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## **PRESS RELEASE** **For Immediate Release**

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### Widewaters Group/ Robert M. Leidig & Associates and the City of Salinas Agree To Cooperate On Major Urban Redevelopment

Salinas, CA...June 24, 2008.....The Salinas City Council voted today to award the Widewaters Group/ Robert M. Leidig & Associates the exclusive right to negotiate the redevelopment and master planning of an eight block area in the city's historic downtown business district.

Mayor Dennis Donahue said, "Clearly this is a momentous event in the history of Salinas, one which will benefit Salinas throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. When we say, "imagine a great city", redeveloping our government center and bringing housing, services and entertainment to the adjacent land is an example of what we mean."

Widewaters Group western states representatives Curtis M. Leidig and Edward G. Shagen were present, as the City Council voted. "We have been working to achieve this cooperation for over a year. Many site visits, conferences with design consultants and late night working sessions have brought us here to today. We imagine that Salinas will again become a great and vibrant city, with beautiful streets and plazas, a variety of entertainment and restaurant choices,

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an attractive civic and cultural center, new office space and many housing options. We want to create a really special sense of place for the community. The planning will include concepts from New Urbanism, such as, walk-ability, sustainable design, connectivity, quality architecture and transit oriented design,” said Leidig.

In the redevelopment process, an exclusive right to negotiate is the first milestone in the major public-private sector collaboration. The Widewaters/Leidig Group, has been given the right to research, plan and submit a master plan for the redevelopment of city/redevelopment agency controlled land to the community, for review. The planning process will involve significant community input, a strong appreciation of the city’s history and character, and the regional culture. The developer has assembled a first class team in order to maximize this opportunity. Urban Design Associates, from Pittsburg, PA will take the lead for the master planning work. The firm has developed an impressive resume in designing cities, towns and neighborhoods throughout the U.S. and around the world, with the goal of creating beautiful places with lasting value for the communities they serve. The urban planning will include a participatory creative design process in which citizens, economists, architects, developer, policy makers and government officials will meet to create a financially feasible vision for the future. The development team also includes; Joe Coomes with McDonough Holland and Allen, Derinda L. Messenger & Associates and WWD

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Corporation, a local civil engineering firm.

The Widewaters Group, headquartered in Dewitt, New York, is a 25 year old diverse real estate development and management company that has extensive experience in the development of Retail, Hospitality and Office projects, throughout the United States. Widewaters portfolio consists of 47 shopping centers and 15 hotels located in 13 states and 2 Canadian provinces in the eastern United States. Widewaters currently has 6 retail and mixed use developments and 3 hotels under development which will be in addition to its existing 3.6 million square feet of retail and 2000+ hotel rooms.

Robert M. Leidig & Associates is a prominent developer in Monterey County, with significant commercial and retail real estate investments in Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA. The Leidig family has a very strong commitment to the community with their investments in the area, starting in the 1850's.

Salinas, CA is a city of 150,000, sixty miles south of the Silicon Valley and 15 miles from the Monterey Peninsula. The Salinas Valley is widely known as the Salad Bowl Capital of the world. The area is also recognized for being one of the largest wine regions in the U.S. Commuter rail service will soon supplement daily bus service between Salinas and Silicon Valley. Nobel Prize winning novelist John Steinbeck was born in Salinas. The National Steinbeck Center, a modern 40,000 square foot museum and community center is adjacent to the planned Widewaters/ Leidig redevelopment area.

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