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Photos included. More available upon request

PEDA Sweetens Its Sales Pitch

PITTSFIELD, MA—As suitors have for generations, the Pittsfield Economic Development Authority is hoping a special box of chocolates will help them to win the heart of their intended. Employing a decidedly Berkshires touch, PEDA is using Chocolate Springs Café custom confections to remind rail car manufacturers that Pittsfield has “sweetened the offer”—to the tune of \$2 million—to entice them to the William Stanley Business Park.

As one piece of a multifaceted campaign, PEDA has sent customized chocolates and a letter from Corydon Thurston, PEDA Executive Director, to transit car makers bidding to provide vehicles for the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority’s Orange and Red lines. Nine companies are vying for the estimated \$850 million contract, which requires that final assembly work on 226 cars be completed in Massachusetts.

“This is a unique way to grab their attention, and one facet of our intense effort to keep Pittsfield and the Berkshires top of mind with these decision makers, as they consider where they will locate,” said Thurston. “It provides an extra opportunity for us to get in front of them, and remind them that we are offering a \$2 million incentive to come to the William Stanley Business Park.”

The Pittsfield City Council recently approved the request by Mayor Daniel L. Bianchi for a \$1 million allocation, matching \$1 million already offered by PEDA, to entice rail car manufacturers to the city. If chosen, Berkshire County could see the creation of up to 250 jobs during a project that will continue for at least a decade.

The customized box of chocolates was crafted by Joshua Needleman, creator and chocolatier of Chocolate Springs Café, Lenox, and features candies that include the Berkshires logo along with red and orange accents to highlight the MBTA rail lines’ colors. Festooned with color themed ribbon and tissue, the package also included a “We’ve got the Sweetest Deal in Massachusetts” brochure and postcard touting cash and tax incentives, rail connections and other attractive features of the PEDA park.

William Stanley Business Park is one of four proposed Berkshire county sites for manufacturing the cars, as each car builder will have different facility requirements. The PEDA site has a “ready-to-build” foundation of more than 120,000 sq. ft. with rail access and siding, plus 19 acres of adjacent available land in the center of Pittsfield.

PEDA has been aggressively marketing the 52-acre business park comprising nine parcels, three of which are occupied. Gold Rated by the MA Biotechnology Council, the location has also been designated for construction of a 20,000-square-foot multi-tenant life sciences facility, supported by a \$6.5 million earmark in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts’ Life Sciences Bond Bill.

The MBTA rail car makers’ proposals, which will include a designated site, must be submitted by May 1. The state is expected to award the work at the end of the year.

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Pittsfield Economic Development Authority (PEDA) is a quasi-public agency created by a special act of the Massachusetts State Legislature, for the purpose of receiving and redeveloping approximately 52 acres of General Electric Company’s former industrial facility located in the heart of Pittsfield Massachusetts. For additional information, visit williamstanleybp.com