

**Exhibit VIII.B.5**  
**Regional Economic Plan Coordination**

***Submit as Exhibit VIII.B.5, a statement as to whether the Applicant's proposed Gaming Facility is part of a regional or local economic plan, and, if yes, provide documentation demonstrating the Applicant's inclusion within, and coordination with, regional economic plans.***

Rivers Casino & Resort at Mohawk Harbor is uniquely responsive to the needs and opportunities of the Capital Region, and is poised to play a pivotal role in ongoing regional revitalization. The proposed Gaming Facility will greatly impact a highly distressed community by creating approximately 1,200 permanent jobs and bringing economic opportunities to the area. Furthermore, the project stimulates economic growth initiatives that are aligned with the priorities and strategies of Governor Cuomo, the State of New York and the Capital Region Economic Development Council (CREDC). Specifically, this development is consistent with New York State's Opportunity Agenda, specifically aimed at a community with high unemployment and poverty rates. Rush Street Gaming brings to New York an incredible track record relative to minority and women hiring and creating opportunities for minority and women-owned (MWBE) enterprises. The project is aligned with the CREDC strategic plan to "Bring Cities Back to Life," bringing an unprecedented level of private investment and employment opportunity to one of the Capital Region's important urban centers. Other strategic priorities of the CREDC include "Prepare for Tomorrow" and "Spotlight Our Strengths" by capitalizing on the rich history and culture of the area and collaborating with Schenectady County Community College to create a workforce within the gaming, culinary, and hospitality industries; "Showcase Our Beauty" by reconnecting the citizenry to an important stretch of the Erie canal and Mohawk River; and "Build a Superhighway" by leveraging the City's transportation infrastructure and millions of dollars in public projects underway.

Situated on 60+/- acres along the historic Mohawk River and Erie Canal in the City of Schenectady, the development will revitalize one of the oldest brownfield sites in the United States. See attached photos of the brownfield site prior to demolition in Attachment "A". The former home of American Locomotive Company (ALCO), and one of the world's most famous manufacturing facilities, helped Schenectady boast it was "the city that hauled the world." Beginning in 1848, ALCO was a direct beneficiary of New York's Erie Canal, and in turn, helped New York State to earn its reputation as The Empire State.

The once prosperous site was abandoned in 1969 and has been a regional eyesore and a disappointing gateway to Schenectady's downtown for the past 45 years. The loss of ALCO operations, combined with the loss of 24,000 GE jobs from 1974 to 2004, has deeply and negatively affected the City and its population, many of whom relied on that industry. Today, Schenectady County's median income is lower than neighboring counties and the state average. The per capita income in the City of Schenectady (\$19,420) is drastically lower than the state average (\$56,448). 20.3% of children in Schenectady County live in poverty, and the City of Schenectady has the 13<sup>th</sup> highest concentration of childhood poverty in the nation. The Schenectady City School District is the 6<sup>th</sup> poorest district in New York State and has the lowest SAT scores in the Capital Region. 22.6% of the city's residents live below the poverty level

(compared to 14.5% statewide); 29.5% of the population is eligible for Food Stamp or SNAP benefits. The City is also in need of new housing opportunities, with 95% of the 30,762 housing units being built prior to 1979, and 61% prior to 1940. The older housing stock creates a high incidence of substandard housing, and 21.9% of the city's housing is comprised of vacant units.

The proposed Gaming Facility will replace this distress and lack of opportunity with a \$300 million destination resort that will attract a projected 2.8 million new visitors per year and restore opportunities and vitality to the area. This marks an incredible opportunity to immediately turn around decades of neglect and misfortune and erect in its place a key element of Schenectady's resurgence.

The proposed Gaming Facility is located on 25+/- acres adjacent to the planned \$150 million Mohawk Harbor, a planned mixed use development with residential, commercial, retail and hotel components. The development includes a new harbor, as well as public green spaces and public riverfront biking and walking trails, which will be connected to the public spaces on the Gaming Facility property. The combined \$450 million investment is unprecedented on the Mohawk River and will represent the largest waterfront project in Upstate New York.

In line with the CREDC-defined strategy to "Prepare for Tomorrow," Rivers Casino & Resort at Mohawk Harbor will promote partnerships within the arts, culture, entertainment and hospitality industries to leverage investment in infrastructure, marketing, aggregation, and brand development, as well as extend benefits to strategic business partners in the community. The Gaming Facility operator, Rush Street Gaming, LLC, has a proven track record of conducting business with minority and women owned businesses. In Des Plaines, Illinois, Rivers Casino spent \$6.9 million in 2013 with minority and women owned businesses in the State of Illinois; in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, SugarHouse Casino spent \$22.6 million in FY2013 with minority and women owned businesses in its host county; and in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Rivers Casino spent \$4.3 million in FY2013 with minority and women owned businesses in its host county. Rush Street Gaming is committed to continuing this example in New York State, where a dedication to minority and women-owned business enterprises by Governor Cuomo and Executive Agencies has resulted in the formation of more than 2,100 MWBE firms since January 2011.

The approximately 1,200 jobs projected to be created at the Gaming Facility will also provide significant opportunities to underemployed segments of the population in the Capital Region, including inner-city youth that have been a target of the state's NY Works Program. Jobs at Rush Street Gaming properties are of a high quality – average compensation, with tips and benefits, is at least approximately \$50,000 at its other properties, and employees are offered extensive training, opportunities for career advancement, tuition reimbursement, 401(k) and health benefits.

Supporting the CREDC's strategy to "Spotlight Our Strengths", Rivers Casino & Resort at Mohawk Harbor looks forward to a long lasting partnership with Schenectady County Community College (SCCC). Located less than one mile from the site, SCCC offers a wide range of transfer degree, career degree and certificate programs to nearly 8,000 students. The project's casino, hotel, and banquet hall will provide invaluable new internship and employment

opportunities for students of the college's blossoming Casino and Gaming Management, renowned Culinary Arts, Hotel and Restaurant Management, Hospitality and Tourism Management and Business Administration programs. SCCC's training programs are uniquely designed to help unemployed persons train for state and new careers at Rivers Casino & Resort.

The construction of a casino, hotel, and banquet facility with harbor access will help promote the CREDC's goal to "Showcase Our Beauty" and provide new opportunities to promote Schenectady as a destination for leisure and entertainment by land and/or waterway. Positioned less than one mile from a downtown in the midst of a revitalization, the development will be strategically located to coordinate with local demand generators such as Proctors Theatre and the expanding Schenectady Light Opera Company, as well with local restaurants, colleges and businesses to generate new and increased income streams for the region and to provide direct and ancillary job opportunities.

The proposed Gaming Facility, to include an attached hotel and banquet facility, will expand the Capital Region's tourism and marketing infrastructure dramatically, increasing the region's capacity for tourism-related initiatives. The leveraging of partnerships with well-known and reputable entertainment institutions, such as Proctors Theatre, a thriving part of the City landscape, will further enhance the regional draw of the Gaming Facility.

The proposed Gaming Facility leverages the intergovernmental collaboration of two important projects: replacement of the dilapidated Amtrak train station in downtown and redesign/reconstruction of Erie Boulevard. The more than 30-year-old train station is slated for demolition, to be replaced with a new, \$15 million multi-story station incorporating design elements from the City's 1908 Union station. Improvements to Erie Boulevard, a major entry point to the City of Schenectady, are currently underway and feature traffic improvements, new parking areas/access for downtown businesses, newer and safer pedestrian crossing facilities, landscaping, sidewalks, and bike lanes. The Gaming Facility development will take advantage of transportation investments, which will help to accommodate the projected 2.8 million new visitors who will come to Schenectady every year.

Less than one mile away from the downtown core, Rivers Casino & Resort will integrate well with the multiple modes of access between the facility and the downtown area. The extension of the Mohawk Bike Hike Trail will encourage pedestrian and bicycle traffic from the Mohawk River to the City's downtown and other key points, such as SCCC. The creation of a new 50 boat slip harbor will provide water access to Schenectady for over 40,000 boaters that pass by this site. Employees will have ease of access because the development will have an array of public transportation options, including existing bus routes. There is close proximity to the Schenectady Amtrak Train Station, which provides regular passenger rail service from Schenectady to Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, New York City, Montreal, Niagara Falls, Rochester, Rutland, and Syracuse.

There is no doubt that this \$300 million development, combined with the \$150 million Mohawk Harbor project and other private investments in downtown, will forever transform the City of Schenectady. Upon completion, the project will transform a vacant, contaminated

Brownfield site into an economically vibrant waterfront destination that contributes to the success and growth of the entire region.