



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Ritchie Announces Major Steps Forward in Plan to Transform Vacant Psych Center Lands to Boost the North Country

[Patty Ritchie](#)

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State Senator Patty Ritchie today announced two major steps forward in the plan to transform unused land at the St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center to help reinvigorate the local economy and create more opportunities for people in the North Country.

At a press conference held in Ogdensburg Tuesday, Senator Ritchie announced signing of her legislation, S.5950-A, that will allow the transfer of 50 acres of prime waterfront—one of the longest stretches of undeveloped waterfront land remaining on the St. Lawrence River—from the State to the City of Ogdensburg. She also announced a \$300,000 grant to the City, which will allow it to proceed with the purchase from the state of a different parcel on the St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center campus, along Route 37, for commercial development.

“The St. Lawrence Psych Center has been at the very center of this community—and its economy—for a century and with these major steps we are positioning the Psych Center to once again be a centerpiece of growth for Ogdensburg and the surrounding region,” said Senator Ritchie.

“I want to thank the Governor for signing my legislation, Office of Mental Health Commissioner Ann Sullivan for working with us on this plan, and the City of Ogdensburg for having the vision that’s helping make this idea a reality, and building a brighter future for us all.”

“Here in Ogdensburg, we’re working diligently to harness our assets—namely our waterfront—in ways that attract developers, new businesses and new residents to St. Lawrence County,” said Ogdensburg Mayor Wayne Ashley.

“We’re excited about these major steps forward and would like to thank Senator Ritchie for being an outstanding partner in our efforts to revitalize the North Country, and create more opportunities for those who live here.”

Under the measure sponsored by Senator Ritchie, the city and state still must agree to a purchase price for the property, and under state law, all proceeds from the sale will be reinvested in improving health services to the mentally ill. In addition, the state also will help the city market the property to potential developers. The bill also includes a landmark provision that would require developers to set aside a small number of housing units where clients of the Psych Center could continue to access programs and services while transitioning back into the wider community.

(Attn. photo editors: Senator Ritchie is pictured in the above photo at Tuesday's press conference with Ogdensburg Mayor Wayne Ashley)