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Simone Development Companies selected to purchase, develop former OMH site in the Bronx

By [REW Staff](#)

12:50 pm, February 20, 2015



[Simone Development Companies](#) has submitted the winning bid to acquire and develop a 33-acre site at 1500 Waters Place in the Bronx, adjacent to their existing 42-acre Hutchinson Metro Center office park. Terms of the deal were not disclosed. Joseph Simone, president of Simone Development Companies, made the announcement.



Rendering of
Hutchinson Metro
Expansion

The site comprises the northeastern portion of the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) Bronx Psychiatric Center campus, including three primary buildings comprising an aggregate total of 900,000 square feet, as well as four smaller buildings and a steam generating powerhouse.

In an effort to reduce its facilities footprint, OMH is consolidating its current operations and will maintain a smaller, 43 acre campus of newly constructed buildings adjacent to the site. It is anticipated that the entire 33 acres will be available for development by mid-2015, after being vacated by OMH.

The New York State Urban Development Corporation, d/b/a Empire State Development (ESD), issued a Request for Proposals for the purchase and redevelopment of the 33-acre parcel in the Morris Park section of the Bronx in November 2013. The site is surrounded by commercial, retail and institutional uses with a recent history of significant development by Simone, including the immediately adjacent Metro Center Atrium, a 360,000 square-foot complex including office, medical, hotel and retail space.



Rendering of
Hutchinson Metro
Expansion

ESD President and CEO Designate Howard Zemsky said: “This announcement is wonderful news for the entire Morris Park community, which will benefit greatly from the construction of this new mixed-use development. From medical and retail services to education and community space, this center will serve a variety of important functions for Bronx residents and provide important jobs for local business owners and workers. I look forward to breaking ground on this project and thank our team at ESD, OMH, and DASNY for their continued collaboration and efforts.”

Simone Development’s Hutchinson Metro Center, which borders the development parcel, is one of the most successful commercial projects in the history of the Bronx, totaling over 1.4 million square feet of office, medical and retail space that is nearly completely occupied by some of the leading medical, educational and government tenants in New York City, including Montefiore Hospital, Affinity Health Systems, Mercy College, the NYC Housing Authority, the IRS and the NYC Administration of Children’s Services among dozens of tenants employing over 6,000 individuals. The campus is also home to a new Marriott, the borough’s only major flag hotel, LA Fitness, Applebee’s and other major retailers.

“We are extremely gratified to have been selected to develop this parcel and add to the borough’s only Class A office park,” said Mr. Simone. “What started as a dream 20 years ago to transform this underutilized site has become a reality, and this new addition will allow Simone Development Companies to expand our vision for the New Bronx and attract even more employers to the area.”

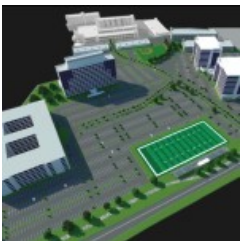
Simone Development’s proposal for the site includes two construction phases totaling nearly 1.9 million square feet of new and renovated commercial space consistent with the aesthetic of the existing Hutch Metro Center, providing a cohesiveness that tie the projects together both physically and visually.

In Phase I, the existing Betty Parker Building at the site will be reconfigured to include infill at both ends, creating two open air courtyards. Upon completion, the revitalized building will total 500,000 square feet for business or medical offices, targeting such uses as a healthcare training institute, educational space and an incubator for biotech research.

The existing John W. Thompson Building will also be redesigned to include a business hotel with meeting facilities and a community college, both totaling 100,000 square feet. A 60,000 square foot parcel in back of the building will be converted into a two-level parking garage.

Phase I will also include construction of two new one-story retail buildings of 20,000 square feet each featuring service, retail and restaurant tenants. Simone will also build new athletic facilities including a baseball diamond and turf football/soccer/lacrosse field. Both fields will include related amenities and lighting for evening events.

Phase II of the project will include four new 10-story buildings of 250,000 square feet each for business and medical offices, as well as an adjacent parking garage. All of the buildings in both phases will be clad in aluminum composite panels to blend harmoniously with Simone’s existing buildings at the Hutch Metro Center and target LEED certification and Energy Star rating. The existing Parker and Thompson buildings will be upgraded with LED light fixtures, high Solar Reflective Index and low flow plumbing fixtures to reduce energy use and conserve water. The parking lots will include electric vehicle charging stations.



Rendering of
Hutchinson Metro
Expansion

The project is part of OMH’s continued efforts to enhance the efficiency of its real estate footprint and convert its large 76-acre campus of older facilities into a smaller 43-acre campus of new buildings at the Bronx Psychiatric Center. OMH’s ongoing efforts, which are expected to be

completed by mid-2015, will enable the agency to facilitate new private development while maintaining and improving both its facilities and services in the area.

OMH Commissioner Ann Marie T. Sullivan, M.D. said: “The redesigned Bronx Psychiatric Center will be a state-of-the-art campus providing high-quality, safe, and comprehensive mental health care to New York residents. Through innovative architecture, this new facility is designed to enable recovery and aid in the community reintegration of individuals with mental illness.”

Representative Joe Crowley said: “The construction of this new multi-purpose facility in Morris Park is an exciting development for the Bronx. I thank Empire State Development for their commitment in making the most of this incredible opportunity to create good-paying jobs, spur our local economy and give back to the surrounding communities. Not only will this project have a revitalizing effect in the area but its impact will be felt for many years to come.”

Senator Jeff Klein said: “The new mixed-use space announced today by Empire State Development marks a significant and profound investment in the Bronx. It’s projects like this that are bringing good-paying jobs to the community, creating opportunities for business to thrive and paving the way for future growth and economic success.”

Assemblyman Michael Benedetto said: “This is a great example of government and private business working together to achieve a stronger economy, by producing more quality jobs while at the same time helping business and quality of life in a community. I applaud ESD on this fine use of government/private company partnership.”

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. said: “This development is a major new addition to our growing, diverse economy. This transformative project will create thousands of new jobs, and I am excited to bring this new professional and medical space to our borough.”



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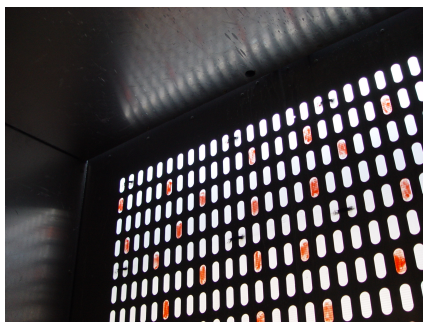
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