

**Empire State Development News**

**Press Office**

(716) 856-8111

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**FORMER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TO BE CONVERTED INTO MIXED-USE  
COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY IN GOWANDA**

**\$10.2 million to be invested in the renovation of Academy Place**

Empire State Development today announced that the former elementary school known as Academy Place in the Village of Gowanda will be converted into a mixed-use commercial and residential structure. With a total of \$10.2 million being invested in this restoration project, Academy Place will offer the Gowanda community much-needed affordable senior housing, a day care center for children and adults and space for business, office, education and community activities.

"The importance of projects such as this for our communities cannot be underestimated," said Dennis M. Mullen, Upstate President, Empire State Development. "As Gowanda faces an urgent need to retain and create jobs for younger residents, while meeting the needs of its growing senior population, this project allows the community to address the differing needs of both segments of its population. ESD recognizes that the success of our communities' futures rest in being able to adjust and reinvent themselves. This includes determining appropriate, effective and efficient ways to re-use existing infrastructure."

This renovation project is designed to encourage commercial, residential, retail and industrial development, as well as promote affordable housing choices and opportunities in Gowanda. ESD awarded this project a Restore New York Community Initiative Round II grant of up to \$1.5 million to offset construction costs. This new facility is expected to be complete by December 2009.

Constructed in 1929, Academy Place was considered surplus property by the owner (the Gowanda Central School District) and has been seen as an eyesore and a financial burden in the community. The Village of Gowanda, in partnership with Healthy Community Alliance, Inc. (HCA), the not-for-profit sponsor and developer of the project, identified the adaptive re-use of Academy Place into a mixed-use structure to meet various residential and commercial needs, which were not currently being addressed in the community.

The first floor of the newly renovated facility is expected to house a child and adult day care center for up to 76 children and 12 adults, office space for Developmental Disabilities Services and HCA, a congregate meal site for senior citizens and community space for general public use. The second and third stories will be developed into 32 residential units to be used as affordable housing for the growing local senior citizen population. Community Place LLC will own the commercial portion of the building and Academy Place Apartments, L.P. will own the residential portion.

Empire State Development is New York's chief economic development agency, encompassing business, workforce and community development. ESD also oversees the marketing of "I LOVE NY," the State's iconic tourism brand. For more information, visit [www.nylovesbiz.com](http://www.nylovesbiz.com).

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