



**For Immediate Release**  
September 20, 2010

Contact: Kevin E. Schwab  
315.422.8284  
kschwab@centerstateceo.com

## **Landmark Theatre Renovations Begin**

### *Assemblyman Magnarelli Secures Vital Funding for \$16 Million Expansion*

Expansion Brings Broadway Productions and \$25 Million Economic Impact to Syracuse

**SYRACUSE, NY** – Renovations are underway at Syracuse's historic Landmark Theatre. The theatre, which has been a downtown fixture since the late 1920's, will undergo a \$16 million dollar expansion and facilities upgrade.

"Since 1928, the Landmark Theatre has been a vital part of the Syracuse community," said Assemblyman William Magnarelli (D-Syracuse, Geddes, Van Buren). "My cousin, Armond Magnarelli, former president of the Syracuse City Council, was instrumental in saving this building. I look forward to finishing what he and others began through the completed renovation and expansion, which will allow the Landmark Theatre to continue serving this community."

Recognizing the project's large economic and cultural impact on downtown Syracuse, the Landmark Theatre project has received leadership and support from Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and Assemblyman Magnarelli, including funding totaling \$7 million; these funds, coupled with historic tax credits make up \$9.6 million of the project's \$16 million total cost. A consortium of local banks has been assembled to provide \$6.7 million in permanent financing.

"We are excited to transform the 'gem' of downtown into the premiere performing arts center and ensure that for generations to come we will entertain theatre patrons of all ages and walks of life - from children's plays to concerts, standup comedy, urban plays to the latest musical to hit Broadway," said Paula Deckman, president, Landmark Theatre Board.

The yearlong Stage House Expansion project will involve the demolition of the existing backstage area and reconstruction of a new larger stage house that will accommodate a greater variety of performance activities. The theatre was built as a movie palace so its current stage cannot accommodate full scale Broadway productions. The theatre's rigging system also needs updating as it is more than 80 years old.

There are more than 250,000 people who visit the Landmark Theatre each year. The goal of the renovation is to bring in touring Broadway performances and ultimately double the number of visitors to the theatre and to downtown Syracuse.

"A strong Landmark Theatre will provide one of Syracuse's main streets with a significant anchor attraction," said Deputy Mayor John Cowin. "Theatre visitors will also enjoy the city's restaurants, shops and hotels, significantly impacting the city's economy."

Each year the Landmark Theatre contributes \$14 million dollars to the local economy. The expansion is expected to double the number of nights the theatre is in use, increasing its overall



economic impact to \$25 million annually.

“The economic impact a renovated Landmark Theatre will have on the city of Syracuse and surrounding communities is significant,” said David Mankiewicz, executive director of the Downtown Committee. “This project combined with the Pike Block Project, Dey’s Centennial Plaza and the Centro Transfer Hub, will create a rejuvenated corridor along Syracuse’s traditional main street and extend the successful revitalization of the Armory Square District further into the heart of downtown.”

“By transforming the Landmark Theatre from a movie palace into a premiere performing arts center, the people in this community will have access to the types of performances they would otherwise have to travel to see,” said Bill Fisher, Deputy County Executive, Onondaga County. “With this new facility our community can instead play host to world class performances.”

“As a cultural anchor in Syracuse and Central New York for generations—and today as a pivotal point along the Connective Corridor, Syracuse’s emerging signature strip of cutting-edge cultural development—the Landmark Theatre is a crucial element not only for the arts community, but for economic development in the region,” said Syracuse University Chancellor and President Nancy Cantor. “The enhancements being made to the Theatre will allow us to broaden, deepen, and sustain collaborative engagement among students, community members, and artists of the highest caliber.”

Design and engineering plans are complete and all necessary funding is in place for the Stage House expansion to proceed.

“This is a state of the art expansion designed to accommodate a wide variety of live performances” said Jim Breuer, president of Hueber-Breuer Construction. “However, in order to carefully preserve the historic elements of the theatre’s structure the existing stage house removal will be a slow process.”

The Stage House expansion is scheduled for completion in October 2011. During renovations the lobby area of the theatre will remain open for weddings, proms, and community events.

“On behalf of the consortium of banks, we are proud to be a part of this exciting downtown development,” said Allen Naples, regional president of M&T Bank. “Partners from Key Bank, Alliance Bank, and Community Preservation Corporation came together with M&T Bank to support this project because we know this is a tremendous investment for our institutions and for the community as a whole.”

### **About CenterState CEO**

Based in Syracuse, the CenterState Corporation for Economic Opportunity is a twelve-county business leadership and economic development organization. A private, not-for-profit organization, CenterState CEO represents more than 2,000 members and serves as the region’s primary economic, community and business development catalyst. CenterState CEO works to achieve regional growth and total community prosperity through partnerships, planning and problem solving.



***About the Downtown Committee***

The Downtown Committee of Syracuse represents the interest of business and property owners downtown. Created in 1975, the Downtown Committee plays a leading role in the planning and coordination of downtown's revitalization.

**###**