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**EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT ANNOUNCES LAURENTIAN AEROSPACE CORPORATION WILL MOVE FORWARD WITH PROJECT IN CLINTON COUNTY**

*Company has secured funding to move forward with its state of the art maintenance and repair facility; the project is expected to create more than 900 jobs in Phase I*

Empire State Development (ESD) today announced Laurentian Aerospace Corporation has finalized its financing and identified its partners to move forward with construction of its 273,000-square-foot maintenance, repair and overhaul hangar for wide-bodied aircraft at Plattsburgh International Airport. The \$175 million project is expected to create more than 900 jobs.

“Laurentian’s announcement is great news for the Plattsburgh community and the entire North Country region,” said Empire State Development Chairman & CEO Dennis M. Mullen. “We have been committed to this project from day one, understanding that Laurentian’s business plan has a clear competitive advantage, from its high-tech, time saving and cost effective operations to its strategic location and proximity to the nation’s busiest airports and Canada. We are pleased to see Laurentian moving forward with this monumental project, which will create hundreds of jobs and provide a major economic boost to the region.”

ESD has approved funding to provide Laurentian with a \$12 million loan to be used, as necessary, as a line of credit to replenish a start-up reserve fund, as well as a \$4.1 million grant for capital expenditures associated with the construction of the facility in Phase I. In addition, ESD has approved a \$2 million grant, sponsored by Senator Betty Little, to Clinton County.

The Plattsburgh-North Country Chamber of Commerce, Clinton County, the Clinton County IDA and One Worksource have also been instrumental in the project.

“I applaud the collaborative efforts by all partners involved and their steadfast commitment to this project,” said Empire State Development North Country Regional Director Peter Wohl. “We all remained dedicated to the viability of this new maintenance and repair facility, a truly innovative plan, and believe in addition to the hundreds of jobs that will be created, the project will spark future development and growth at Plattsburgh International Airport. We look forward to seeing shovels in the ground.”

Laurentian is partnering with Verdant Capital Group, LLC, who will invest, alongside the management group, the capital required to allow Laurentian to begin the project. The closing of the financing is subject to a number of conditions, including the completion by Verdant of its final due diligence, the execution of definitive agreements and the absence of any material adverse change in the financial markets. Verdant and Laurentian are confident that the transaction will be successfully completed as scheduled and will take place on or before March 1, 2011.

Laurentian Aerospace Corporation President and Chief Executive Officer Robin Wohnsigl said: “We are pleased to partner with Verdant Capital Group, LLC, on this project. Once we close the financing, we expect the construction to take approximately 18 months, with commercial operations scheduled to begin in the fourth quarter of 2012. In addition to the new technology we’ll employ, we expect 900 new jobs to be created by the facility’s second year of operations.”

Construction is anticipated to begin in April 2011 after necessary engineer work is completed.

In June 2006, Laurentian announced plans to build the 273,000-square-foot maintenance, repair and overhaul hangar. The company has been unable to move forward with construction until now, as it faced difficulties in finding a lead investor during the global recession.

Plans for the facility include two bays, each capable of servicing all wide-body aircraft, with the exception of the Airbus 380 and the Boeing 747-800. An important feature of the company’s facility will be the use of two laser-guided automated docking systems. The docking systems motors will slide the docking system into place around the aircraft. The laser-guided system is sufficiently accurate to bring the structure within one centimeter of an aircraft’s fuselage and each docking system will move into place around an aircraft in less than one hour.

The company will utilize state-of-the-art software systems to manage maintenance activities. Remote terminals located throughout each hangar bay and on each docking system will significantly improve productivity by reducing the time required for the acquisition of instructions, tools and material by the company’s aircraft technicians. These systems will be integrated with the company’s accounting and financial reporting systems. The use of the automated docking system and the efficiency associated with a modern information technology system will significantly reduce the out-of-service time for an aircraft in comparison to the out-of-service time required by other companies providing heavy maintenance services, most of which use manual or semi-manual scaffolding systems which must be erected and removed manually.

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](http://www.NYfirst.NY.gov)). ESD is committed to being recognized on a global scale as the economic development engine driving job growth, strategic investment and prosperity in New York State. ESD is intent on paving the way for New York State to become the leader of the innovation economy and one of the most business friendly, productive and competitive economic development climates in the

world. 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](http://www.esd.ny.gov).