



ANTHONY J. PICENTE JR.  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE



JEFFREY M. LANIGAN  
MAYOR

July 23, 2024

The Honorable Kathy Hochul  
Governor of New York State  
NYS State Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul,

As you know, we continue to recover from the unprecedented tornado event on July 16, 2024 that devastated the City of Rome in a way upstate New York has never seen before. The immediate response from the City, County, State and not-for-profit agencies was unbelievable. Together, we opened roads, restored power, helped those who needed shelter, food and other necessities the tornado stole from them in an instant.

We appreciate the assistance from you, your office and agencies. We would not have accomplished as much as quickly as we did without your vital support.

However, the efforts continue and the costs to the City and County continue to mount at breakneck speed. Since July 16, we have expended funds for emergency response, clean up, public assistance, temporary government offices, business recovery and individual assistance to those affected by the tornado. All these efforts continue, and the costs will continue to increase. In fact, long-term recovery from this event is only just beginning and the total impact is still unknown.

Between our around the clock relief efforts while still running our governments' daily operations, expenses are quickly becoming a serious concern. While we continue to work through the FEMA municipal assistance program, and are thankful for your emergency declaration, the reality is it will be years before any of those funds are realized. Even when FEMA municipal assistance is realized, it will barely scratch the surface of what we have spent and will continue to spend to recover.

We are requesting financial assistance from the State of New York to move forward. One long-term recovery area that must begin immediately is the demolishing of uninhabitable and unsound structures. Currently we estimate \$25 million in demolition costs alone.

We believe one way you can continue to assist in this effort is to help us meet these demolition costs. Devastated buildings that remain and are beyond repair will continue to degrade, ruining neighborhoods and creating unsafe environments for residents, while decreasing surrounding property value. It is our number one long-term priority.

We are confident you will help us meet this need as we continue to face this disaster head on.

There is no scenario where we would be as far as we are without your initial assistance, but we continue to need the State of New York to come through for the people of Rome and Oneida County.

We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

ANTHONY J. PICENTE, JR.  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

JEFFREY M. LANIGAN  
MAYOR