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## **NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY HIGHLIGHTS SUCCESSFUL FIRST YEAR OF REIMAGINE THE CANALS INITIATIVE**

*Initial Phase of Economic Development and Resiliency Projects  
Successfully Launched Along Canal Corridor*

*Investment Leverages Increased Annual Spending on Maintenance and  
Infrastructure*

The New York Power Authority and Canal Corporation Board of Trustees today were provided an update on the successful launch of the first phase of *Reimagine the Canals* projects this past year. Aimed at investing in communities and improving resiliency, this first set of *Reimagine the Canals* projects were initially unveiled during Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's [2020 State of the State](#) Address. NYPA and the Canal Corporation are investing [\\$300 million](#) over five years to reimagine and revitalize the state's iconic Canal system. This initiative is in addition to NYPA's annual \$140 million investment into the Canal's continued maintenance, operation, and infrastructure.

"Through *Reimagine the Canals*, NYPA continues to support long-term investments that enable both the Erie Canal and canalside communities to reach their full potential as historical, recreational, and economic assets," **said NYPA Chairman John R. Koelmel**. "Our commitment to this initiative, and our dedication to reinvigorating the Canal, helps ensure an economically vibrant future for upstate New York communities."

In its first year, *Reimagine the Canals* launched a pilot program to improve resiliency and [mitigate ice jams](#) along the Erie Canal and Mohawk River in Schenectady County, successfully redeployed canal water management gates to [extend the fishing season](#) and improve the renowned angling experience in Western New York, began design work on the [Brockport Loop Pedestrian Bridge](#) that will connect SUNY Brockport to the [Empire State Trail](#) in Monroe County, and worked with Madison County to select a developer to create a unique [pocket neighborhood](#) in Canastota.

In addition, the design of a new whitewater course in Cayuga, the illumination of iconic canal infrastructure, and the redevelopment of the historic Guy Park Manor in Amsterdam into a hospitality destination continue to advance as part of *Reimagine*.

**NYPA President and CEO Gil C. Quiniones said,** “The *Reimagine the Canals* initiative has positively impacted local economies, and our continued efforts to advance *Reimagine* projects will increase tourism opportunities and support a more resilient New York. These investments continue to ensure the canal will drive economic growth for the next generation and ensure that the Canal continues to be a uniting force for recreation and congregation in Canal communities.”

**Canal Corporation Director Brian U. Stratton said,** “The *Reimagine the Canals* initiative continues to uplift the Canal’s unique infrastructure and recreational assets to New Yorkers. *Reimagine* projects benefit both residents of canalside communities and visitors as they connect a new generation to the rich heritage of the New York Canal system.”

**NYPA Vice President for Planning – *Reimagine the Canals* Angelyn Chandler said,** “Reimagine will adaptively reuse canal infrastructure to create new economic development and recreational opportunities for canal communities. Building on the legacy of this historic asset, Reimagine will ensure that the Canal is a vital amenity for 21st century Canal users and visitors.”

Also, during the summer of 2020 and the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the New York State Canal Corporation through *Reimagine the Canals* promoted six hubs of canal and trail activity and celebrated local canalside businesses across Upstate New York. Nearly 3,000 people participated in this program, which offered four free outdoor excursions by kayak and/or bike in Schenectady, Chittenango, Seneca Falls, and Rochester – allowing visitors to exercise both mind and body while still practicing safe social distancing.

In the coming months, *Reimagine the Canals* will be identifying additional investments that will drive tourism and local outdoor recreation along the length of the Canal, and researching projects that will improve resiliency and sustainability.

The New York State Canal system is scheduled to open on Friday, May 21<sup>st</sup> at 7 am for the [2021 season](#).

For more information on the *Reimagine the Canals* program, please visit the Canal Corporation’s [website](#).

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### **About the New York State Canal Corporation**

New York’s Canal system includes four historic canals: the Erie, Champlain, Oswego, and Cayuga-Seneca. Spanning 524 miles, the waterway links the Hudson River with the Great Lakes, the Finger Lakes and Lake Champlain. The canals form the backbone of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor and connect hundreds of unique and historic communities.

The New York State Canal Corporation is a subsidiary of the New York Power Authority.

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