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Landmarks Illinois and the National Trust for Historic Preservation Urge Governor Pritzker to Include Rehabilitation and Reuse Study of Iconic James R. Thompson Center in Building Sale RFQ

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Central Management Services will soon release an RFQ for project management expertise for the sale of the iconic James R. Thompson Center in Chicago. Landmarks Illinois and the National Trust for Historic Preservation urge Gov. J.B. Pritzker and his administration to include Landmarks Illinois’ re-envisioning study for the James R. Thompson Center in the RFQ.

The following are statements by Landmarks Illinois and the National Trust for Historic Preservation:

“Corporations continue to migrate to Chicago from suburbs and beyond, and we believe the Thompson Center presents itself as a desirable reuse option for corporate offices and many other uses,” said Bonnie McDonald, President & CEO of Landmarks Illinois. “We urge the Pritzker Administration to include our re-envisioning study in the RFQ to ensure that the Thompson Center may shine as the one-of-a-kind Postmodern marvel that it is.”

“Millions of people visit Chicago every year to experience its diverse architectural landscape, a testament to the city’s longstanding commitment to preservation and innovative design,” said Jennifer Sandy, Associate Field Director for the National Trust for Historic Preservation. “Now that many Modern and Post-Modern buildings like the Thompson Center are at risk, Chicago can again demonstrate its leadership on a new generation of buildings worthy of preservation and reuse. Breathing new life into the Thompson Center— not throwing it away--is the right thing to do economically, environmentally and architecturally.”

Background:

Landmarks Illinois study, "[Thompson Center Reimagined](#)," was released in 2018 and developed in coordination with Thompson Center architect Helmut Jahn. It demonstrates the feasibility for the state-owned building to be rehabilitated and reused in the private market. The study proposes a location for a tower on the Thompson Center site while retaining and connecting to Jahn's iconic building, constructed in 1985. Without a tower addition, the Thompson Center also could qualify for several rehabilitation tax incentives with a qualified rehabilitation if listed in the National Register of Historic Places and/or locally landmarked.

Landmarks Illinois has included the Thompson Center on its annual [Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois](#) for the last three years, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation brought nationwide attention to the threatened yet important building in 2019 by including it on its [America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places](#) list.

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