

Yonkers Industrial Development Agency

Operations

The City of Yonkers Industrial Development Agency is a public benefit corporation established by an act of the New York State Legislature in 1982, under Section 903 of the General Municipal Law. The agency operates for the benefit of the City of Yonkers and its populace to accomplish any or all of the purposes specified in Title 1 of Article I8A. Specific powers and duties are conferred to the agency with respect to the acquisition of real property, whether by purchase, condemnation or otherwise, within the corporate limits of the City of Yonkers. All of the local zoning and planning regulations, as well as the regional and local comprehensive land use plans, are taken into consideration to carry out the duties of the agency.

Organized in a manner consistent with the statute, the Mayor of Yonkers appoints a seven member Board of Directors comprised of both public officials and business leaders. This Board governs the IDA by establishing official policies, reviewing and approving requests for financial assistance. Operations and activities of the agency, its members, officers and employees are carried out in accordance with State law.

The IDA's mission is to generate economic development and job growth throughout the City of Yonkers by attracting new businesses; retaining existing ones and helping them all become competitive in a global marketplace. The agency accomplishes this mission by offering financial assistance in the form of Sales and Use Tax Exemptions, Mortgage Recording Tax Exemptions, Payment-In-Lieu-Of-Tax agreements (PILOTs) and by issuing tax exempt Industrial Development Bonds (IDB's).

Cost benefit analysis were conducted by a consultant on several key IDA projects. The studies highlighted the economic impact of projects undertaken by the IDA and confirmed the incentives provided to the projects yielded impressive results for the City of Yonkers.

Empire City, an IDA project which opened in 2006, continued to build momentum in 2008 with \$1.4B being received in the last quarter alone. It is truly becoming a regional destination attracting people to our City who would not otherwise come. In addition, NYS funded \$19.7 M to The Yonkers Board of Education in 2008 as a direct result of the VLT operation. This in addition to a \$2.5M PILOT payment made by the private investor group to the taxing jurisdictions. Prior to the IDA transaction which facilitated the expansion and renovation of the old Yonkers Raceway, this site was a deteriorating asset which held no hope being a source of increased revenue.

Accomplishments

Yonkers is experiencing a surge in interest from entrepreneurs and developers seeking to take advantage of the benefits of doing business in the 4th largest city in New York State. Excitement about economic development initiatives had a ripple effect in 2008. Our accomplishments during the year are reflective of that enthusiasm and of a city

committed to expanding the local economy. The Yonkers IDA helped advance the goals of economic vitality and improved community life in the city with the successful closing of four projects.

Commercial Projects

The two commercial projects which closed in 2008 will provide 890 construction jobs, and create 315 new full time jobs in Yonkers. Private investment in commercial projects through the IDA totaled \$373M.

- **Hampton Inn and Suites** - \$23M project which includes the acquisition of 2.5 acres of property in South West Executive Park and the development of a 144 unit hotel. This project reinforces the City's plan to bring quality hotels to the city.
- **Cross County Shopping Center** – This \$350M development is a major renovation of an existing open mall. In addition to the renovation, this project will create 245,000 sq ft of new restaurant and retail space, construction of a five story parking garage and 1 level of deck parking over existing parking lost as well as on and off site traffic, landscaping and infrastructure and improvements. A legendary attraction in Yonkers, this total makeover will continue to make Cross County a magnet for people from all over the tri-state area. With the additional of new retail chains and a hotel, it is estimated that sales tax revenues will increase.

Housing Projects

Increasing and improving the city's housing stock is central to the economic development initiatives. Private and public investment in 2008 made possible the closing of two housing projects. These projects will cause 80 construction jobs and 12 new full time jobs to be created. However, job creation was not the primary objective in the IDA's decision to provide assistance to these housing projects. Instead the IDA's aim is to ensure adequate housing stock for a much needed workforce and an often neglected special needs population. Investment in residential projects totaled \$55,000,000 in 2008.

- **Center for Family Services** **\$ 1,061,000**
Although a small capital investment, this project makes a huge impact in the lives of those with special needs. Renovations and the opening of a residential and habitation facility for six developmentally disabled adults in a 2,400 square foot, tow story house were made possible by the use of tax-exempt bonds under the previous civic facilities legislation.
- **326 Riverdale Avenue** **\$54,000,000**
New construction of a 170 unit affordable housing facility with an underground parking garage. 60% of the units will be leased to households earning 60% of the area's median gross income and 20% at market rate.

Other Accomplishments

As has been done in the past 7 years, the IDA awarded a total of \$125,000 in scholarships to 30 high school seniors from the Yonkers Public School system in June 2008. The scholarships were funded by virtue of an agency agreement with two companies which previously received financial incentives through the IDA. Under the terms of the agreement, the companies will continue to fund the scholarship program each year through 2016.

Access to information about meetings, public hearings, agendas, minutes, financial reports and other pertinent information continued to be made available on the IDA website.

Site visits were conducted during the year and staff toured 9 IDA projects sites to inspect completed and ongoing work at the various locations.

At the annual Yonkers Business Week, the agency worked with the City of Yonkers to promote the city to business owners, developers and entrepreneurs. The weeklong event highlighted the major developments underway and distributed awards to local businesses that have made lasting contributions in the city.

The IDA has partnered with the Office of Economic Development to engage a marketing consultant to rebrand the City's downtown and Waterfront district. The new brand, and the associated marketing materials, will help us attract new investors and corporate tenants to the downtown.