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MANHATTAN BOROUGH PRESIDENT BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF STUDIO 54 RENOVATION ULURP APPLICATION

\$105 Million Renovation Will Refurbish and Transform Iconic Manhattan Landmark

Approval Could Open New Funding Streams for Restoring Historic Theaters Citywide



NEW YORK, NY – Today, Manhattan Borough President Brad Hoylman-Sigal recommended approval of a ULURP application to facilitate a \$105 million rehabilitation of Studio 54 by Roundabout Theatre Company, a nonprofit theater operator. This storied and iconic landmark of New York’s arts, culture, and nightlife scene will be transformed into a full-service theater for Manhattanites to enjoy, with ticket sales benefiting local education and workforce development programs.

The proposed project would substantially rehabilitate Studio 54, upgrading its facilities to ensure the theater remains competitive and financially viable relative to comparable theater markets. The \$105 million restoration includes: rebuilding Studio 54's permanent stage and restoring the orchestra pit; providing ADA-accessible concessions and enhancing accessibility to other areas, providing additional restrooms and other critical theater amenities; re-raking all patron seating levels, including the orchestra and balcony levels to create new seating with improved comfort and accessibility; increasing artist and staff support spaces, and upgrading obsolete base building systems to enhance life safety mechanics and reduce the theater's carbon footprint.

Manhattan Borough President Brad Hoylman-Sigal said: "The proposed rehabilitation of the Studio 54 Theater is vital for the preservation and continued success of one of Manhattan's most storied cultural institutions. For over 25 years, Roundabout Theatre Company has stewarded the century-old theater in furtherance of their mission to celebrate the power of theatre by spotlighting classics from the past, cultivating new works of the present, and educating minds for the future. It's a wonder they have made it work for so long in this aging facility that lacks a proper stage, backstage, orchestra pit, or limited accessible seating and restrooms. Through the concerted focus of my office on arts and culture, I'm proud to have contributed \$1 million toward the \$105 million rehabilitation effort, and to support this application for a zoning text amendment and special permit to facilitate this transformative project."

Roundabout Theatre Company Artistic Director Christopher Ashley said: "The revitalization of Studio 54 is critical to its future as one of Broadway's great theatres and to what artists can create there for decades to come. Roundabout has stewarded this legendary venue for almost thirty years, and some of our most ambitious work has been made there. This project expands what is possible on that stage, for musical theatre and for the range of work we create, and makes the building far more accessible and welcoming for audiences and artists. We are deeply grateful to Manhattan Borough President Brad Hoylman-Sigal for recommending approval of our ULURP application and for committing \$1 million through his challenge grant initiative known as the Manhattan Multiplier for Arts and Culture."

Studio 54's ULURP application presents a reasonable set of updates to the zoning tools established to support the Midtown Theater Subdistrict. If approved, these updates would create a significant new financial pathway not just for Studio 54, but for dozens of other theaters seeking to modernize aging infrastructure and meet contemporary performance and audience needs.

The proposed zoning text amendment achieves this in two ways: it builds upon listed theaters' existing ability to generate bonus floor area through substantial rehabilitation projects, and it expands the mechanism for transferring that bonus floor area to receiving sites within the Theater Subdistrict. Together, these changes address a significant limitation faced by the Studio 54 Theater, and likely other listed theaters, that are unable to readily accommodate bonus floor area on-site.

Further Context

The proposed \$105 million substantial renovation of Studio 54 includes:

- Restoring the permanent stage, removing the necessity for a temporary stage to be installed for each production;
- Re-raking the orchestra-level seating for improved sightlines, circulation, and additional seating;
- Restoring the orchestra pit, removing the necessity for live musicians to be placed on stage;
- Installing a new stage trap system for greater production flexibility and accessibility;
- Front-of-house improvements to circulation, operations, and accessibility, including expanding the lobby, relocating the bar and concession area, and providing additional concessions, restrooms, and other theater amenities;
- Improving artist support areas, circulation, and functionality by reconfiguring the stage wings and cellar level with new programmatic areas and accessibility improvements for performers;
- Re-raking the balcony level with a new seating layout for greater comfort and accessibility, and redesigning the mezzanine level with additional circulation space, expanded restrooms, additional concessions, and accessibility;
- Expanding audience accessibility and improving services and comfort by adding additional restrooms, bar and lounge spaces, a multi-stop elevator, and leveling cross-aisle walkways;
- Improving production infrastructure, including rigging and control areas, multi-media capacity, lighting and sound systems, and other power systems; and
- Upgrading obsolete and outdated base building systems to improve life safety systems, improve ventilation, and reduce the Theater's carbon footprint.

Read BP Hoylman-Sigal's full approval recommendation [here](#).

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