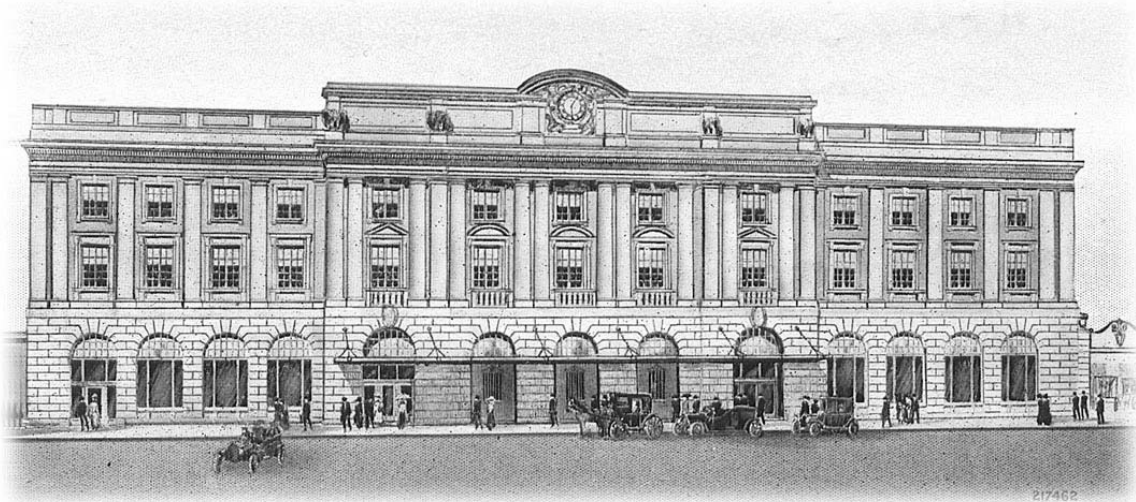




**Oneida County Department of Planning**  
Boehlert Center at Union Station, 321 Main Street, Utica, NY 13501

**April 2005**

**Request for Proposal**



**Lease/Operation of Restaurant Union Station Utica, New York**

Oneida County seeks to identify interested parties to enter into a lease to operate the restaurant facility at Union Station to serve the traveling public, employees and visitors to the Station. Union Station, owned by Oneida County, is located in the historic Bagg's Square area of the City of Utica, one mile from NYS Thruway Exit 31 and the Erie Canal. The construction of Union Station was completed in 1914 and the building is on both the New York State and Federal Registers of Historic Places.

## **I. Background: Purpose**

Union Station currently serves as a multi-modal transportation center, including the following uses: Amtrak train service; Greyhound and Adirondack Trailways' inter-regional bus service; Birnie Bus Services and CENTRO/ONEIDA regional bus services. In addition, the Station houses a bookstore, barber shop, the offices of the Adirondack Railroad, and is the home to five Oneida County government departments: Probation, Public Defender, Motor Vehicles, Board of Elections, and Planning

## **II. Capital Improvements: Status**

**NB: It is important to note that the County of Oneida expects to award bids for construction work that will commence in the late spring of 2005 and which will extend into 2006, some of which will involve significant construction activity and may cause some inconveniences on the ground level of Union Station.**

Oneida County in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration, Federal Highway Administration and the New York State Department of Transportation has embarked on a major program to renovate Union Station, enhancing its function as a multimodal transportation center. Since the mid-1990's over \$17 million of Federal, State and County funding has been invested in the restoration, preservation, and improvement of this facility.

Current building improvements will include work on the ground floor level of the main building and will include improvements to the storefronts, signage, electrical, HVAC, terrazzo floor restoration, and skylight improvements. Work planned to be complete in Spring 2006.

## **III. Pedestrian Traffic:**

There is significant potential for a profitable restaurant operation at Union Station when considering County employee counts, other tenant employee counts, neighboring businesses including the Trackside Tavern, Doyle Hardware, Children's Museum, NetJet, Gaffney Communications, and others. Annual bus and rail passenger counts (not including CENTRO) are approximately 150,000; the Department of Motor Vehicles handles between 500 and 700 transactions daily; the Adirondack Scenic Railroad "Thomas the Tank engine" promotion averaged nearly 20,000 visitors over two weekends in 2003 and 2004 and is striving for more in 2005. Visitors to County offices and participants in public events such as Christmas on Main Street, weddings, and train shows, bring several thousand more to the Station each year.

## **IV. Restaurant Facility and Utilities and Services:**

## **Description**

The restaurant facility is located off the main lobby of the Station. Customer access to the facility can be gained through the lobby of the Station or through a separate entry for the restaurant located on the west side of the Station, across from the Children's Museum. The attached floor plan of the Station (attachment #1) shows the spaces to be leased. With the permission of the County, a prescribed outdoor area of the public space located on the north (track) side of the Station may be made available to the lessee on a seasonal basis for restaurant purposes.

## **Operating Parameters: Limits & Conditions Utility Systems and Services: Responsibility**

The restaurant is served by separate telephone and gas, and electric meters and the cost of these services, as well as appropriate trash removal, will be the responsibility of the lessee. The County will provide space heating and water. The lessee will be responsible for all routine maintenance and cleaning of leased space and equipment including the indoor and outdoor cafe areas. There are two air conditioning units, one for the Grill Room and one in the Dining Room. The lessee will be responsible for maintenance, repair and replacement of these units, if necessary and accepts them on an as-is basis. The County will provide routine cleaning and maintenance of the Main Lobby, public restrooms and the outside of the building including sidewalks and parking lots (including sanding and plowing). The County will repair any plumbing problems that occur below the floor of the lessee's space or other problems identified as structural in nature. Currently the County retains a private security firm at the Station 24 hours per day and 7 days per week, however this service is not specifically provided to tenant spaces. In addition, the Oneida County Sheriff's Department has a daily weekday presence in the station from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The intent of the County is to enter into a lease for the operation of a restaurant at Union Station to serve the needs of the traveling public, employees and visitors to the Station. The following represents the limits and conditions that will be set forth in the lease agreement.

## **Alcoholic Beverages**

It is specifically the intent of the County that the restaurant **NOT** be operated, or give the appearance of being operated, primarily as a bar. However, the County will permit the serving of alcoholic beverages only in support of and subordinate to the operation of a restaurant. Alcoholic beverages may be served in the restaurant, Grill Room, and the indoor Cafe area. With the permission of the County, alcoholic beverages may be served in the prescribed outdoor area. Further, alcoholic beverages may be served in the main lobby during special events, with County permission. Serving alcoholic beverages in any location will be subject to the lessee obtaining appropriate permits from the NYS Alcoholic Beverage Control Board.

## **Entertainment**

Entertainment will be permitted only in support of and subordinate to restaurant operations. The type of entertainment will be subject to approval by the County. Entertainment must not conflict with the Station's transportation function, other tenant operations or office use. The hours during which entertainment will be permitted will be set forth by the County.

### **Sole Operation**

To help ensure the success of the lessee's operations, the County will not permit another restaurant facility to locate and operate within Union Station.

### **Concession Sales**

The County will permit the sale of concession type items such as prepackaged candy, gum, canned soft drinks, etc. at the Station's Bookstore. Also, the sale of coffee and donuts, and canned soft drinks will be permitted at GAB Transportation.

### **Use of Lobby**

The County will permit the lessee, through a permit system, to hold special events, such as shows, dinners, concerts, etc. in the main lobby. Events held in the main lobby cannot conflict with the operations of the Station or adversely impact the Station's tenants.

### **Sublease Restrictions**

The County will not permit the lessee to sublease the restaurant facility.

### **Operations & Maintenance**

The County intends to lease the restaurant in good operating condition, as will be more fully defined in the lease. It will be the responsibility of the lessee to make any improvements, subject to prior approval by the County, and to operate and maintain the restaurant in compliance with all relevant federal, state and local codes, rules and regulations.

### **Smoking**

Smoking by restaurant patrons or employees will not be permitted anywhere within Union Station. Smoking will be permitted in the prescribed outdoor area only as permitted by law.

## **V. Request for Proposal:**

### **Response Elements:**

The response to the RFP should include the following information:

- Identify desired time period of lease and renewal options.
- Description of the concept planned for restaurant operations.
- Include the days the restaurant will be open for business each week and the hours of operation expected for each week and weekend day.
- Provide a sample menu showing the type of food to be served (i.e. breakfast, lunch, dinner and/or after dinner).
- Note the hours during which each meal will be served.
- Note whether alcoholic beverages will be served and if so describe how such service will be integrated into the restaurant operation.
- Note if entertainment is planned as part of restaurant operations and if so describe the type of entertainment and the proposed schedule.
- Describe any improvements planned by the lessee for the restaurant including equipment, furnishings etc.
- Include a general business plan for restaurant operations and describe any plans for advertising or promoting restaurant operations to the public, travelers and employees. Also, describe any plans for utilizing the main lobby area for community and/or restaurant related events.
- Name, addresses and telephone number of the prospective lessee.
- Complete resume of prospective lessee and all principal personnel to be involved in the management and operation of the restaurant.
- Evidence of personal experience of the lessee and principal personnel specifically with the management and operation of restaurant facilities.
- Financial statement of the prospective lessee indicating sufficient resources available for successful promotion, management and operation of the restaurant facility.
- Names, addresses and telephone numbers of at least three (3) references of individuals with direct knowledge of the experience of the lessee and principals involved in restaurant management and operation.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

Criteria for evaluation will include:

- Experience in successful restaurant management and operations
- Financial resources
- Strength of business plan
- Operation consistent with the historic character and function of the station
- Ability to service the traveling public and employees of the station
- Innovative ideas or plans to promote use of the restaurant facility and station
- Investment in the restaurant
- Other factors deemed relevant by the county

In selecting a lessee the County will consider all of the information provided by the respondents to the RFP as well as reference checks and other information derived from any investigation that the County may perform.

The financial terms and length of the lease will be negotiated with the prospective lessee, identified through this RFP process.

### **Response Submissions and Timetable**

**Three (3) copies (one of which shall be in a reproducible format)** of the RFP response must be submitted.

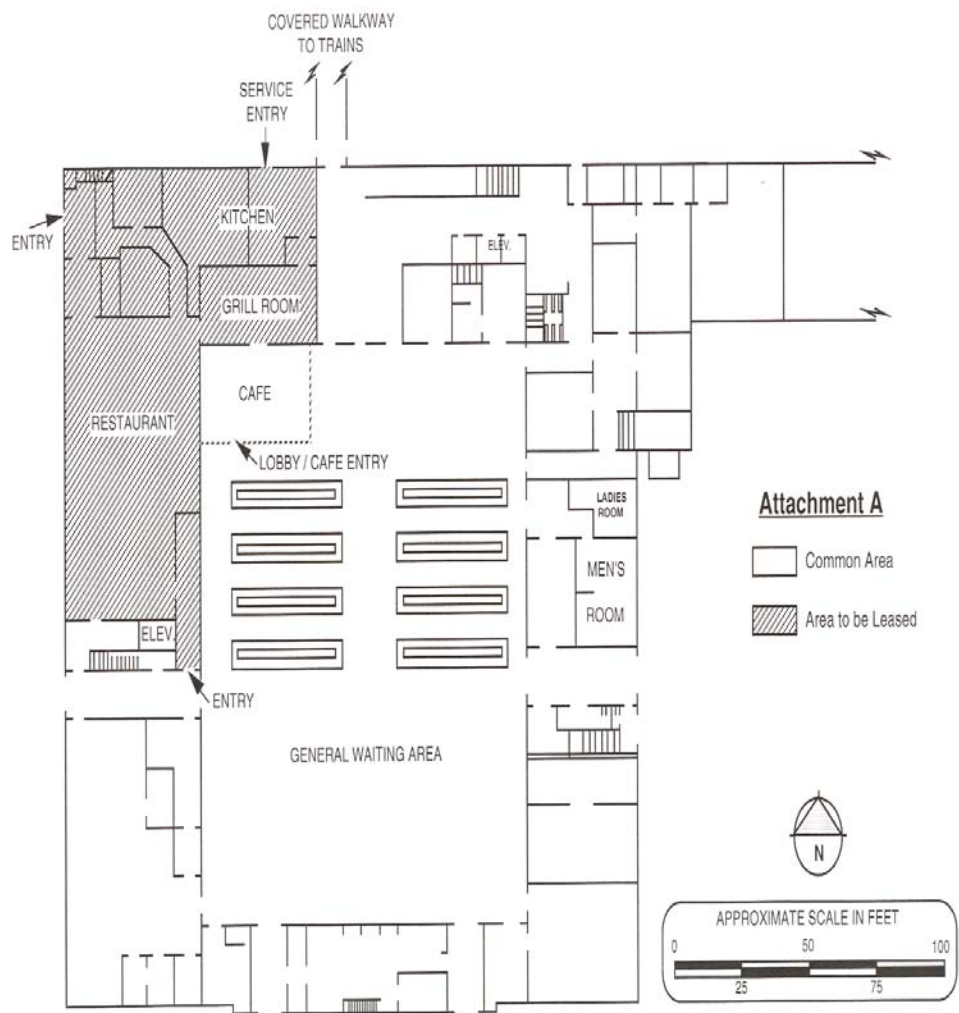
**Submittals *must* be received by 3:00 PM on May 13, 2005**, at the office of the Oneida County Department of Planning, 3rd. Floor, Boehlert Center at Union Station, 321 Main Street, Utica, New York, 13501.

There will be a pre RFP submittal meeting at 9:00 AM. on April 29, 2005 at Union Station to tour the restaurant facility, answer questions and provide relevant factual information. Attendance at the meeting is not required and is at the option of the respondent.

Any questions concerning the RFP should be addressed to: John R. Kent, Jr., Oneida County Commissioner of Planning, Boehlert Center at Union Station, 321 Main Street Utica, New York, 13501 **Telephone:** (315) 798-5710 **Fax:** (315) 798-5852 **E-mail:** [planning@ocgov.net](mailto:planning@ocgov.net).

### **Note the following:**

- Respondents *may* be asked to interview NLT week of May 16, 2005
- Anticipate selection and notification of tentative candidate NLT May 20, 2005
- Anticipate lease negotiations complete started and completed NLT June 10, 2005
- Anticipate lease approval by Board of Legislators by late July 2005.
- Note, these dates are approximate and subject to change.



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