

Changes at Illinois Executive Mansion for renovation

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SPRINGFIELD – The Governor’s Office announced today the Illinois Executive Mansion will close to the public in January 2017 for renovations.

“The People’s House will undergo an extensive transformation over the next year,” First Lady Diana Rauner said. “In order to properly preserve the building as quickly and efficiently as possible, we will close the building to the public during the renovations. When it reopens, the Illinois Executive Mansion will feature art exhibits

that showcase Illinois artists and an educational visitor's center for school groups, along with some much needed updating.

While the building will be closed for tours, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency will be starting a walking tour of the grounds surrounding the Illinois Executive Mansion to explain the renovation and keep visitors updated on the progress. The walking tour will also explore the historic neighborhood surrounding the mansion and discuss how it has changed over time.

"The Executive Mansion was neglected for years and left in disrepair. The renovations will restore the building to ensure our future generations can enjoy and learn from its rich history," Governor Rauner said. "Anyone who has done home renovations knows it's never easy, but by doing a short-term closure, we hope to minimize disruption to the public for the long term."

Governor Rauner, the First Lady and their dog, Stella, will move out of the mansion during the renovation. They will move to the Agriculture Director's House on the Illinois State Fairgrounds.

"Carol and I are pleased to welcome the Rauners to the neighborhood," said Agriculture Director Raymond Poe. "The state fairgrounds are utilized 365 days a year to host everything from horse shows to holiday markets. This move will allow the Governor and his family the opportunity to meet and mingle with the men and women directly involved in Illinois agriculture. It is our sincere hope that the Governor and his family enjoy their time on the state fairgrounds."

"I commend Governor Rauner and First Lady Diana Rauner for utilizing private funds to restore the Mansion back to a historical and respectable condition," stated Senator Bill Brady (R-Bloomington). "To have the commitment and passion to stay in Springfield during the transformation shows a great respect for Illinois and our citizens."

"It's a breath of fresh air to have a Governor actually living in Springfield," Rep. Tim Butler (R-Springfield) said. "As the fairgrounds are in the 87th District, I'm excited to welcome him to my neck of the woods while the renovations on the mansion are underway."

"It's wonderful to have the Governor living back in the state's seat of government," Springfield Mayor Jim Langfelder said. "Whether out at the Farmer's Market or high school sports games, Governor Rauner and the First Lady have made Springfield their home and are a constant fixture in our community. We appreciate the work he and the First Lady are doing to restore the Executive Mansion so our citizens and tourists can enjoy the building for years to come."

The renovation is expected to be complete in Spring 2018 with tours resuming to coincide with the Illinois Bicentennial. The renovation project is being completed without any taxpayer funds.