grant Application. The staff at SCOPE is uniquely qualified to navigate state grant funding programs, and this recent win is another example of how collaboration and a unified vision for the future of the community can yield results that will have a lasting impact."

The FY 2024 Budget, which includes \$50 million for the Restore New York Communities Initiative, will strengthen the state's economy, and accelerate Governor Hochul's vision of making New York the most business-friendly and worker-friendly state in the nation. The Budget will invest in local economies, raise the minimum wage for three years and then tie future increases to inflation, and modernize New York's public workforce.

Schuyler County Partnership, in collaboration with our local and county officials, is researching possible projects for the next round of funding and re-evaluation projects that were not successful this round to possibly reapply in the fall.
