



North Youngmann Commerce Center Now Open for Business

By Kevin Jolly

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TONAWANDA, N.Y. -- Following the recent announcement NRG may be closing its Huntley plant in Tonawanda, the town is marking the opening of a brand new industrial complex.

Wednesday, Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz along with Congressman Brian Higgins and town of Tonawanda officials cut ribbon marking the grand opening of the North Youngmann Commerce Center on Two Mile Creek Road. Turning the agricultural site formerly known as the "mud flats" into an industrial park wasn't without its challenges.

"This is a huge project because what we're talking about is a major shovel ready site, taking an area that was previously had some environmental contamination, cleaning it up and turning it into a brand new commerce center our community," said Poloncarz.

So far, three businesses have already committed to open shop there. First Source which manufactures and packages candy products will occupy the first building on the site a 300,000 square foot facility and MJ Mechanical is building a 40,000 square foot facility. A third company Unifrax is moving from its current location just across the street.

"Our economic and commercial growth we've experienced over the last five to eight years has been tremendous," said Joe Emminger, town of Tonawanda deputy supervisor.

Town of Tonawanda officials say with the NRG Huntley Plant scheduled to shut down next year this redeveloped 92-acre site is vital to the economic future of the town.

"On everybody's mind is what's going to happen with NRG and nobody is aware of what's gonna happen with NRG. That won't be decided until March 1. So, this is gonna help without tax base, this is going on the rolls this year. Prior years for the past 40, 50, hundred years this was never generating any revenue. So we're glad to have it being income producing, income generating tax base and we expect more businesses to come in here and expend our industrial tax base in the future," said Emminger.

The project was made possible through a partnership between federal, state, and local officials.