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Street-Works LLC unveils \$1 billion downtown Quincy redevelopment project

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Street-Works LLC, based in White Plains, NY, recently unveiled a sweeping \$1 billion redevelopment project that will transform downtown Quincy into a vibrant, attractive urban center with new sidewalks, new retailers, additional parking and more than 1,000 new apartments and condominiums.

"This will be the largest development project in Quincy's history and one of the largest projects in New England," Mayor Thomas Koch told more than 100 business men and women at a March 3rd breakfast meeting hosted by Quincy 2000. "The people of Quincy have been waiting for several generations for a project of this importance and magnitude, and now its time has come."

Quincy is located about seven miles south of Boston and has a rich maritime and political history dating back to the 1600s. Two presidents, John Adams and John Quincy Adams, were born in Quincy, as was the Revolutionary War figure John Hancock.

Street-Works has invested more than \$15 million in property purchases in downtown Quincy thus far, and plans to spend another \$3 million in the coming months on further purchases and site development work. Street-Works' founding partner Richard Heapes said the company and the city control about 70% of the downtown area, allowing them to move forward with the project. Street-Works plans to submit a site approval package to the Quincy city council by January 2010, and would anticipate beginning construction later in 2010. The project is expected to last five to eight years and create thousands of jobs.

Key to the project will be street and sidewalk reconfiguration around the downtown area's historic landmarks, including Hancock Cemetery, Old City Hall and the United First Parish Church, also known as the Church of the Presidents. This area, which borders the Quincy Center MBTA stop, will become a pedestrian-friendly mix of benches, lighting, trees and public walking paths.

The downtown development project would be anchored by new and renovated office buildings, including a new building at 1440 Hancock St. that could reach 20 stories. The project envisions one or two new hotels. As part of its zoning requests to the city council, Street-Works will seek the ability to develop a building at the height in order to have flexibility in attracting a tenant. The downtown area would feature sidewalk level retail stores and restaurants, and the sidewalks would be widened to between 18 and 20 ft. in order to accommodate open cafes. The entire downtown area will be lined with mature trees.

The project is anticipated to attract \$1 billion in private investment and will require about \$200 million in public infrastructure improvements, including replacing or upgrading utility lines, sewer lines and other infrastructure components. A crucial feature of the downtown development project is the Quincy Concourse, a long-awaited east-west thoroughfare that will allow motorists to drive between Rte. 3A and the Burgin Pkwy. without having to impact any streets in Quincy Center. The concourse

construction project is now underway.

Street-Works will construct five consumer-oriented garages, all four or five stories each, featuring painted walls, brightly-lit decks and escalators. In all, some 2,500 new parking spaces will be added through the project. The garages will be managed by a single entity, either the city or a private company. The garages will be distributed strategically in order to provide easy access for residents, workers and shoppers. Street-Works' plan envisions several large retailers, including department stores, and a wide mix of service-oriented retailers such as hair salons, butchers, restaurants, delis and other merchants providing staple products for residents in the expected 1,100 new apartments and condominiums. Street-Works also anticipates a wellness center featuring a gym and medical facilities as well as a permanent downtown home for Quincy College.

Mayor Koch and Quincy 2000 anticipate a dramatically altered downtown that will attract new residents, new businesses and visitors from surrounding towns attracted to the restaurants, shops and ambience of the new center. Koch and representatives from Street-Works recently met with Jeffrey Simon, the new state director of federal stimulus package funds, with the hope of securing stimulus money for the project.

Street-Works, formed in the 1990s, is both a developer and a consultant to other developers. The company has completed major urban redesign projects from coast to coast, and prides itself on creating attractive, pedestrian-friendly downtown areas that attract residents, shoppers and employers. The company recently completed a \$285 million development of Blue Back Square in West Hartford, an area formerly consisting of several defunct car dealerships and numerous vacant lots. Blue Back Square now features restaurants, cafes, open public areas, apartments and condominiums, and retailers such as Barnes & Noble, Crate & Barrel, REI and a N.Y. Sports Club. The company's other endeavors include a \$200 million project in Bethesda, Md., a \$750 million project in San Jose, Calif. and a \$200 million project in New Rochelle, N.Y. Founding partner Richard Heapes told the Quincy 2000 breakfast attendees that the company's vision for Quincy center is based on the firm's knowledge of public urban areas and its past achievements.

"We're not experimenting on Quincy. Everything we will do on this project is something we've done successfully in other places, and that includes development, financing, design, and everything else. What attracted us to Quincy was its historic identity, its proximity to Boston and public transportation, its location on the water and the very sound steps the city's leaders have taken in order to zone the city properly for a project of this scope," Heapes said.

Clearly, the city of Quincy is on the move and the revitalization of its downtown commercial center is a priority for community and state leaders. The city takes great stock in its tremendous assets and is exhibiting leadership and vision as it strives to establish a 21st Century city that is reinvigorated physically, socially and economically.

The city welcomes the opportunity to boast of these exciting initiatives to promote new investment opportunities within our rejuvenated downtown and places high value on protecting the public realm, preserving history and fostering sustainable development practices. Whether a company requires public transportation, a deep sea port, commercial rail, a beautiful waterfront, access to major highways, proximity to Boston, a quality workforce or a diversified community - Quincy is the place to live, work and invest in. Quincy 2000 Collaborative and the city administration are eager to convince you that here in Quincy We Mean Business!

Dean Rizzo is executive director of Quincy 2000 Collaborative, Quincy, Mass.