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## Erie County development agency gives \$700,000 in tax breaks to apartment project

By DAVID ROBINSON **News Business Reporter** 2/15/2005

A \$3.4 million project by developer Eran Epstein to convert a mostly vacant warehouse into 40 apartments for low-income senior citizens will receive tax breaks worth nearly \$700,000 through the Erie County Industrial Development Agency.

The tax breaks, which include \$583,000 in property tax savings, were granted Monday to 937 Broadway LLC, a partnership between E Square Capital and CWG Development Associates, which plan to convert the top three floors in the four-story building into apartments. The first floor of the four-story building will remain as retail space.

"This will serve as a catalyst in the neighborhood to attract both neighbors and businesses," said David W. Kerchoff, the IDA's deputy chief lending officer.

The IDA also approved a request on behalf of Buffalo printing products company Graphic Controls Corp. to obtain a \$222,000 grant through the state Department of Economic Development to help it buy new equipment that will reduce waste during printing processes.

The agency also approved expanding the size of a pair of previously approved projects. The IDA increased the value of a project by McKinley Universal Liquor Co. and Service Universal Distributors to build a 39,375-square-foot warehouse and distribution facility at 125 Allied Drive in Cheektowaga to \$2.65 million from the \$2.1 million the agency approved last March.

The company, which currently employs 54 people, expects to add five jobs over the next two years, IDA officials said.

The agency also increased the value of a project by Buffalo real estate executive Peter F. Hunt to build a Hunt Real Estate Corp. headquarters, back office and training facility at 430 Dick Road in Cheektowaga to \$1.5 million from the \$1.2 million originally approved by the IDA in October 2003. Hunt said it expects to increase its work force from 36 today to 47 after two years.

The agency also approved a lease for Hammond Manufacturing Co., a Guelph, Ont., manufacturer of electronic plastic cases for electronic enclosures that is moving into 19,800 square feet at the Airport Commerce Park II at 475 Cayuga Drive in Cheektowaga.

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Hammond is set to receive 200 kilowatts of low-cost electricity from the New York Power Authority to support its \$1 million plant in Cheektowaga. The company is moving a portion of its operations from Waterloo, Ont. About 14 jobs will be transferred and another 10 created at the plant, the Power Authority said.

An IDA affiliate, the Regional Development Corp., approved a \$500,000 loan for Regional Integrated Logistics that will allow the Town of Tonawanda trucking and warehousing firm to acquire its leased facility at 2321 Kenmore Ave., as well as to purchase equipment and obtain working capital. The company expects to add 10 jobs to its 31-person work force over the next three years, the RDC said.

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