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## State picks developer for 33-acre Bronx site

The \$16 million deal will bring hotel, medical facility and office space to Morris Park.

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The Bronx is about to see more development.

Simone Development Companies will build a 1.9-million-square-foot mixed-use office, academic and medical complex on a 33-acre site at 1500 Waters Place, a parcel in the east Bronx.

The state-owned site, next to Simone's Hutchinson Metro Center development, currently houses the Bronx Psychiatric Center of the state's Office of Mental Health. OMH plans to downsize to a newly built 43-acre campus south of the Waters Place parcel.

The \$16 million deal, which is subject to a diligence period and public approval process, is expected to create 1,900 construction jobs and several thousand permanent jobs.

"We look at this as the completion of the mission over the next many years," said Guy Leibler, president of Simone Healthcare Development. "We're big believers in the Bronx."

Bronx-based Simone plans to reconfigure two existing buildings and build six new ones on the site. The structures include two one-story retail buildings of 20,000 square feet each, four 10-story buildings of 250,000-square-feet each, and an adjacent parking garage, according to a statement by the developer.

In addition to the new office space intended for medical services, the project has a retail plaza, a 150-room hotel and 100,000 square feet of space for higher education, according to Empire State Development. The project also will provide community meeting space and other amenities for the Morris Park community. Simone will build a baseball diamond and a turf ball field.

"Retail goes very well with ambulatory medicine," said Mr. Leibler. "Ambulatory medicine brings in people who are healthy enough to move around, and there's usually someone else they bring along to return home with. While the patient is having their procedure, the significant other can browse through a shop or just entertain themselves with



*Courtesy of Empire State Development*

Elevated view of the John W. Thompson (right) and Betty Parker (left) buildings, which will be renovated and repurposed for the project.

coffee and a magazine. That's why we look at the next phase of our development opportunities in a mixed-use manner."

Details on the types of medical services offered to potential tenants have not yet been discussed, but Mr. Leibler hopes for research or biotech facilities.

New York state first issued a request for proposals for the 33-acre, state-owned Bronx site in December 2013. The Empire State Development negotiated with Simone on behalf of OMH, which operates the property, and the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York, which owns the site.



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