



Uniland to develop 150,000 s/f manufacturing in Lackawanna

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Lackawanna, NY The Buffalo and Erie County Industrial Land Development Corporation (ILDC) board of directors approved the sale of 9.2 acres on the former Bethlehem Steel property to Uniland Development Co. Uniland plans to build a 150,000 s/f manufacturing spec building that will bring private businesses and jobs to the site, part of which is being redeveloped by Erie County, the ILDC, and the Erie County Industrial Development Agency (ECIDA) into a commerce park.

“Uniland’s acquisition of 9.2 acres of the former Bethlehem Steel site and plans to build a 150,000 s/f manufacturing spec building is the next step in the renaissance of the site. My vision for the site was to return manufacturing and other 21st Century businesses to it. Many had said it could not be done, but this private investment by Uniland follows the recent investment by TMP Technologies, also on the new Dona St. extension, and reinforces just how desirable and conducive the site is to business. I thank all of our federal, state and local partners who helped us get to this point, and I know we look all forward to the building’s completion as well as to welcoming businesses and jobs back to Lackawanna,” said Erie County executive Mark Poloncarz. The county executive serves as the board chair of the ILDC, which is the land development arm of ECIDA.

According to the approved purchase agreement, Uniland will initiate construction on the spec building within 12 months of the deal’s impending closing date in late spring. Uniland expects to invest approximately \$14.5 million on the site’s development, located along the newly-constructed Dona St. Extension, including \$230,000 for the purchase of the parcel. Uniland will become the first developer and second business at the commerce park site—less than one year after local manufacturer TMP Technologies broke ground on a 280,000 s/f manufacturing facility, also along the Dona St. Extension.

“As the region’s premier large-scale developer, Uniland is proud to partner with the County and the City of Lackawanna on this ambitious project,” said Uniland CEO Michael Montante. “I commend the county and its partners for bringing the site to development-ready status through the infrastructure improvements they’ve made to attract private development. This is one of these public-private partnerships that will bear fruit for years to come as we help fill the need for more industrial real estate product.”

“We have been working with brokers and our other contacts to inform them of this opportunity and its prime location,” Montante said. “We will announce a tenant once an agreement has been

formalized,” he added. Erie County has been working with the City of Lackawanna, the ECIDA, the ILDC and site owner Tecumseh Steel since 2012 to purchase 148 acres on the east border of the 1,000-acre Bethlehem site and redevelop the parcels into a manufacturing commerce park. The ILDC Board’s approval of the Uniland purchase means more than a quarter of the redeveloped acres on the commerce park site are now sold for development.

“Spec space is much-needed in Erie County,” said ECIDA president/CEO John Cappellino. “This partnership with Uniland is a big step forward in offering potential employers the warehouse/manufacturing space they require. We need to be competitive in the manufacturing marketplace, and these types of facilities need to be built in Erie County. This purchase agreement, on the heels of 28 acres sold to TMP Technologies, indicates an increasing interest in the commerce park from developers and manufacturers,” said Cappellino.

“This new public/private partnership with Uniland will help continue our collective momentum around rebuilding the business base and creating employment opportunities in the City of Lackawanna and Erie County,” said Lackawanna mayor Annette Iafallo.

“We’re grateful to Uniland for showing confidence in the development potential of the former steel plant site and helping to fill a great need for warehouse and manufacturing space here locally. I look forward to continued collaboration with county executive Poloncarz and the ILDC as we take this significant step forward in redeveloping the former Bethlehem Steel site,” said Iafallo.

Efforts continue in marketing the remaining acreage to site selectors and businesses, in addition to the ILDC exploring the purchase of more parcels for redevelopment. The ILDC and Erie County plan to unveil the commerce park site name and signage in late spring.

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