



For Immediate Release: October 11, 2011

Contact:

Austin Shafran (ESD) | ashafran@empire.state.ny.us | (800) 260-7313

Laura Magee (ESD) | lmagee@empire.state.ny.us | (800) 260-7313

RFP ISSUED FOR DEVELOPMENT OF KEY SITE IN NIAGARA FALLS, NY

Proposals can include plans for hotel, retail and housing development, among others

Empire State Development, USA Niagara Development Corporation and the City of Niagara Falls today announced that USAN and the City is issuing a request for proposals (RFP) for development of a key site in downtown Niagara Falls, New York. Proposal submissions are due December 2, 2011.

“This is a tremendous opportunity for an able developer to make Niagara Falls an even greater place for tourists, residents and workers,” said Empire State Development President, CEO and Commissioner Kenneth Adams. “We have made a strong investment in downtown Niagara Falls and we’re seeing the results. Economic indicators, such as hotel occupancy rates, foot traffic and visitation, are all up. This is a perfect time for someone with the right vision to get involved in the redevelopment of Niagara Falls.”

The site is located at 310 Rainbow Boulevard, at the northwest corner of Old Falls Street, 300 feet from the entrance to Niagara Falls State Park, which enjoys approximately eight million annual visitors. Totalling 0.88 acres, the site was recently acquired by the City of Niagara Falls in conjunction with a larger effort to develop the Niagara County Community College-sponsored Culinary Institute in a portion of the former Rainbow Centre Mall. As part of the Culinary Institute project and in cooperation with the city, \$8 million in upgrades will be made to an adjoining 1,600-space, city-owned parking ramp. Direct access to the ramp is available from the subject site via an elevator lobby that fronts on Rainbow Boulevard. The site also benefits from a number of investments along the recently-restored Old Falls Street corridor, including \$12 million in street improvements, the award-winning Conference Center Niagara Falls and the Seneca Niagara Casino complex.

“Our research is suggesting reasonable unmet demand along Old Falls Street for at least one major upper-upscale hotel, considerable need for new retail and food and beverage facilities, as well as new residential units,” said ESD Regional President Sam Hoyt. “Our goal for a project on this site is a mix of urban uses.”

“Every day, we see vast improvements in Niagara Falls and because of the infrastructure investments we’ve put in place, private investment is following,” said City of Niagara Falls Mayor Paul Dyster. “The site is prime property for a capable developer with the right vision.”

“Proximity to the State Park and the future Culinary Institute—along with the continued success of year-round events on Old Falls Street—will significantly contribute to the successful redevelopment of this project site,” said USAN President Chris Schoepflin. “I look forward to reviewing the proposals for what will be the first new building on Old Falls Street in over a decade.”

The Site is classified under the Niagara Falls Zoning Ordinance as D1-C Downtown Zoning District, permitting a diverse combination of commercial, residential, and mixed-use building types within the City’s core tourist area. Proposals are intended to focus upon mixed-use infill development that further enhances the Old Falls Street pedestrian character and expands street-level retail offerings to visitors and residents. The RFP asks proposers to submit a detailed development plan, a detailed financial plan and a summary of the proposer team information. For complete information, see the RFP at www.usaniagara.com.

“I’m looking forward to seeing an able developer tap into the natural resources we have here in Niagara Falls, as well as the exciting new projects coming down the pipeline, such as the Culinary School,” said Senator Grisanti. “This property is located right in the middle of a tremendous growth-area in our region and would be an ideal site for a variety of businesses to grow and invest.”

“Economic development and job growth are the top priorities of all Western New Yorkers,” Senator George D. Maziarz said. “The project that wins the RFP should be the project that will bring the most jobs to Niagara Falls and its residents.”

“The Culinary Institute hasn’t yet opened and we are already seeing its impact. I was proud to sponsor legislation last year when I was a County Legislator to bring the Culinary Institute to the City of Niagara Falls and I am eagerly anticipating its opening,” said Assemblyman John Ceretto. “This new development will help make Niagara Falls a more attractive place to tourists and help bring new monies into our local economy.”

Empire State Development is New York’s chief economic development agency and administrator of the statewide business resource portal New York First (www.NYfirst.NY.gov). The mission of Empire State Development is to promote business investment and growth that leads to job creation and prosperous communities across New York State. ESD also oversees the marketing of “I LOVE NY,” the State’s iconic tourism brand. For more information on Empire State Development, visit www.esd.ny.gov.



###