



## **Flint's Historic Capitol Theatre to be Restored and Revitalized in City's Downtown**

*Shuttered for nearly twenty years, Theatre will serve as economic and cultural resource for city residents*

*Project builds upon robust arts and cultural resources in the city, providing platforms for a wide range of live performing arts presentations*

**Flint, MI** – January 18, 2017– The Capitol Theatre is being revitalized in downtown Flint, Michigan, serving as an economic and cultural engine for the city and region. Through the restoration of its ornate John Ebersohn design and upgrades to its facilities, the Theatre will once again be a focal point for the community, presenting national acts and providing platforms for local arts groups. Enriching and expanding the city's arts and cultural resources, the Capitol Theatre will reopen in late 2017 with refurbished theater facilities as well as restored office and retail spaces. The Re-Opening date, and related programming and activities will be announced in the coming months.

Long a vital part of the city's social and cultural fabric, the Capitol Theatre originally opened in 1928 as a vaudeville house and movie palace, serving as a center of arts and entertainment in Flint. The most lavish of Michigan's chain of Butterfield Theatres, the Theatre began to host concerts in the late 1970s, including performances by a range of popular musicians including Ray Charles, AC/DC, John Mellencamp, Green Day, Black Sabbath and more. Closing its doors in 1996, the Theatre sat dormant for nearly two decades, until restoration began in July 2016. Programming at the restored Capitol will include a diverse mix of popular and classical music, comedy acts, film screenings, contemporary and modern dance, spoken word, and theater works that play to the strengths of its intimate auditorium and a new flexible space for small-scale performances.

"The Capitol Theatre was once the community's living room so-to-speak, where residents gathered for shared cultural experiences and live entertainment," said Jarret M. Haynes, Executive Director of The Whiting, one of the lead partners spearheading the Capitol Theatre project along with the not-for-profit Uptown Reinvestment Corporation. "The Capitol's re-opening will deepen the impact of our vibrant arts community and become a resource to foster creativity right here in Flint. We are so proud to bring this treasure back to the city and look forward to welcoming visitors from the city and region for generations to come."

With approximately 100 events of varying sizes projected per year, the revitalized Capitol Theatre is expected to attract more than 60,000 visitors annually. The initiative is one in a series of recent and current projects to lift the city's economy through investments in arts and culture, education, technology, and small business advancement. Recent projects include the modernization and installation of state-of-the-art equipment at Longway Planetarium on the Flint Cultural Center campus, the opening of the Michigan State University School of Public Health and the Flint Farmers Market, which relocated to downtown Flint in 2014 as a year-round resource for local producers and small businesses, tripling its visitors to approximately 750,000 residents annually from across the city and region. In 2015, Hurley Medical Center opened a children's clinic above the Market, creating a health

and wellness campus in the downtown area. In October 2016, Kettering University celebrated the completion of the first phase of development of the University's General Motors Foundation Mobility Research Center, which will provide new resources for engineering students and professionals working at the fore of research and development in the auto industry.

The restoration of the Capitol Theatre building, listed on the National Registry of Historic Places since 1985, will reinterpret the Theatre's original vibrancy while upgrading it to a state-of-the-art performing arts venue. The revitalization project will also include the renewal and refurbishment of 25,000 square feet of attached office and retail space within the Theatre's building. Led by a design team comprised of architects DLR Group|Westlake Reed Leskosky, and construction managers The Christman Company, the project will preserve the atmospheric style of the 1,600-seat structure and faithfully restore historically significant elements of the Theatre's original design including:

- recreation of the building's original 1928 façade, including restoration of terracotta ornamentation on the building's exterior;
- restoration of the ceiling within the auditorium, which will once again evoke the open skies, enhanced by lighting effects that will mimic transitions from sunset to dusk to the night sky;
- restoration and recreation of decorative plasterwork and statuary throughout the theater, lobby, and interstitial spaces connecting front and back of house amenities, as well as spaces between the theater and adjacent offices;
- updating historic lighting and fixtures throughout, including installation of state-of-the-art performance lighting;
- reproduction of original theater seats;
- restoration of the historic marquee and blade;
- enhancement of the Theatre's lighting, acoustic, seating, backstage and front-of-house facilities; and
- the creation of an additional performance space on the lower level for small-scale, experimental workshops and performances.

The operation of the Capitol Theatre will be managed as a nonprofit performing arts center alongside The Whiting Auditorium, in fulfillment of its mission to present and foster live performance and education opportunities for the city and region's residents. Beginning in 2015, a \$37 million campaign was mounted for investment in live performing arts in Flint, including the restoration of the Capitol Theatre and select upgrades to The Whiting Auditorium. To date, more than \$33 million has been raised, including major gifts from The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, The Hagerman Foundation, and support from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.

### **About The Whiting**

The Whiting provides facilities, programs and services to promote and support the presentation of the best local, regional, national and international performing artists. Each year, The Whiting Presents Broadway, music, comedy, theater, dance and much more throughout its season. The Whiting is also the performance home of the Flint Symphony Orchestra and many other community graduations, recitals and other events.

### **About Uptown Reinvestment Corporation**

The non-profit Uptown Reinvestment Corporation is committed to building a vibrant future for Flint with a special emphasis on improving and revitalizing the downtown business district into an attractive area for business, employment, living and entertainment.

### **About The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation**

The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, established in 1926 in Flint, Michigan, by an automotive pioneer, is a private philanthropy committed to supporting projects that promote a just, equitable and sustainable society. It supports nonprofit programs throughout the United States and, on a limited geographic basis, internationally. Grantmaking is focused in four programs: Civil Society, Environment, Flint Area and Education. In addition to Flint, offices are located in metropolitan Detroit, Johannesburg and London. With year-end assets of approximately \$2.7 billion in 2015, the Foundation made 400 grants totaling more than \$119 million. For more information, visit [www.mott.org](http://www.mott.org).

### **About The Hagerman Foundation**

[The Hagerman Foundation](#) was established by Phil and Jocelyn Hagerman in 2014 with one passion in mind: to brighten and improve the lives of future generations. Their vision is to see the revitalization of Flint and surrounding communities by partnering with organizations, programs, and projects that support growth of individuals and the culture of the world we live in.

### **About DLR Group | Westlake Reed Leskosky**

[DLR Group](#) is an integrated design firm delivering architecture, engineering, interiors, planning, and building optimization for new construction, preservation, and adaptive reuse. Our promise is to elevate the human experience through design. This promise inspires sustainable design for a diverse group of public and private sector clients; local communities; and our planet. DLR Group is 100 percent employee-owned and fully supports the initiatives and goals of the 2030 Challenge, and is an initial signatory to the China Accord and the AIA 2030 Commitment.

[DLR Group acquired Westlake Reed Leskosky](#) in September 2016. Today, the combined design expertise and resources of Westlake Reed Leskosky and DLR Group serve clients as a global, integrated design firm committed to elevating the human experience through design.

### **About The Christman Company**

[The Christman Company](#) founded in 1894, has grown to become one of the country's leading professional construction services firms, and is ranked at #111 on the Engineering News-Record ENR 400 list of top contractors nationally. The company's award-winning services include construction management, historic preservation, general contracting, design/build, real estate development, facilities analysis and planning, and self-performed skilled trades. Christman maintains offices throughout Michigan, the southeast US, and mid-Atlantic.

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