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**COLLABORATIVE EFFORT BY ISLAND BUSINESS GROUPS TO SHINE LIGHT ON NEEDS FOR
BOROUGH-WIDE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

Kick off effort focuses on social media & lawn sign campaign featuring #MoreTransitLessTraffic

Staten Island, NY, April 17, 2018– In late 2017, Staten Island Economic Development Corporation (SIEDC) Executive Committee member Phil Guarnieri of Empire State Bank had an idea. He knew that Staten Island’s nonprofit business organizations, representing thousands of firms from around the borough, could make a significant impact on the community if they worked together. That day, the idea for the Staten Island Business Partnership was born. Yesterday, at the SIEDC Business Conference, the Partnership announced its plans to rally local businesses to focus on the need for **borough-wide infrastructure improvements.**

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“Utilizing the broad reach and expertise of the participating nonprofit organizations, and the synergies they provide, I’m sure we can make a positive impact on both the business community and for our residents,” Guarnieri said.

Gail Castellano, of Richmond County Savings Bank and a Board member of the South Shore Business Improvement District added, “One of the most exciting aspects has been that the members of the Partnership represent an island wide constituency of thousands and thousands of businesses – from North Shore to South, and East Shore to West. The collaborative spirit of the group is clear, and everyone realizes that we’re stronger working together than alone.”

Castellano added, “I’m pleased to announce that the group has agreed to focus on a campaign to encourage increased attention on **public support for infrastructure improvements on Staten Island.** This can encompass public transportation and ferries, road widening, sidewalks, parking and a myriad other issues like storm resiliency, utility construction and sewers. “

The initial phase of the efforts will include a major social media campaign with a focus on transit. Partner groups will begin utilizing the hash tag **#MoreTransitLessTraffic** when focusing on improvements to our roads systems and any infrastructure projects. SIEDC has committed to producing 100 lawn signs with the More Transit Less Traffic message for distribution to its members and other partners will discuss creation of lawn signs with their memberships and distribute accordingly. Store signs/window decals will be produced with the same messaging for retail establishments to mount and display.

“One of the biggest successes in Staten Island’s history was the collaborative effort to close the Landfill. The topic chosen by the Partnership is certainly one that all Staten Islanders can rally around towards a common goal,” explained Cesar J. Claro, President and CEO of SIEDC. “We’re really looking forward to seeing where this effort can go.”

Participating organizations include: SIEDC, Building Industry Association of Staten Island, Executive Club of Staten Island, New Dorp Business Improvement District, Northfield LDC, North Shore Rotary Club, SCORE, Small Business Development Center, South Shore Business Improvement District, Staten Island Business Outreach Center, the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce and World of Women. Other organizations are welcome to join the Partnership, and there are no fees for participating.

About SIEDC:

SIEDC's mission is to enhance a thriving Staten Island economy by promoting public and private investment, and encouraging the development of commercial and industrial property and projects in an environmentally friendly manner, all of which improve the quality of life and provide broad and diverse employment opportunities.

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