

November 17, 2011

News Release

*For Immediate Release*

### **Park Central Square Dedication November 18**

The City of Springfield, along with downtown property owners and businesses, will celebrate and dedicate Park Central Square Friday, Nov. 18 at 11:30 a.m.

This project began in 2007, but the origins of the square trace back to 1836 when John Polk Campbell set aside 2 acres as, "Public Square."

The last renovation of the square occurred in the early 1970s. In Feb. 2010 it was added to the National Register of Historic Places.

The current renovation could be called a "restoration and rehabilitation" rather than a redesign and rebuild; removing non-historical additions (such as the walls that were installed in 1974) and restoring and repairing above- and below-ground infrastructure.

At first glance, citizens may wonder what is different. "If you perceive that nothing's changed, then great – we did our job," notes architect Tim Rosenbury.

Accessibility and safety were just some of the goals and concerns with the project. Walls were removed, curbs on both sides of the street were eliminated, ramps have been enhanced to provide easier access for persons of all ages and abilities; every corner of the square has a wheelchair ramp. Lighting is now even and adequate throughout the square, providing an environment that improves safety. Twelve security cameras have been installed that provide assistance to law enforcement.

A new sound system will enhance the entertainment options on the square. Sixty-six new trees, plus new turf and a new irrigation system, help return the square back to renowned landscape architect Lawrence Halprin's vision.

The iconic fountain has been preserved and improved with new piping and a larger underground vault housing computer-controlled equipment.

Designed by Butler, Rosenbury & Partners, built by Carson-Mitchell Engineers and Builders, and managed by the Department of Public Works, the renovated and rehabilitated Square honors the vision of one of America's premier modern landscape architects while preserving its relevance in a vibrant and resurgent downtown.

The total construction cost of the inner-square-project is \$1,824,024.80. The project was completed using \$1.2 million in Department of Housing and Urban Development Economic

Development Initiative grant funds and the remainder from the 1/4-cent Capital Improvements sales tax.

The Urban Districts Alliance will program and manage events and activities to help make the Square a vital, attractive place that is family-friendly by day and supports the emerging cultural and entertainment district in the evenings. This will be the heart for concerts, festivals, speeches, parades, as well as impromptu events made possible by the performance improvements to the square.

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