



6516 Detroit Avenue, Suite 1 • Cleveland, OH 44102
www.gordonsquare.org • 216.961.4242 x 239



CITY OF CLEVELAND
Mayor Frank G. Jackson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Joy Roller, Executive Director, Gordon Square Arts District (216) 961-4242
Jeff Ramsey, Executive Director, Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization, (216) 961-4242
Andrea Taylor, Press Secretary to Mayor Frank G. Jackson (216) 664-4171 or (216) 857-7998
Tom Andrzejewski/Leslie Kay, The Oppidan Group Inc. (216) 771-9988

New streetscape sets stage for flourishing Gordon Square Arts District

CLEVELAND (September 26, 2009) — Cleveland officials and civic leaders today introduced the city's newest work of art — a transformed streetscape that sets the stage for theatre-going, gallery-hopping, shopping and dining in the [Gordon Square Arts District](#).

The \$3.5 million redesign of Detroit Avenue from West 58th Street to West 73rd Street provides form as well as function for the new arts district, home and future home of theatres, shops, art galleries and restaurants in the heart of the [Detroit Shoreway](#) neighborhood, five minutes from downtown Cleveland.

Today's event will be followed next Friday by the reopening of one of the anchors of the arts district — the [Capitol Theatre](#), a 1920s movie house at West 65th Street and Detroit that will feature art and independent films as well as quality Hollywood movies.

The streetscape makeover transforms Detroit into a hip, pedestrian-friendly district, with wider sidewalks, artist-designed benches and pavers, trees, new lighting and bike racks. Unique bus shelters, designed by a local award-winning architectural firm, will be installed shortly.

Cleveland Mayor Frank G. Jackson, Ward 17 Councilman Matt Zone and others released dozens of biodegradable balloons that floated north above Lake Erie to cap the occasion. They declared the arts district a special jewel for all Greater Clevelanders.

"This streetscape signals that you are in a unique area of Cleveland," said Jackson. "The Gordon Square Arts District demonstrates what can be done through imagination and collaboration among the local development organizations, the theatres and the city of Cleveland. We've transformed this historic neighborhood into a community that will be sustainable far into the future with housing, entertainment and retail."

Said Zone: “I’m proud of what we’ve been able to accomplish, including the jobs and investment that have already been created, with more on the way. We are looking at a projected \$500 million in economic impact on this community, and it’s happening even though we are in one of the worst economic recessions.”

Today’s ceremony also kicked off a day-long street festival, sponsored by the Detroit Shoreway Community Involvement Committee. The festival featured live performances, local artists, vendors, food, the Gordon Square Farmers’ Market and a sidewalk sale by merchants.

The Gordon Square Arts District is a national model of how the arts can be used to stimulate economic development. The effort has already filled almost all the retail spaces and is attracting further investment.

The streetscape redesign and the restoration of the Capitol Theatre are among its five capital projects. Plans are being finalized for construction of a new \$7 million performance center for [Near West Theatre](#), which will move to the district, and for a \$9.4 million renovation of [Cleveland Public Theatre](#), also near the West 65th-Detroit intersection. Parking has been added to the district, with more planned.

In the new streetscape, from West 58th to West 73rd streets, Detroit Avenue was repaved, and new sidewalks and curbs were installed.

In the heart of the district, from West 61st to West 69th streets, the street was narrowed so the sidewalks could be widened to encourage pedestrian traffic and outdoor dining. Sidewalks that were 8½ feet wide on the north and 10 feet wide on the south were widened to 13 feet on both sides; Detroit, which had four 12-foot-wide driving lanes, now has two 11-foot lanes and two 9-foot-wide parking lanes.

In addition, the following features and design elements were being installed from West 61st to West 69th streets (Because of manufacturing delays, not all the features were in place before today’s event):

- Earthtone pavers that will form the crosswalks at West 65th and Detroit and decorate the sidewalks at other locations in the district. Local environmental artist [Susie Frazier Mueller](#) drew inspiration from the topography of the nearby Lake Erie shoreline and the inner patterns of trees in the area to design the pavers, paver areas, benches and the Gordon Square Arts District’s signature “G” mark. The design consists of both laser-cut and sandblasted block pavers.
- Unique, curved benches, in three different shapes. The charcoal gray precast concrete benches will be lighted from underneath at night to create a warm red glow. The benches were also designed by Frazier.

- Two innovative bus shelters, each made of a single sheet of stainless steel with a unique pattern of perforations designed to optimize lighting and wind conditions. The shelters will be internally lighted at night, projecting distinctive patterns on surrounding buildings and other surfaces.

The shelters were designed by [Robert Maschke Architects Inc.](#), a nationally recognized firm located in the Gordon Square Arts District. Robert Maschke, AIA, principal of the firm, is also a resident of the district.

- Modern, stainless steel bike racks.
- Landscaping, including approximately 40 Aristocrat pear and Valley Forge American elm trees.
- New light poles, matching those at nearby [Battery Park](#). The old utility poles were removed, and unsightly utility lines have been buried.

A small, landscaped public plaza will be built at the northwest corner of West 67th Street and Detroit, adjacent to the future site of the new Near West Theatre performance center — the next focus of the Gordon Square Arts District's efforts.

Major funding for the streetscape project was provided by the city of Cleveland (\$1.9 million) and the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (\$1.6 million), with additional funding from the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority's Transit Waiting Environments program (\$25,000).

Besides Frazier, the design team included [City Architecture Inc.](#) and [Michael Benza & Associates Inc.](#) engineers. The contractor was Terrace Construction Company Inc.

Additional information about the streetscape, including images, is available at <http://www.gordonsquare.org/mediakit.html>.

###