

## **Empire State Development News**

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### **FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATE**

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## **EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT AWARDS WATERTOWN A RESTORE NEW YORK GRANT FOR ITS WOOLWORTH BUILDING**

### **Nine additional projects across the North Country will also receive funding for economic and community development**

Empire State Development today announced that the Woolworth Building in Watertown is the recipient of a \$2.5 million grant from the third round of Restore New York funding. Empire State Development is providing funding to 79 projects statewide through its Restore New York Communities Initiative. Restore New York was designed to revitalize urban areas and stabilize neighborhoods as a means to attract residents and businesses. The North Country will receive \$12.6 million in funding for 10 projects.

"The Restore NY program is critical to our economic development, smartly leveraging private investment with State dollars so that we provide our neighbors with the resources they need to grow," said Governor David A. Paterson. "With this third round of funding, our villages, towns and cities can move forward with renewal projects that create jobs and attract businesses and consumers."

The historic Woolworth Building, which sits at the top of Public Square in the center of downtown Watertown, has been abandoned for several years and is located in an Empire Zone. The building will be rehabilitated to create a 72,850 square foot boutique hotel with 100 guest rooms on the second through sixth floors, meeting rooms, restaurant and retail spaces on the ground floor and a new pool and fitness center in the basement. A separate multi-story parking garage will be built opposite the hotel on vacant property where deteriorated structures were recently demolished by the city.

"Restoring the vacant but historic Woolworth Building has been a top priority for everyone as the building will serve as an anchor for the city's downtown square," said Empire State Development Chairman and CEO designate, Dennis M. Mullen. "Projects like this one have the potential to reposition our State by spurring economic development, creating resilient communities that provide the foundations for future growth and the means to transform neighborhoods. The process was a competitive one that identified those projects that would truly serve to revitalize urban cores, leverage private investment and bring future business expansion to New York State."

Empire State Development Regional Director James Fayle said: "As the site of the first venture into the 'five and dime' business and boasting a rich architectural history, we have been steadfastly working to redevelop Watertown's downtown and revive the heart of this city. This Restore New York grant for the Woolworth Building, as well as grants for other distressed North Country communities, will help position the region for future economic development initiatives and neighborhood growth."

City of Watertown Mayor Jeffrey E. Graham said: "The Woolworth Building is the historic and economic cornerstone of not only Public Square, but also of this region. This project is a significant milestone in the process to reinvigorate Public Square as the economic engine for the North Country. We look forward to the project's completion and remain committed to other important downtown projects, such as the refurbishment of the J. B. Wise parking lot."

New York State Senator Darrel J. Aubertine said: "As the cornerstone of Watertown's Public Square, restoring the Woolworth Building is a much anticipated next step in the revitalization of this city's downtown. This investment by the state, along with the funding secured to complete the square's

reconstruction project and smaller projects, will help make downtown Watertown a destination once again. These grants are part of a growing effort to breathe life into our downtowns and historic buildings which includes improvements to the New York Main Street program and historic preservation tax credits passed this year. It's exciting to see these important projects in Watertown, Carthage, Clayton, Cape Vincent, and Sackets Harbor funded in this round of grant announcements, as each of these projects will pay dividends for years to come."

New York State Assemblywoman Addie J. Russell said: "I am pleased that this round of Restore NY funding will benefit North Country projects in the 118<sup>th</sup> Assembly District. The restoration of the historic Woolworth Building in Watertown, Pickens Hall in Heuvelton, the Roxy Hotel in Cape Vincent, and the Riverwalk district in Clayton will bring new economic development opportunities to each of these communities. When we bring resources like Restore NY funding into our communities, we are making an investment in not only in the preservation of our history, but in our future as well."

Jefferson County Vice Chair Carolyn D. Fitzpatrick said: "How wonderful it is that an important anchor of Watertown history will be afforded opportunity to continue on—not only as a historical mainstay—but also encouraging economic development, strengthening Jefferson County to remain a success story."

Restore New York funds municipally sponsored projects for the demolition, deconstruction, rehabilitation or reconstruction of vacant or obsolete structures. Restore New York was designed as a competitive process with specific criteria. Strong emphasis is placed on projects from economically distressed communities across the state with priority given to those that leverage other state or federal redevelopment, remediation or planning programs such as Brownfield Opportunity Area or Empire Zones.

In addition to the Woolworth Building in Watertown, additional North Country projects receiving Restore New York III funding are detailed below:

#### **Village of Malone – Flanagan Hotel**

Grant Total: \$2,164,751

The project includes the rehabilitation of the currently vacant Flanagan Hotel building, located on Main Street in Downtown Malone, into a 101 room hotel with street level commercial space. The building is located in an Empire Zone and totals 93,100 square feet of space spread over six stories. The hotel first opened in 1914 and served as an icon for the community until a 1997 fire damaged the building, leaving it vacant. The community has since identified downtown revitalization as a priority economic development strategy and the hotel's high visibility and connection to local history make it a key component to the success of downtown.

#### **Heuvelton – Pickens Hall Phase IV**

Grant Total: \$490,000

This project includes funding for the restoration of the third floor of Pickens Hall, the Opera House Auditorium, which will provide performance space and rooms for the Heuvelton Historical Association's museum. This will complete the restoration of this historic jewel which serves as an anchor to the Heuvelton community.

#### **City of Plattsburgh – Imperial Industrial Park – New Homes For Business**

Grant Total: \$2,500,000

The Imperial Industrial Park is the site of the former Imperial Wallcoverings factory, which in the 1990s employed about 600 workers. The site includes 550,000 square feet of floor space under ten acres of roof across 46 acres in the city of Plattsburgh's Empire Zone. The facility's current tenant occupancy is 35.2 percent. The Restore New York Grant will be used to rehabilitate the existing site, including replacing and insulating an approximately 200,000 square foot roof; restoring two rail spurs, constructing demising walls and installing energy efficient lighting to create smaller, more efficient manufacturing and warehouse spaces for new tenants.

### **Keeseville – Ausable Horse Nail Company Complex**

Grant Total: \$630,000

This project will revitalize the vacant but historic former Ausable Horse Nail Company complex along the Ausable River through an initiative by Adirondack Architectural Heritage (AARCH), the private nonprofit historic preservation organization of the Adirondack region. The project will result in the creation of an architectural heritage center, rental office and apartment spaces, as well as four studio/living spaces for working artists. The revitalization of the mill has been a high priority community project in the village for the past decade.

### **Village of Carthage – Medical Office Complex**

Grant Total: \$579,136

Job Creation: 12 jobs

This project will consist of the construction of a 6,400 square foot two-story brick facade commercial medical office building for lease to Pediatrics and Family Primary Care Practices. The project will be constructed on vacant land in the center of downtown Carthage, adjacent to the site of a five building fire in 2001. In February 2009, two dilapidated buildings were demolished adjacent to the fire site to make room for this project. The project, which will continue efforts recommended in the 2001 Carthage/West Carthage Downtown Revitalization Plan, will result in the creation of 12 high paying jobs and generate more than 8,000 patient visits per year to downtown, which is critical to the sustainability of downtown businesses. The Carthage Area Hospital will be able to address expanded healthcare needs of the region associated with Fort Drum so that the area may remain economically competitive.

### **Village of Cape Vincent – Roxy Hotel**

Grant Total: \$1,532,286

The Roxy Hotel (Roxy's), built in 1894, is literally the cornerstone of the business district in the village of Cape Vincent. Listed on the New York State Historic Register, Roxy's is a three-story brick building located at the corners of Broadway (Main) and Market Streets. The rear top two floors of the 15,000 square foot building overlook the beautiful St. Lawrence River, but are in the process of being condemned. The building is part of the downtown revitalization plan which was developed with the assistance of a 2006 New York State Strategic Planning Technical Assistance Grant. Facade renovation for the building was also included in the New York State Main Street Grant received by the Cape Vincent Improvement League and Cape Vincent LDC in 2007. The rehabilitated building will be a mixed-use facility with the majority of space dedicated to commercial use. An attached motel unit will be demolished and replaced with 4-6 apartments.

### **Village of Harrisville – Riverside Neighborhood**

Grant Total: \$276,475

Dooley's Drug Store on Main Street is located in the center of the downtown commercial district of Harrisville and is in the Lewis County Empire Zone and the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Riverside Targeted Area. The vacant drug store was condemned by Lewis County Code Enforcement on February 20, 2009 (7,460 square feet) and will be restored to contain commercial space on the ground floor and two apartments on the second floor.

### **Village of Sackets – Historic Madison Barracks**

Grant Total: \$735,000

The subject of the village of Sackets Harbor's Restore New York grant application is the Historic Madison Barracks Rehabilitation Project. This project proposes to restore an architecturally and historically significant abandoned, dilapidated vacant building that is not currently on the tax rolls. The former administration building is listed on the National Register of Historic places and is located in the community's locally targeted Madison Barracks Historic Planned Development District. The site will be rehabilitated into a hotel, requiring new infrastructure which will further stimulate development in the area.

**Village of Clayton – Riverwalk District**

Grant Total: \$1,203,354

This project will create new jobs through the renovation of two sites reaching from Clayton's main artery, Riverside Drive, to the St. Lawrence River. A three story mixed used building including retail, office and living space will replace the structure currently located at 419 Riverside Drive. A second building, currently underused and located at 690 Riverside Drive, will after renovations house office space and an expanded marine repair facility. Both sites are located within the Riverwalk District and will comply with the community's Comprehensive Plan, as well as its Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan.

For more information regarding Restore New York, please visit [www.empire.state.ny.us/restoreNY/default.asp](http://www.empire.state.ny.us/restoreNY/default.asp). Empire State Development is New York's chief economic development agency. ESD also oversees the marketing of "I LOVE NY," the State's iconic tourism brand. For more information, visit <http://www.nylovesbiz.com/>.

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