



## **Phase 1 of redevelopment complete for Richardson Olmsted Campus**

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Buffalo, NY Governor Andrew Cuomo attended the ribbon cutting for the first phase of redevelopment of the Richardson Olmsted Campus. Construction has been underway since 2014 to redevelop the first three of 11 buildings at this National Historic Landmark. The three buildings, including the Towers Building, have been transformed into the 88-room Hotel Henry; a restaurant; 500-person event space set to open on April 30; and the Lipsey Buffalo Architecture Center, opening later in 2017. Construction of the campus created 500 construction jobs and 75 permanent jobs.

“After years of blight, Buffalo is booming, and the reimagined Richardson Olmsted Campus will build on this momentum, creating a new center of economic activity in Western New York to attract visitors and revenue,” governor Cuomo said. “The transformation of this historic landmark into a modern masterpiece will help to drive tourism, support the local economy, and further strengthen Buffalo’s resurgence.”

One of the largest and most complicated historic preservation projects in the nation, the total cost of stabilization, site work, landscape and redevelopment reached \$102.5 million. The redevelopment utilized \$76.5 million in New York State funds and \$16 million in historic tax credits via M&T Bank in a massive undertaking to modernize the campus and find profitable uses for the monumental structure.

Paul Hojnacki, president of the Richardson Center Corp., said, “This towering success story stands as a testament to the many supporters who loudly proclaimed its worth over 40 years. Together we accomplished this monumental transformation.”

Empire State Development president, CEO and commissioner Howard Zemsky said, “Buffalo is finally cementing its place as a world-class destination for architectural enthusiasts. Restoring architectural gems like the Richardson Olmsted Campus will attract more visitors and generate local economic opportunities, while further strengthening Upstate New York’s tourism industry.”

M&T Bank regional president Jeff Wellington said, “The Richardson Olmsted Complex is one of the most important development projects in Buffalo heading into 2017 and its successful completion will be another positive step to attract additional investments in the city and in the surrounding community. Through \$16 million in financing and a charitable donation of \$1.25 million, we are honored to play a role in bringing this project to fruition.”

Dennis Murphy, partner, Hotel Henry, said, “A tip of the hat, and deep-bow, to the hundreds of journeyman, professionals, volunteers, and community participants who dedicated thousands of hours to bring about a Buffalo milestone; the construction completion of Phase one to the Richardson Olmsted Complex. On behalf of all Hotel Henry colleagues, we thank you! Leading up to the April 30th soft opening, Hotel Henry shall install furnishings, train personnel and prepare to

open these National Historic Landmark doors for all to experience.”

The efforts at the 140-year-old former state hospital facility, designed by H.H. Richardson and widely considered to be one of Buffalo’s most important and beautiful buildings, have been overseen by the Richardson Center Corp., the non-profit owner of the site. The not-for-profit Richardson Center Corp. has pursued a reuse plan for the campus since it was formed in 2006. For many years prior, committed preservationists, elected officials, and community members focused attention on the decades of neglect and deterioration.

The reuse builds upon the concepts developed in the master plan for the site, created with community input gathered through ten public meetings and with the active participation of the Richardson Center Corp. Community Advisory Group. Thousands of people provided input to create a reuse plan that complements and strengthens the neighborhoods. The first phase of redevelopment and site work sets the stage for future development of the remaining eight buildings for complementary uses. Work is underway now to assess future development projects.

The Campus is part of the \$1.6 billion tourism industry in Erie County which generates \$200 million in sales tax revenue—a \$500 tax reduction per household. In addition, \$157.3 million is added to the economy every year by nonprofit arts and culture institutions like the Richardson Olmsted Campus, supporting 29,000 full time equivalent tourism jobs. Construction at the Campus provided 500 construction jobs with a \$27.5 million payroll. The project will ultimately create approximately 75 permanent jobs with an annual payroll of \$1.5 million.

The redevelopment allows the Campus to generate property and sales tax revenue in excess of \$1 million dollars a year for the city and Erie County. Property tax and sales tax will be collected for the first time ever. The new hotel will provide an estimated \$500,000 in sales/occupancy tax revenue per year and an additional \$325,000 in annual sales tax revenues from guests’ direct sales.

Senator Charles Schumer said, “This gorgeous Buffalo landmark is finally enjoying the upkeep and attention that it deserves. I’m proud to have done my part in securing the funds needed to restore the roof. But above all, I’m thrilled that the Richardson Olmsted Complex is set to thrive for generations to come. This development will be a magnet for business and tourism from across the state. It’s exactly the boost we need for Buffalo’s economy.”

Congressman Brian Higgins said, “Again and again this community has realized the great potential that exists when we invest in the historic structures that make Buffalo unique. The Richardson rebirth represents the vision to reimagine a place with one-of-a-kind architecture and character that can’t be replicated. Historic tax credits and state leadership made the Richardson redevelopment possible and we should look at it as an example for other opportunities throughout the city of Buffalo to do the same moving forward.”

Senator Chris Jacobs said, “The iconic design of the Richardson Olmsted Campus represents a great period in Buffalo’s history. With the investment of state resources and a remarkable commitment from the Richardson Center Corp. Board, the redevelopment has turned the campus into a cultural amenity symbolic of Buffalo’s future.”

Assemblyman Sean Ryan said, “The Richardson Olmsted Campus has been on quite an incredible journey. Today marks a significant milestone in the history of the city of Buffalo. One of our greatest architectural treasures has been saved from the wrecking ball and transformed into an amazing new space. The Hotel Henry and the Lipsey Buffalo Architecture Center make great use of this iconic Buffalo landmark. This renovation is a testament to what we can do when we breathe new life into our historic structures. This type of preservation and adaptive reuse should be the model going

forward for the city of Buffalo.”

Mayor Byron Brown said, “Today marks the beginning of a new era for the historic Richardson Olmsted Campus, an architectural gem which is starting a new life. This redevelopment created hundreds of construction jobs and more than 75 permanent jobs, in addition to creating a one-of-a-kind facility that builds on Buffalo’s past to reinforce its continuing renaissance. I thank governor Andrew Cuomo for his continued commitment to Buffalo through this project.”

Erie County executive Mark Poloncarz said, “The transformation of the Richardson Olmsted Campus is stunning and is a celebration of what can happen when committed people seize a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to effect change on a monumental scale. These buildings had drifted away from their original, intended use and the size and scope of restoring them was too much for any one agency to handle. Thanks to governor Cuomo, however, not only was this rebirth envisioned but it has come into being, and today we are celebrating new life and new energy at this unique and historic place.”

This National Historic Landmark is a masterpiece of the great American architect Henry Hobson Richardson and landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, along with his partner Calvert Vaux. The 42 acres and collection of buildings known as the Richardson Olmsted Campus is nationally recognized as a great work of these two masters and locally admired for the monumental presence and iconic copper towers.<sup>14</sup>

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