



For Immediate Release

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**Demolition Slated for Studio 28, Enabling Wyoming to Plan
New Use for Key Stretch of 28th Street**
Souvenir Hunters Can Take a Brick from the World's Largest Multiplex as a Memento

Wyoming, Michigan, March 4, 2014 – A West Michigan landmark will be coming down this spring.

Weather permitting, the City of Wyoming expects to see demolition begin on Studio 28 within the next two weeks. Built in 1965 by Jack Loeks, Studio 28 made history as the first multi-screen theatre east of the Mississippi two years later and again in 1988 when its expansion to 20 screens made it the largest free-standing multi-plex in the world.

After four decades of use, Loeks Theatres Inc. closed the facility in 2008 citing declining attendance. The facility, which sits on 20 acres of prime commercial real estate on 28th Street SW, remains available for redevelopment.

“Studio 28 was a place where movie magic happened,” said Emily Loeks, director of community affairs. “Its 43-year run of operation is one that we are really proud of. It laid the foundation for the creation of a healthy, family-owned movie exhibition company that thrives in this region.

“The time has come, though, to take down the building. There are safety concerns propelling the decision forward. It was a vibrant community center for 43 years, but now it's time to clear the way for new uses of a great site in the heart of Wyoming.”

After the building was condemned recently, Loeks Theatres began the process of tearing down and recycling the 125,000-square-foot building. Its removal is a key step forward in the development of 28 West, a mixed-use development district taking shape in downtown Wyoming. The form-based code that will guide development of 28 West was passed by City Council in final reading last night.

“We're glad to see the Studio 28 owners moving forward with demolition,” said Wyoming City Manager Curtis Holt. “While the theatre was long a centerpiece in the community, it has been steadily deteriorating since its closure and is now unsafe.

“Its removal and recycling opens an exciting ‘next chapter’ for development along this key stretch of retail and restaurants. The site will be attractive to many different types of investors, and we look forward to working with developers to maximize its potential.”

Wyoming police officers and firefighters will take advantage of the demolition to conduct emergency rescue and training exercises before the building is torn down.

A small number of bricks will be removed from the building and placed outside the perimeter of the security fence for souvenir hunters who would like a Studio 28 memento.

Nunica-based Melching Demolition, which will perform the demolition and recycling, expects to stage equipment to the site at 1350 28th Street SW within the next two weeks. Interior demolition is slated to begin by March 12, with razing of the main structure and removal of the two large signs and their foundations expected to follow shortly after that.

Melching Demolition plans to recycle as much steel, brick, block and concrete from the theatre as possible. Steel and metals will be moved offsite for processing, while masonry and concrete will be crushed onsite. City officials said Melching Demolition they will take every possible precaution to minimize the noise and dirt from the crushing process, which they expect will take approximately one week.

“For everyone’s safety, we caution community members who want to watch the demolition process to stay well behind the security fence,” Holt said. “We recognize that many area residents might want to take a last look at this community icon, which is fine. This will be an active demolition site, though, and we encourage everyone to be cautious and to follow the posted safety instructions.”

Demolition is expected to be completed before the City’s Annual Spring Carnival, which will take place on the property April 11-20.

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