

Recommended Award: Exhibit G

Applicant Name:	Forest Lawn Heritage Foundation	REDC Region:	WNY
Project Type:	Tourism/Marketing	County:	Erie
Industry:		Locality:	Buffalo
Amount Requested:	\$300,000	Start Date:	01/01/2014
		Finish Date:	12/31/2015
RECOMMENDED OFFER			
Recommended Total Award:	\$150,000		
Total Project Cost:	\$477,000		
% of Project Cost Recommended:	31%		
REGIONAL IMPACT MEASUREMENTS			
Number of Jobs Retained:	Not applicable.		
Number of Jobs Created:	Not applicable.		
Average Salary of Jobs:	Not applicable.		
Indirect Jobs Created	Not applicable.		
Other Impact			
PROJECT DESCRIPTION			
<p>As one of the most heavily visited historic sites in Western New York, the Forest Lawn Heritage Foundation has identified the need to enhance the visitor experience as it pertains to making connections to the history on display at the illustrious Forest Lawn Cemetery. To fulfill this mission, the Forest Lawn Heritage Foundation has begun the construction of the Margaret L. Wendt Archive and Resource Center which is intended to give each visitor the opportunity to trace the genealogy of any of the families buried in Forest Lawn. Because the cemetery dates almost as far back as the City of Buffalo, many of the visitors will find that they can trace their own genealogy back to the first generation of "Buffalonians" in their family.</p> <p>The Forest Lawn Heritage Foundation has successfully raised the money needed to build the structure that will house the Margaret L. Wendt Archive and Resource Center and the construction on the building has begun. The Foundation, however, is still facing the challenge of securing the remaining funds needed to implement the electronic database that will give visitors access to the historic data contained in the cemetery. The completion of this project will offer both repeat and new visitors to the remarkable grounds a world class experience that will both renew and boost interest in the WNY Region.</p>			
OTHER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS RECEIVED			
ESD:	\$0	NYPA:	\$0
IDA:	\$0	Other:	\$
PREVIOUS STATE ASSISTANCE OFFERED OR PROVIDED			
TYPE	AMOUNT	STATUS	
N/A	N/A	N/A	

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

Forest Lawn Cemetery is converging on a project based on a massive increase in public interest in genealogy that is projected to result in a significant number of additional visitors each year. Having a history that goes to the earliest days of Buffalo, NY and is paralleled only by places like Arlington National Cemetery, Forest Lawn is a key tourism asset to the WNY Region.

This project will allow Forest lawn to implement a system that will give visitors an opportunity to trace their WNY genealogy (or anyone's genealogy – e.g. Millard Fillmore – 13th President of the United States) back to the beginning of the cemetery which was founded in 1849. The project itself is based on the model of tourist destinations, like Ellis Island, which sees approximately 2 million visitors each year, interested in tracing their genealogy back to their family's entrance to the U.S.

It is well established that one of the WNY Region's greatest strengths is the history that has been preserved here and this project will capitalize on that history and create a new reason for tourists to come to the WNY Region. The Western NY Regional Economic Development Council set the growth of tourism as a high priority in the WNY Region and, as one of the Region's greatest tourism assets, this enhanced visitor experience will move the Region closer to that goal.