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For Immediate Release: 8/18/2023

Construction begins at Shimer Square

Mount Carroll, IL- Renovation and construction will officially begin on Monday, August 21st at Shimer Square in Mount Carroll, IL. Work includes general renovations to the Sawyer House, parking lot and sidewalk replacements, masonry repairs to the main entrance gate, asbestos removal, and interior building demolition within Bennett and Hathaway Halls.

On Monday, August 21st, Galena Repair & Maintenance's subcontractor, Renaissance Restoration, will begin masonry repairs followed by Elevated Roofing starting roof replacement work on Monday, August 28th. IITI will begin abatement work inside the Sawyer House and once completed, Galena Repair and Maintenance will begin the full-scale renovation work.

Work is made possible through the \$1.5 million Rebuild Illinois grant, where GROWTH was one of 11 awardees in the state to be awarded funding through the competitive Regional Economic Development (RIRED) component of the grant. A public bidding process was published in May 2023 where potential bidders were invited to submit proposals. Bidders were required to meet certain requirements set forth by DCEO within Rebuild IL grant parameters to be considered. After receiving approval by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity in late July, GROWTH signed contracts with Galena Repair & Maintenance and IITI.

"This is truly a momentous milestone for Shimer Square ensuring its credible and sustainable future," said Brian Hollenback. "In July, I let the community know work would start "30 and 3", what can be seen today can be expected for the next three years."

Once construction is complete, the Sawyer House will be repurposed into a Resource Center providing access to housing and business resources for entrepreneurs, homeowners, and renters. A co-workspace will also be incorporated to respond to the need for flexible workspaces for working families. Bennett and Hathaway Halls will have interior demolition completed for future redevelopment, with GROWTH eyeing a for-sale product. Parking lot excavation and sidewalk replacements will improve the overall access and walkability of the campus.

Progress and Perseverance

GROWTH reaching this milestone was no small feat. On the heels of Rebuild IL-related construction, GROWTH anticipates closing and starting construction on its \$32 million redevelopment of McKee, Hostetter, and Dezendorf Halls. These historic buildings will be redeveloped into 51 units of workforce rental housing consisting of 1, 2, and 3 bedrooms ranging in size from 580 to 1,125 SF.

Simultaneously, GROWTH has a pending \$2 million request to the City of Mount Carroll that would allow GROWTH to capitalize on that contribution which would support not only the childcare center, but also create additional for-sale housing at Shimer Square with corresponding downpayment assistance, launch a city-wide homebuyer assistance program, provide administrative support for the childcare center, and provide gap financing towards construction costs. That request remains pending.

A new temporary “Shimer Square” sign has been installed on the former Campbell Center sign facing Clay Street. Residents can expect future contractor and development signage as activity increases throughout the campus. Shimer Square remains closed to the public and will be for the foreseeable future to ensure the safety of all.

GROWTH will continue to partner with the Carroll County Mirror-Democrat to provide construction progress and updates. GROWTH encourages all to follow the progress online at www.ShimerSquare.com and on its [Facebook page](#).

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