



For Immediate Release

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Contact: Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway: Taryn Duffy T: 914-457-2431 C: 914-819-7972; tduffy@yonkersraceway.com; Cirillo World: John Cirillo 914-260-7436, johnnycigarpr@aol.com

Largest Employer in City of Yonkers Creates Additional Jobs...

EMPIRE CITY CASINO AT YONKERS RACEWAY BREAKS GROUND ON \$40 MILLION EXPANSION -- 300 NEW JOBS EXPECTED -- INVESTMENT TO BUILD ON MORE THAN \$1 BILLION CONTRIBUTION TO NY STATE & YONKERS SCHOOLS

Casino President Timothy J. Rooney, Elected Officials from Brooklyn to Buffalo and Business and Community Leaders Herald New Jobs and Investment

Yonkers, NY, July 26, 2011—State and local officials gathered at **Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway** (Empire City Casino) today to break ground on a \$40 Million expansion that is expected to produce more than 200 new construction jobs and 100 permanent jobs at Yonkers' largest employer and New York's most successful racino.

At a news conference unveiling the expansion, Empire City Casino President Timothy J. Rooney was joined by state officials, elected representatives, business and community leaders from Brooklyn to Buffalo who praised the expansion for creating new jobs and giving a shot in the arm to local economic development activities which will build on the Raceway's billion dollar investment in schools in Yonkers and across New York State.

"We are proud to be Yonkers' largest employer with 1,200 employees and we are committed to this community," **Empire City Casino's President and owner, Timothy J. Rooney**, said. "As we grow and expand everyone benefits. By investing in Yonkers and Empire City, we will create new jobs and provide critically needed revenue for our schools, our community and our state during difficult economic times."

The 66,000 square-foot space, which was part of the original casino construction approvals issued by the New York State Lottery and the New York State Racing and Wagering Board in 2006, will provide 30,000 square feet of additional gaming space, 20,000 square feet of food and beverage facility space, 6,000 square feet for a new casino entrance, and 10,000 square feet of office and administrative related space.

The expansion will allow Empire City to reconfigure its current gaming layout, relocating 350 of its existing 5,310 slot machines while introducing 400 new electronic table gaming seats for its customers. This new space will significantly enhance the gaming and entertainment experience for patrons, and the new casino entrance will include a high-tech porte-cochère that will not only enhance the architecture of the structure but also provide necessary protections for guests during inclement weather. Completion of the addition is expected in early 2012.

Empire City Casino collaborated with the Yonkers Industrial Development Agency ("IDA") to negotiate an agreement that helped secure the continued viability of the City's largest employer, created much-needed jobs and directed substantial funding to the City of Yonkers at a time of great financial concern.

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“Nearly 30 contracts will be awarded through this project and we expect the majority of construction jobs to go to New Yorkers,” **Rooney** added. “Almost all of our local New York trade unions will be involved in this project: teamsters, laborers, carpenters, brick masons, plumbers, electricians, and sheet metal workers, just to name to a few.”

Contracts have already been awarded to Sentrale Construction of White Plains, Enterprise Architectural Sales Inc. of Manhattan, and Berlin Steele, who will be using all local labor. Additionally, the installation of the high-tech porte-cochère, which will be the largest installation of this innovative European e-foil technology in the United States, is expected to be completed by a New York company.

“To fulfill Empire City Casino’s directive and ensure that the created jobs go to New Yorkers, a Project Labor Agreement was signed with the local business union trades so that the local workforce will be utilized,” said **Frank Ciminelli, Senior Vice President of LPCiminelli, Inc.**, the construction management firm on the project. “In the last week we’ve accepted plumbing, mechanical, fire protection and electrical bids, all of which will be awarded to New York contractors.

Designed by Studio V Architects PLLC of New York City, the architecture of the new casino at Yonkers Raceway is a dramatic departure from ordinary casino design. A dramatic curved façade features over 45 feet of frameless low iron glass in a 300-foot arc that creates a backdrop to the entry canopy and a window onto the interior of the casino. The sculptural entrance structure is inspired by the unique landscape of “the hilltop track” at Yonkers Raceway. A massive steel lattice shell structure grows out of the hillside to create a sculptural entrance canopy that forms an icon on the exterior, and a dramatic backdrop to the excitement and activity of the casino interior. This will be covered in an innovative material, ETFE foil, and will be the largest structure of its kind in North America.

Jay Valgora, the principal and founder of Studio V Architecture described their design: “At Yonkers Raceway, we set out to completely re-invent the modern casino. The typical casino is a themed box cut off from its environment. In our design, a four story high arc of frameless glass expresses the energy of the casino on the outside, and brings the drama of the unique landscape and architecture into the gaming hall.”

Empire City Casino’s success to date results from a cooperative effort with the Division of Lottery, strategic marketing, savvy business planning, and a tremendous amount of hard work. The organization is committed to continuing its role as a partner in education with the State of New York, as well as serving as a strong community partner and employer to Yonkers, Mount Vernon and all of the surrounding areas.

“The New York Lottery is proud to celebrate Empire City Casino’s current growth and continued profitability. The substantial increases in net win and profit recorded by Empire City Casino last fiscal year helped the New York Lottery close out the year with a \$3.05 billion contribution to education statewide – with more than \$23.3 million of that going to schools right here in the Yonkers School District. We look forward to the expanded profits these enhancements will bring in our ongoing mission to raise additional profits for education,” said **New York State Lottery Director Gordon Medenica**.

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“Since early 2007, Empire City Casino has contributed over \$1 Billion to the State’s education system, and approximately \$105 Million in funding to the City of Yonkers – and that steady stream of revenue will continue,” said **Timothy J. Rooney, Jr.** “Hundreds of construction jobs and nearly 1,200 permanent jobs have been created. This is a partnership that works well and will continue to prove successful for as long as we have the support and partnership of our elected officials and communities.”

Mayor Philip A. Amicone said, “With this Raceway expansion, Yonkers has hit the trifecta: 279 new jobs – both permanent and construction – will be created; at a time of significant budget constraints, the project will provide a new, and much welcomed, infusion of tax revenue into the City coffers; and Empire City will stay one step ahead of its competition and secure its place as an attractive visitor destination. I wish the Raceway great success in the years to come.”

State Senator John Bonacic said, "The job creation created by this investment is welcome both in New York State and the horse racing and entertainment industry. I look forward to continuing to see our harness track properties grow with private sector development opportunity. I also look forward to helping facilitate, as both Chairman of the Senate Racing Committee and the Senate Judiciary Committee, a Constitutional amendment to legalize casino gaming."

"Yonkers success is great and encouraging news for the horse racing industry in New York and the thousands of jobs it sustains," **Assembly Racing and Wagering Committee Chairman Gary Pretlow** said. The breeders, the horsemen, the track all benefit by the investments being made and horse racing continues to benefit by the successful marriage of gaming with racing which has introduced the sport to a new generation of fans."

New York State Racing and Wagering Board Chairman John D. Sabini said, "This expansion not only enhances an already successful gaming facility, but shines a light on one of the best harness tracks in the nation. Plus, Empire City's commitment to create hundreds of jobs as part of this project is in line with Governor Cuomo's priority of putting New Yorkers back to work. This is a positive development for New York's racing and gaming, as well as the state's economy."

Senator Jeffrey D. Klein, (D-Bronx/Westchester) said, "This is a very important day, not just for Empire City, but for the greater Yonkers area. This expansion will create more jobs when we need it the most, create additional funding for Yonkers schools at this critically important time, and make this city even more of a destination where locally owned businesses can thrive."

Assemblyman Mike Spano (D-Yonkers) said, "This expansion means more construction jobs, more permanent jobs, and increased funds for the state, for Yonkers, and for its schools. Education especially benefits from Raceway revenues and I am happy to have helped make that happen over the years. I look forward to keeping this partnership going for the benefit of Yonkers and its schools."

“This project is a prime example demonstrating how smart investments by the IDA can generate economic activity vital to our City’s future. Yonkers Raceway – already an important engine for our local economy that generated \$23 million in direct revenue to the city in the last year alone – will contribute even more direct jobs and tax revenue, while having a positive impact on other Yonkers businesses for years to come,” said **Ellen Lynch, president and CEO of the Yonkers IDA.**

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"The expansion of the Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway will create many needed jobs and increase the city's potential for future investments and economic development. I am pleased to see this responsible financial agreement come to fruition," said **Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson (D-Mount Vernon)**.

"It's a proud moment for Empire City Casino -- and a fortuitous one for Yonkers, Westchester County and the State of New York -- when the state's most successful racino breaks ground for expansion. By creating one hundred new permanent jobs and potentially increasing its already-substantial contributions to the state education fund and the lottery, Empire City is giving the people of this city, county and state exactly the kind of economic good news they want to hear. On the occasion of this groundbreaking I offer my congratulations on the organization's success to date and my best wishes for continued growth and success in the future," said **Assemblymember Amy Paulin (D-Eastchester)**.

"Thanks to the government/private partnership, economic development is off and running in Yonkers," said **Assemblyman Thomas Abinanti (D-Greenburgh)**.

"I am excited to join with Empire City at Yonkers Raceway (ECYR) for their expansion groundbreaking. This expansion will create 200 well-paying union jobs in construction and 100 permanent positions that will be an economic boost for both Yonkers and the Northwest Bronx. I applaud ECYR for their commitment to economic development and their commitment to education, having contributed \$1 billion to education in New York State that is helping ensure our children are able to receive a quality education," said **Senator Gustavo Rivera (D-Bronx)**.

"Empire City Casino is an economic development project that draws people from across the entire region and benefits not only the City of Yonkers but all of Westchester County," says **Marissa Brett, Executive Director of Economic Development for the Westchester County Association**. She added: "We applaud the Rooneys' decision to continue investing in Westchester, and the Yonkers IDA for partnering with them. We look forward to the job growth and tax revenues that are sure to follow."

Westchester County Executive Robert P. Astorino said, "This expansion is great news, not just for Yonkers but all of Westchester. It will create jobs and help stimulate our economy. Congratulations to everyone involved."

"The additional funding this expansion means to the City of Yonkers translates into much-needed aid for the Yonkers Public Schools. The educational dollars generated will provide our students with programs recently threatened due to our budgetary constraints," said **Yonkers Superintendent of Schools Bernard P. Pierorazio**.

About Empire City Casino:

Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway features: 5,310 slot machines, electronic roulette and video craps, dining in the Empire Terrace Restaurant, which overlooks the track for live harness racing, and Nonno's Trattoria for Italian cuisine, as well as a quick bite at the International Food Court and its wide-ranging menu. The multi-faceted Good Time Room is available for parties, benefits, weddings, and major events for up to 500.

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Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway is located at 810 Yonkers Avenue (at Central Avenue) in Yonkers, New York, Westchester County, (I-87 to Exit 2). Empire City Casino is open seven days a week from 10:00 AM to 2:00 AM Sunday through Thursday, and until 4:00 AM on Friday and Saturday. For more information call 914.968.4200 or log onto www.empirecitygaming.com.

About Studio V Architecture:

In just five years, STUDIO V Architecture has grown to be one of the most unusual and innovative architecture firms in New York City. The Studio's work focuses on the unique expression and contradiction of culture in the contemporary city.

The firm is currently designing a range of extraordinarily diverse projects including three showcase sustainable communities in Long Island City and Astoria and contemporary mixed-use building for the RKO Keith site in Flushing showcasing a landmarked 1920's theatre lobby enclosed in a sculptural curtain of glass. Other projects include the a 260 foot sculptural tower with exposed steel bracing as a corporate headquarters for a construction company, the adaptive re-use of 32 industrial structures in Sunset Park Brooklyn, and a floating building for a Jersey City Marina. The studio is currently designing a museum for an abandoned railway bridge between the US and Canada overlooking the famous Niagara Falls.

About LPCiminelli:

Founded in Buffalo, N.Y. in 1961 LPCiminelli has been achieving award winning results for institutional and commercial clients for 50 years. The company, an ISO 9001:2000 certified firm, offers a full range of construction services including program management, construction management, general contracting and design-build. Focused mostly in the Northeast, LPCiminelli has expanded its geographic reach to deliver projects across the country as well as to several international locations. The company has been recognized for many of its projects, winning an unprecedented seven Build New York Awards and a prestigious Build America award.

**HIGH-RES DESIGN PHOTOS & PHOTOS FROM EVENT WILL BE AVAILABLE AFTER 1:30PM AT
www.yonkersraceway.com/groundbreaking**

Contacts:

Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway: Taryn Duffy T: 914-457-2431 C: 914-819-7972;
tduffy@yonkersraceway.com

Cirillo World: John Cirillo, 914-260-7436, johnnycigarpr@aol.com

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