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EMPIRE STATE PLAZA ICE RINK TO OPEN IN JANUARY

Commissioner RoAnn Destito today announced that the Empire State Plaza ice rink will open to the public for the first time since 2007. The popular outdoor rink will open in early January and is anticipated to remain open for the remainder of the winter. The rink will be open in the afternoons and evenings, 7 days per week, and skating will be free.

The New York State Office of General Services (OGS) and Olympic Regional Development Authority (ORDA) are partnering with the Lake Placid Regional Winter Sports Committee, a 501C3 corporation, who will underwrite the ice rink operations by contributing \$100,000 for the 2012 winter season. The funds will support the mission of the organization to enhance New York State's economy, quality of life, image and development of regional, national and international sports and will be used at the Empire State Plaza to sponsor skating clinics for inner-city youth to promote an active lifestyle and as a recruitment tool for potential world-class athletes. Funding will also be used to attract visitors to events and activities in the Lake Placid region including world-class bobsledding, professional figure skating, the Empire State Games, and skiing and snowboarding at Whiteface Mountain and Gore Mountain.

"We are thrilled to bring skating back to the Plaza. Because our new partners in Lake Placid offer some of the best winter activities in the state, they are the perfect complement to the ice rink," Commissioner Destito said. "Families and visitors to the Capitol Region will once again have an opportunity to skate on one of the most unique outdoor facilities in the state."

"ORDA is excited to team up with the Sports Committee to bring skating back to the plaza. Skating is a terrific family activity and it's great that families and people of all ages will have the chance to skate again in this beautiful complex," Ted Blazer, ORDA president and CEO, said.

The ice rink originally opened on December 17, 1976, when the Office of General Services held the first holiday festival at the Empire State Plaza. The three-day event drew over 60,000 people to see the lighting of the tree, fireworks, and the dedication of rink.

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