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Willard Redevelopment Study Brings Historic Collaboration to Seneca County

[Romulus, NY] – For the first time, three Seneca County organizations will come together in an official joint meeting for the unveiling of the Highest & Best Use Study for the Willard Drug Treatment Campus. This historic show of unity between the Seneca County Board of Supervisors, Chamber of Commerce, and Industrial Development Agency (IDA) highlights the significance of the Willard reuse project as a catalyst of growth and progress for the community. The final presentation of the Willard Highest & Best Use Study will be held on **Monday, November 13 at 5:00pm** in the auditorium at **South Seneca High School**, 7263 Main Street, Ovid, NY. All are welcome to attend.

As part of a proactive approach to the future of the closed campus, the IDA's contracted consulting team – MRB Group, EDR, Bero Architecture, and HRP Associates – has developed a Highest & Best Use Study. This study assessed the feasibility and impact of various uses that could be part of the redevelopment of the site. The study also provides a strategy for the community, including a number of partners that make up the Willard Task Force, to rebuild economic and community vibrancy at the site.

Community engagement has been a cornerstone of this initiative; the IDA held two Public Input Sessions in July and October to gather comments and ideas from the public. During these sessions, attendees were provided with information about the site, its history and architecture, the local economy and demographics, and more. Attendees then responded to and shared their visions for the future of the site. At the October session, the consulting team presented a draft conceptual site plan, which included recreational, residential, educational, and hospitality uses, among others. The team considered economic conditions, demographics, site features, and community input in developing these concepts. While the actual uses and redevelopment will be defined over time in partnership with developers, the proposed concepts were generally well received and supported at the October meeting.

Seneca County Manager, Kyle Lovell commented, "We are thrilled to embark on this historic collaboration with the IDA and the Chamber of Commerce. The Willard Drug Treatment Campus has a unique place in our county's history, and together, we are determined to ensure that it has an even brighter future."

Jeff Shipley, President of the Seneca County Chamber of Commerce said, “The redevelopment of the former Willard Drug Treatment campus is an important issue facing all Seneca County residents and businesses. The project has the potential to fundamentally transform our community and create sustainable economic development for many years to come. We applaud the work of the Willard Task Force and look forward to helping both the IDA and Seneca County Board of Supervisors move forward with unified leadership on this collective vision.”

Sarah Davis, Executive Director of the Seneca County IDA, added, “The passion and commitment of our community have been evident throughout this process. We're excited about the future of the Willard Campus, its potential to be a beacon of innovation and community spirit, and the opportunities it is already bringing for collaboration with the County Board of Supervisors and Chamber.”

For more information about the Willard Campus Reuse Project, visit www.senecacountyida.org.

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