

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE –

## **Upper Union Street Schenectady Beautification**

### **Upper Union Street Businesses Welcome Construction**

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**SCHENECTADY, NY --- 7-29-09 ---** Businesses and customers on **Upper Union Street, Schenectady** are in for some long awaited improvements. New curbs, sidewalks, and pavement for both sides of Upper Union Street from Dean Street to Van Antwerp Road are in the works and scheduled for completion by October 1. The project includes twenty-three new street trees in attractive, easy maintenance stamped concrete planters with yard hydrants to provide a convenient source of water for the trees. To add to the small town ambiance on Upper Union Street, decorative lighting fixtures will be placed on light poles along both sides of Union. A gateway pillar will welcome visitors as they enter the BID from Niskayuna.

“We’re thrilled to see these improvements for **Upper Union Street,**” says Guy Sementilli, Chair of the **Upper Union Street BID** and owner of **Scotti’s Italian Restaurant & Pizzeria**. “Over the past few years, Upper Union Street has really come into its own as a destination for shoppers. This face lift for the street will build on the work our Metroplex funded Façade Program has been doing to improve the outside appearance of our buildings. It will make Union Street an even more appealing place.” Since 2005, the façade program has improved nineteen of Upper Union’s buildings including over \$650,000 of private investment from business and property owners. Considerable interior work and other privately funded changes bring the total in excess of a million dollars in improvements.

“We are grateful to the **Metroplex Development Authority, the City of Schenectady** and **Senator Farley** for making these improvements a reality,” continued Sementilli. “The project is beautiful, well planned, and a welcome step up for our thriving business district. We especially appreciate the cooperation between the City and the Upper Union Street business owners throughout the planning for the project.”

Both **Mayor Brian Stratton** and **Metroplex’s Ray Gillen** commented on the project. Mayor Stratton said, “I am thrilled that the City is able to join with our business partners and Metroplex to make these much-needed improvements to the thriving Upper Union Street commercial corridor. This project will make this exciting and cozy shopping district even more successful.” Metroplex Chair Ray Gillen said, “We are pleased to continue to support the exciting revitalization of Upper Union Street.”

The project is expected to be completed by October 1, in plenty of time for the Upper Union Street Harvest Festival, scheduled for October 17<sup>th</sup>. A formal ribbon cutting for the new street will be scheduled as part of Harvest Festival.

The approximately \$700,000 project will employ twenty people during a roughly two month construction period. Work will generally take place weekdays from 6:30am – 4:30pm. Union Street will not be closed to traffic; but construction will necessitate parking and lane adjustments.

Improvements to the balance of the business district from Dean Street to Lakewood Avenue are anticipated for the 2010 or 2011 construction season.

The City has hired Callanan Industries to complete this project as part of the City's overall paving program. Clough Harbor & Associates did the design, River Street Planning & Development has provided communication support.

Upper Union Street is a charming neighborhood main street with a unique, high quality mix of one of a kind shops and services along with fine and casual dining. Its location between Schenectady's arts and entertainment district, Niskayuna's upscale neighborhoods and Union College's campus makes the street a destination for residents, professionals, students and visitors. The Upper Union Street BID (Business Improvement District) offers services to the district including marketing, maintenance, events, and façade improvement matching grants funded by the Metroplex Development Authority. Guy Sementilli, chef/owner of Scotti's Restaurant, is the chair of the BID. Mitch Messmore is the Executive Director. The web site is [www.upperunionbid.org](http://www.upperunionbid.org).

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