

# REAL ESTATE WEEKLY

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## Project a Newark priority

A cornerstone of Mayor Cory A. Booker's State of the City address recently was the announcement that Two Center Street, a mixed-use residential and retail project on a 1.2 acre site adjacent to the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), was selected as one of the City of Newark's top economic development priorities following a rigorous evaluation conducted by a Scorecard committee convened by the Brick City Development Corporation. Two Center Street is a partnership between NJPAC and Dranoff Properties, Inc. of Philadelphia.

"We are pleased to be advancing our partnership with the New Jersey Performing Arts Center. This project will strengthen our downtown, add hundreds of new housing units and create construction jobs in our city," said Mayor Cory A. Booker. "In partnership with NJPAC and Dranoff Properties, we pledge to move this project forward intensively this year – securing the resources we need to make it a go for construction in the coming years."

As announced last year, NJPAC entered into a Letter of Intent with Dranoff Properties, Inc. to develop Two Center Street, which is envisioned to become the tallest building in Newark. The forty story-plus building is set to include a residential community of 300 units – 20% of which will be set aside for artists, over 20,000 square feet of street-level, high-quality retail (including restaurants, cafes, shops, galleries and related uses), possible cultural uses and structured, hidden from street view parking for over 550 cars to serve the shared needs of the residential community as well as those of NJPAC's audiences and the increasing daytime commercial demand.

"This is a huge vote of confidence and a milestone as Newark re-emerges as a viable and attractive destination for downtown residential living," said Lawrence P. Goldman, NJPAC's President and CEO. "The Scorecard process was thoughtful, tough, comprehensive and made us think even more carefully about the kind of neighborhood we want to create around the Arts Center's Theater Square. A complex, mixed-use urban redevelopment project like this can only

be done through a partnership of public and private entities. We are pleased to be partnered with Dranoff Properties and congratulate Mayor Booker, Governor Corzine and their Administrations for their vision in establishing so thoughtfully the City's and the State's priorities."

Two Center Street will be the Arts Center's first major expansion since its opening in 1997 and the first newly constructed residential building in downtown Newark in over four decades. "We see this as nothing less than a transformative development for the State's largest city," said Goldman. "The Arts Center was always intended as the centerpiece of a busy, inviting downtown core. Now, with Two Center Street and the new Seton Hall Law School residence building the Mayor also announced Monday evening, it's not difficult to imagine a real urban buzz in Newark again, with students and artists, singles, young married couples, professionals and empty-nesters all moving in and living here 24/7, with great shops, hip hangouts, trendy restaurants and NJPAC itself all contributing to a renewed vibrancy of a great American city."

"Our mission for *Two Center Street* is to transform downtown Newark into a vibrant arts and cultural district – an area where people not only come to work, shop and be entertained, but a residential destination, says Carl E. Dranoff, Founder and CEO of Dranoff Properties. "We will draw upon our extensive, mixed-use experience, using arts and culture as a springboard to make *Two Center Street* a success."

Goldman and Dranoff believe the seal of approval from the City and State will be significantly useful as work commences to secure all necessary financing and subsidies to make *Two Center Street* viable. "Newark needs people living downtown to realize fully its burgeoning revitalization," said Goldman. "Throughout the country and the world, in places like London, Los Angeles and Pittsburgh to name just a few, arts centers have led the way in transforming cities. There is every reason to believe that Newark can be the next major urban success story."