

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).

During 2007, the IDA Finance Administrator began billing and collecting PILOT payments on behalf of the taxing authorities, a function not previously performed by the agency. The agency also generated its first annual report to Westchester County regarding PILOT activity for 2006. In November the Finance Administrator relocated to Atlanta and we began a search to replace the position which is key to managing day to day accounting and finance issues and focusing on our many and varied reporting requirements. The Agency's objective is to be effective, efficient and transparent. Thorough oversight of essential project components and financial reports is vital to achieving that objective. Concurrently, we began a search to fill a new position of Executive Assistant.

Throughout 2007, we continued to work with a market research consultant to study employment and industry data in the city and the surrounding competitive markets. The intent of this contract is to provide data upon which decisions can be made relative to projects being incentivized and to targeted marketing efforts.

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 2007. 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 five projects.

Commercial Projects

The two commercial projects which closed in 2007 will provide 5,700 construction jobs, and create 4,040 new full time jobs in Yonkers. Private investment in commercial projects run through the IDA totaled \$931M.

- **Marriott Residence Inn** - \$31M project which includes the acquisition of 2.5 acres of property in South West Executive Park and the development of a 144 unit hotel designed for business travelers. This project represents an important first step in providing much needed hotel space in the city.
- **Ridge Hill** – This \$900M development will turn 81 acres of previously undeveloped land into an exciting mixed use destination which will bring people from all over to the City of Yonkers. It will also dramatically increase the tax base, providing additional property and sales tax revenues. Located between the Sprain Brook Parkway and the NYS Thruway, the site is perfect for the uses planned - 1.3M square feet of retail space, 1000 residential units and a hotel conference center.

Housing Projects

Investment targeted at increasing and improving our housing stock is vital to support all current and future efforts at economic development. Three housing projects closed in 2007 which will cause 10 employees to be retained, 200 construction jobs and 18 new full time jobs to be created. The driving force behind the IDA's efforts in this regard however, was not so much job creation and retention as ensuring adequate housing stock for a much needed workforce and a quickly growing elderly population. Equally important is the goal of improving the appearance and the security of blighted areas in the city's downtown. Private capital investment in residential projects totaled \$92,250,000 in 2007.

Housing projects con't

- **Croton**

\$23,250,000

New construction, located on Ashburton Avenue, just west of Nepperhan Avenue. This Hope VI project consists of 60 apartments for the workforce community. 80% of the units will be leased to households earning between 30 – 60% of the area's median gross income. New development will include a community room, crafts room, computer stations, laundry facilities and card-key access. This new complex is also a key component to the redevelopment of the Ashburton Avenue corridor, an important east west arterial leading to the waterfront.

- **Highland Senior Housing**

\$18,000,000

Private investment drives the development of 88 units of new senior housing. Project includes the construction of the building, apartments and parking for 44 cars.

- **Riverview II**

\$51,000,000

Acquisition and interior/exterior renovation of 343 units of affordable housing. Units leased to household earning no more than 60% of the area's average median income. A comprehensive renovation plan which includes work to building and common areas. Individual apartments will be modernized with tenants in place, or by "checkerboarding" tenants within the property. Total capital improvements to the development will be \$8.5 million.

Other Accomplishments

In June the IDA awarded a total of \$125,000 in scholarships to 30 high school seniors from the Yonkers Public School system. 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.

Work has been done to make the IDA website a better tool by which to provide the public with access to information about meetings, hearings, agendas and financial reports.

During 2007, staff and board members attended educational sessions to get familiarized with the requirements of PAAA.

Staff toured 22 IDA projects sites to inspect completed and ongoing work at the various locations.

Throughout the year the agency made efforts to reach out to the commercial real estate market and to key members of the business community to bring attention to the opportunities that are available in the "new" Yonkers. Newly designed ads were placed strategically in real estate and business publications.

An informative PowerPoint presentation and video was developed and presented to a broad-based business audience at a luncheon held at X2O, the city's very successful new waterfront restaurant. The business community was also given a riverside view of the development as we provided a ferry tour along the waterfront and explained the upcoming and proposed projects.

Many individual tours of new development sites, and areas targeted for redevelopment, were conducted as well.