



CITY OF CLEVELAND  
Mayor Frank G. Jackson



The Group Plan

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## **Cleveland's Public Square Reopens After Renovation**

**CLEVELAND** – June 30, 2016 – The City of Cleveland, Cuyahoga County and Group Plan Commission (GPC) announced today that the renovation of Cleveland's Public Square has been finalized and that The Square is now open to the public. The announcement came during a ceremony to rededicate The Square this morning.

The non-profit Group Plan Commission has been working in partnership with the City of Cleveland and Cuyahoga County, along with other stakeholders, to finance and deliver this project.

"The new Public Square moves us closer to a pedestrian, cycling, and public transportation friendly downtown," said Mayor Frank G. Jackson. "It would not have happened without the support of the public, private, and philanthropic communities, the vision of Tony Coyne and the Group Plan Commission."

"This is a crucial and exciting development right in the heart of Cleveland. We know that inviting public spaces are key to attracting and keeping residents and visitors here," said Cuyahoga County Executive Armond Budish. "I am pleased that the County was able to contribute very impactful financing for this effort."

The new Public Square dates to an April 30, 2010, meeting in Mayor Jackson's Office when Cleveland City Planning Commission Chairman Anthony Coyne proposed—and Mayor Jackson agreed to appoint—a renewed Group Plan Commission based on the original 1903 Group Plan for Cleveland's malls and adjoining buildings.

Mayor Jackson appointed the Group Plan Commission members in June, 2010, and charged them with improving these public spaces and connecting nearby projects such as Flats East Bank, the new casino, the new convention center, and the Global Center for Health Innovation. The Commission's May 2011 report presented a bold vision for Public Square, the Malls, and the lakefront.

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After viewing public spaces during trade missions to European cities—Paris and Rouen, France, Vicenza, Italy, and Lubijana, Slovenia—Mayor Jackson urged Commission Chair Coyne to think boldly about a unified Public Square achieved by closure of Ontario Street and a less intensive Superior Avenue crossing. By April, 2013, the Commission and its landscape architect James Corner had proposed the design for Public Square that you see today.

Public Square has been closed since the reconstruction began in March 2015. The new design by internationally renowned landscape architecture firm James Corner Field Operations, has transformed The Square from four separate quadrants into a unified public space in the heart of Downtown Cleveland. The Square is a welcoming space that invites people in, encourages them to stay and will be used throughout the year for a wide range of programs and events.

The Square includes pedestrian pathways, green spaces for concerts and events, areas to sit and lounge, a café, a new public restroom and a water feature, which was ceremonially activated during today’s rededication. The Soldiers and Sailors Monument remains as an integral feature of the park and will become more accessible to the public.

While the on-time completion of the \$50-million reconstruction of Public Square is a milestone for the GPC, and its civic partners, LAND Studio, the Downtown Cleveland Alliance, and the Greater Cleveland Partnership, the GPC is looking forward to how The Square will be used by Clevelanders and visitors.

“As excited as we are to have people come and experience the world-class design and craftsmanship that went into the transformation of Public Square, we are equally focused on how The Square will be maintained and programmed for years to come,” said Anthony Coyne, GPC Chairman. “GPC’s focus on ensuring that The Square will be used by the whole community was an important driver of Public Square’s transformation.”

The Group Plan Commission has formed a partnership with the City of Cleveland to help take care of and activate The Square with a variety of year-round programming, and has brought on Sanaa Julien as a loaned executive from the Cleveland Metroparks to serve as CEO for Programming and Operations.

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