

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tompkins County Area Development Earns New York State's First IEDC Accreditation

TCAD achieves Accredited Economic Development Organization (AEDO) status from International Economic Development Council

ITHACA, N.Y. – May 4, 2020 – [Tompkins County Area Development \(TCAD\)](#), the economic development group for Ithaca, N.Y., and the surrounding county, is the first organization in New York State to be accredited by the [International Economic Development Council \(IEDC\)](#). TCAD is one of only 67 organizations in the world to receive Accredited Economic Development Organization (AEDO) status. This certification recognizes the work being completed by leading-edge organizations worldwide.

“Tompkins County Area Development displays the professionalism, commitment and technical expertise that is deserving of this honor,” said IEDC President and CEO Jeff Finkle.

In 2019, TCAD reported \$86.7 million in capital investment projects. The organization’s strategic partnership with area businesses led to the retention of 159 jobs, plus 54 projected new jobs.

“TCAD’s success depends on our talented and experienced staff, dedicated board members and strong community support. As such, we are pleased to be the first accredited economic development organization in the state,” said Heather McDaniel, president of TCAD. “We remain dedicated to building a thriving, sustainable economy that improves quality of life in Ithaca and Tompkins County.”

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, TCAD has availed itself to business owners, local leaders and other stakeholders to ensure the long-term health and prosperity of its unique economy. TCAD’s homepage, www.tcad.org, has become a go-to resource portal for area business owners and has been updated in near-real-time. The page features news from the office of Governor Andrew Cuomo, information on the CARES Act and various other federal, state and municipal efforts to buoy local economies. TCAD has launched an emergency relief loan fund program and convened service providers in the area to coordinate programming. The organization has also assembled an economic recovery cabinet of business leaders to inform emergency response and recovery efforts.

“TCAD is a recognizable part of Tompkins County, advocating for smart, sustainable growth and expanding employment opportunities for the region’s workforce,” said Larry Baum, chair of TCAD’s Board of Directors. “We’re thrilled with the AEDO accreditation and will help TCAD continue to provide real value for our diverse businesses.”

According to IEDC, earning the AEDO accreditation tells respective communities and their businesses/local stakeholders that these economic development organizations have attained a measure of excellence – conferring credibility and assuring that trust is well-placed and local business is in good hands.

The AEDO program is a rigorous and comprehensive peer review process that measures economic development organizations against professional standards. The program consists of

two phases: a documentation review and an onsite visit. During TCAD's onsite visit, reviewers met with staff, board members, business leaders and elected officials.

Each phase is designed to evaluate information about the structure, organization, funding, programs and staff of the candidate economic development organization.

Maintenance of the AEDO status is required every three years and is accomplished through documentation submission and/or onsite visits by a team of the AEDO subcommittee.

About Tompkins County Area Development

Since 1964, Tompkins County Area Development (TCAD) has continued to work tirelessly to grow, retain and attract companies that provide high-quality employment opportunities in the Greater Ithaca, N.Y., region. The organization strives to create a supportive environment for entrepreneurship and business development. TCAD maintains strategic partnerships with businesses, Cornell University, Ithaca College, Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3), government and area nonprofits, which contributes to the region's prosperity. TCAD is committed to its mission of creating a thriving and sustainable economy for its region. For more information, visit TCAD at: www.tcad.org.

About the International Economic Development Council

The International Economic Development Council is the largest membership association serving economic and community development professionals in the world. With over 5,000 members nationwide and abroad, IEDC offers the economic development profession one source for information and professional development, one voice for the profession and one force for advocacy. For more information, visit IEDC's website at www.iedconline.org.

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