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## **Exhibit Hall Expansion Underway at Cobo Center in Detroit**

*Swinging steel signals start of brick and mortar expansion of Cobo footprint.  
Historic Cobo Arena conversion next on punch list.*

DETROIT—April 22, 2011—Construction crews have begun erecting the steel girders that will frame the 25,000 gross square foot addition to the rear of Wayne Hall, one of the four contiguous exhibit halls on the main floor of Cobo Center. The additional space is scheduled for completion by November of this year, and has in fact already been consigned for use by the North American International Auto Show in January of 2012. The addition is part of the Detroit Regional Convention Facility Authority's (DRCFA) three-year, three-phased \$270 million plan for the reinvention of Metro Detroit's regional convention facility, and represents the transition between the second and the final phase, which is the start of the extensive restructuring and expansion portion of the transformation process. The entire bond-financed project is scheduled for completion by 2015 and will return Cobo Center to its historic role as one of North America's premier meeting and convention venues.

"Today we're seeing the visual manifestation of our commitment to Michigan and to the global meeting and convention industry that the Cobo transformation process is on time and on budget," said Larry Alexander, DRCFA board chair and Detroit Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau president and chief executive officer. "Now is when the massive, visible improvements begin. When complete, Cobo will be equipped with over 150,000 square feet of additional, prime meeting and show floor space. Its size, scalability and flexibility will enable it to host multiple events at the same time, and allow the region to host most of the world's largest conventions."

Phase One was a \$3 million dollar initiative begun in September 2009 on urgently needed upgrades that was completed before the January 2010 North American International Auto Show.

Phase Two was a \$50 million dollar initiative that began in February of 2010 and entailed enhancements to the loading dock area and access/egress, electrical power and lighting improvements, 500 additional parking spaces and a partial re-roofing of the building, and the additional 25,000 square feet currently being added to Wayne Hall.

In addition to the increased meeting and exhibit space, the most visible upgrades to Cobo Center during the third and final phase will include:

- The reinvention of Cobo Arena as a 40,000-square foot ballroom with supporting meeting, pre-function and back-of-house spaces. The arena is the former home of the Detroit Pistons, where former Piston Hall of Fame guard and current Mayor of Detroit Dave Bing played for nine years. Work on this new ballroom begins this summer and will feature a glass wall and open-air terrace facing Hart Plaza and Detroit's downtown to the east, as well as pre-function space with a panoramic view of the Detroit River and the international border with Canada to the south.
- The creation of a new "signature space" for Cobo Center in the form of a spacious three-story glass atrium that links the main floor of the venue with a new entrance facing the Detroit River, bringing the lower-level exhibition space more naturally into the flow of a meeting or convention and linking Cobo Center more fully to Detroit's revitalized riverfront.

- Significant renovation to the building's primary façade on the east side facing downtown Detroit. The primary element will be a high-tech "media mesh" that will function as a giant digital signboard welcoming conventions and guests to Detroit and to the new Cobo Center. Additional elements include a new entrance to the recently-developed food court, improved protection from the elements for arriving guests and increased use of glass in exterior walls to tie events at Cobo Center more closely into the surrounding city.
- Reconfiguration of most meeting and breakout room space throughout the venue, especially along the south side of the facility along the Detroit River, to meet the needs of today's meeting and event planners. The majority of the exterior walls along the river will be replaced by high-efficiency glass walls to take advantage of Cobo's riverside location and update Detroit's signature river skyline view for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

**About the Detroit Regional Convention Facility Authority:**

The Detroit Regional Convention Facility Authority (DRCFA) was created in 2009 to operate Cobo Center in Detroit under long-term lease from the City of Detroit. The DRCFA Board of Directors is comprised of five representatives selected by the Governor of Michigan, the Mayor of Detroit, and the county executives of Wayne, Oakland and Macomb Counties. The DRCFA receives funding from revenues at Cobo Center as well as support from the state's Convention Fund. For more information, visit the Authority's Web site at [www.DRCFA.org](http://www.DRCFA.org).

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