



The Journal



12 New USDA Regional Food Business Centers to open in 2023
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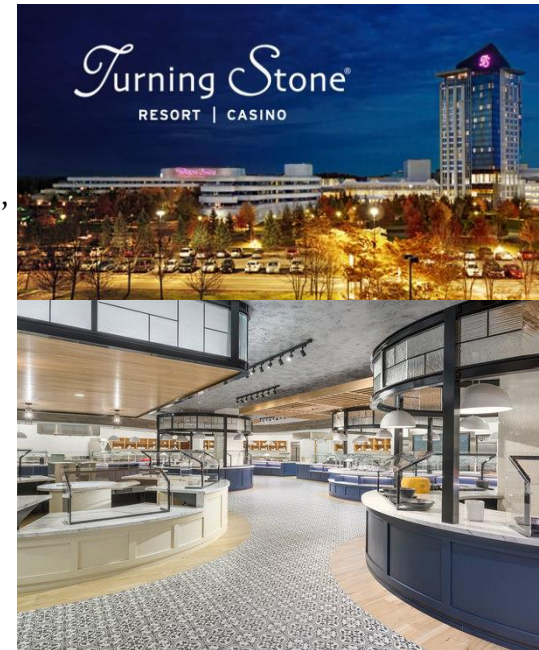


Oneida Indian Nation Announces Completion of the Largest Expansion of Turning Stone Resort

March 1st, 2023 The Oneida Indian Nation today announced the completion of the largest expansion and financial reinvestment at Turning Stone Resort Casino in the last 20 years. The massive multi-year project will nearly double the existing convention and meeting space at the resort. To support the increase of convention guests, the expansion will also include a new hotel at Turning Stone, roughly the same size as the Tower Hotel, with approximately 250 guest rooms, outdoor spaces and additional amenities. Together, these additions will help attract even more regional and national events from across the country, further increasing tourism to the region.

The expansion project at Turning Stone will result in millions of dollars spent with local businesses and vendors. The Oneida Indian Nation has selected Syracuse-based Hayner Hoyt as the General Contractor and will also utilize Central New York trade unions, creating hundreds of local construction jobs. The expansion will also support the continued growth of the Oneida Indian Nation’s workforce with hundreds of new permanent jobs once completed. Over the last three decades, the Oneida Indian Nation has invested more than \$1 billion in Central New York.

Planning for the multi-year expansion is already underway with ground-breaking expected to Take place in 2023.



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“As we begin our largest reinvestment in two decades, we embark upon a new chapter for our enterprises, ensuring that we remain one of the top event and tourism destinations in New York for decades to come,” said Ray Halbritter, Oneida Indian Nation Representative and Oneida Nation Enterprises CEO. “Today we are experiencing record demand for hosting conferences and other events at Turning Stone that far outpaces our current hotel and convention facilities. This extensive multi-year expansion project will help us meet this rising need and even greater demand in the future. Our 30-year track record has proven that investments like this are essential to sustain the growth and success of our enterprises and the entire region.”

The Oneida Indian Nation has selected world-renowned architecture and design firm Gensler as its development partner for the expansion. Gensler serves more than 3,500 clients in virtually every industry with 52 locations around the world. Gensler has been the lead designer and architect for other leading destinations, including City Center in Las Vegas, Gaylord National Hotel and Convention Center in Washington and Walt Disney World’s Swan Reserve, among many other major resorts and convention centers across the globe.

“Gensler is thrilled to partner with the Oneida Indian Nation on its expansion of Turning Stone Resort Casino,” said Lester Yuen, Design Director for Gensler. “This expansion will introduce some game-changing features to this incredible property, and we are very excited to add this expansion to our portfolio of world-class hospitality and convention projects.”

“As one of the largest employers and key contributors for investments that bring millions of visitors to Central New York every year, the Oneida Indian Nation has been a critical driver in the economic development of Oneida County,” said Oneida County Executive Anthony Picente. “This latest investment at Turning Stone Resort Casino – the largest in 20 years – expands on this partnership and, along with the Nexus Center, continues our shared goal for the revitalization of Oneida County. We know that when the Oneida Indian Nation does well, Oneida County does well, and the expansion of Turning Stone will help grow this success with increased tourism, new jobs, and more.”

“The partnership between the Oneida Indian Nation and the Town of Verona has played an important role in our mutual growth and success,” said Verona Town Supervisor Scott Musacchio. “Recently, this partnership helped provide water and sewer infrastructure for the Oneida Indian Nation’s new employee housing, an innovative approach to increasing affordable housing and growing jobs within our community. Turning Stone’s expansion will continue this partnership, injecting significant investment into our local economy, and further establishing Verona as a world-class destination for tourism, conventions, and more.”

“At a time when many businesses are postponing or canceling investments, the Oneida Indian Nation is moving forward yet again with a major expansion at Turning Stone that will create good-paying jobs for hundreds of our members and support the continued growth of our region,” said President of the Central/Northern Building Trades Greg Lancette. “Our motto has always been that if the Oneida Indian Nation can dream it, we can build it. We are honored to once again play a part in bringing these dreams to reality. “

“Today’s announcement by the Oneida Indian Nation is further evidence of the region’s growing tourism economy and economic recovery from the global pandemic. Mohawk Valley EDGE welcomes the Oneida Indian Nation’s upcoming project and how this

investment is fueling the region's economic resurgence," said Mohawk Valley EDGE President Steven DiMeo. "We see this large-scale development as a positive for area businesses who are looking for meeting and convention venues, as well as for those in search of world-class recreational activity. We are happy to call the Oneida Indian Nation our partners and neighbors in ensuring that our region generates revenue, recreation, and overall community impact for years to come."

"For the last three decades, the Oneida Indian Nation has been an exemplary partner, focused on increasing tourism for the region and committed to investing in its workforce and surrounding communities," said President of CenterState CEO Rob Simpson. "This historic expansion of convention space and hotel rooms at Turning Stone continues this exceptional commitment, and will attract even more businesses and tourists from around the country to Upstate New York."

About the Oneida Indian Nation

The Oneida Indian Nation is a federally recognized Indian nation in Central New York. A founding member of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy (also known as the Six Nations or Iroquois Confederacy), the Oneida Indian Nation sided with the Americans in the Revolutionary War and was thanked by Congress and President George Washington for its loyalty and assistance. Today, the Oneida Indian Nation consists of about 1,000 enrolled Members, most of them living in Central New York. The Nation's enterprises, which employ more than 4,750 people, include Turning Stone Resort Casino, YBR Casino & Sports Book, Point Place Casino, The Lake House at Sylvan Beach, The Cove at Sylvan Beach, Maple Leaf Markets, SāvOn Convenience stores, Salmon Acres, a hunting preserve, an RV Park and two marinas. Proceeds from these enterprises are used to rebuild the Oneida Indian Nation's economic base and provide essential services, including housing, health care, and education incentives and programs, to its Members. For more information, visit OneidaIndianNation.com.

USDA Announces Finalists for Twelve New USDA Regional Food Business Centers and \$420 Million in Funding to Strengthen Food Supply Chain Infrastructure:

WASHINGTON, May 3, 2023 – Today the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the creation of 12 new USDA Regional Food Business Centers that will provide national coverage coordination, technical assistance, and capacity building to help farmers, ranchers, and other food businesses access new markets and navigate federal, state, and local resources, thereby closing the gaps to success. In addition, USDA also announced a \$420 million Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI) to fund innovative projects designed invest in processing and distribution capacity to build resilience across the middle of the supply chain and strengthen local and regional food systems. USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) will partner with state and territories' departments of agriculture for this program.

"The Biden-Harris Administration is committed to transforming our food system to one that offers new market opportunities to small and mid-sized farming operations through a strengthened local and regional food system," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "The Regional Food Business Centers, along with investments through the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program will create new and expanded local market opportunities which will improve farm income, create good paying jobs and build greater resilience in

our overall food system.”

“USDA recognizes that local and regional food systems are essential to the overall food supply chain and the new Regional Food Business Centers are the cornerstone of our efforts to support them,” said Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Jenny Lester Moffitt. “The resources and diverse knowledge offered through the Centers will make the opportunities available through dozens of USDA programs more accessible to small and mid-sized producers and food and farm businesses. The Centers technical assistance coupled with the additional funding for processing capacity and infrastructure improvements through the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure program is bringing us many steps closer to reaching the goals of the Food System Transformation framework.”

USDA Regional Food Business Centers

In September 2022, USDA announced \$400 million to fund this initiative and 12 organizations were selected to lead efforts in their region and together serve all areas of the country. The Regional Food Business Centers will support producers by providing localized assistance to access a variety of markets, including linking producers to wholesalers and distributors. By strengthening connections between rural and urban areas, the Regional Food Business Centers will drive economic opportunities across the region, creating a more diversified and resilient food system. Collectively, the organizations selected to lead each Center reflect an impressive cross-section of the varied institutions, organizations, and associations that must cooperate to achieve genuinely strong and distributed food systems. These organizations are engaging with grassroots food and farm organizations and employing a range of creative strategies to build food system resiliency. Regional Food Centers will target their work to historically underinvested communities in their region.

USDA Regional Food Business Centers Geographic Regions map

Lead Organization Selected for Each Center:

Appalachia USDA Regional Food Business Center, Rural Action Inc.

Delta USDA Regional Food Business Center, Mississippi Delta Council for Farmworker Opportunities

Great Lakes Midwest USDA Regional Food Business Center, Michigan State University

Heartland USDA Regional Food Business Center, University of Nebraska

National Intertribal Food Business Center, Intertribal Agriculture Council

Island and Remote Areas USDA Regional Food Business Center, Hawaii Good Food Alliance

North Central USDA Regional Food Business Center, Region Five Development Commission

Northeast USDA Regional Food Business Center, NASDA Foundation

Northwest and Rocky Mountain USDA Regional Food Business Center, Colorado State University

Rio Grande Colonias USDA Regional Food Business Center, Texas A&M AgriLife

Southeast USDA Regional Food Business Center, Georgia Minority Outreach Network

Southwest USDA Regional Food Business Center, University of California

More information is available on the [USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Regional Food Business Centers Program webpage](#).

Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

RFSI is another important component of USDA's framework to transform the food system to benefit consumers, producers, and rural communities by providing more options, increasing access, and creating new, more, and better markets for small and mid-size producers. Through RFSI, AMS will enter into cooperative agreements with state agencies, commissions, or departments that are responsible for agriculture in states or U.S. territories. This program is funded through the American Rescue Plan and is intended to provide similar support to that provided in other USDA funding for meat and poultry processing, but for the non-meat and poultry sectors.



USDA will work with recipients to competitively subaward funding to projects that expand capacity for the collection, processing, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling, and distribution of food products, including specialty crops, dairy, grains for human consumption, aquaculture, and other food products, other than meat and poultry. Entities eligible for subawards include agricultural producers or processors, non-profit organizations, local government entities, tribal governments, and institutions such as schools, universities, or hospitals.

Interested subaward applicants will apply directly through their state agency. AMS encourages applications that serve smaller farms and ranches, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, underserved producers, veteran producers, and/or underserved communities.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the Biden-Harris administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.

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