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## **BL Companies celebrate start of construction of Storrs Center**

October 18, 2011 - Connecticut

BL Companies celebrated with The Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Storrs Center master developer Storrs Center Alliance, (an affiliate of LeylandAlliance LLC of Tuxedo, N.Y.), and co-developer Education Realty Trust, Inc. (EDR), based in Memphis, Tenn., on the start of construction of Storrs Center, a new mixed-use town center to be located adjacent to the University of Connecticut.

A ceremonial ground breaking was held recently. Storrs Center will include new retail, restaurant, office, and residential development within a planned community of pedestrian walkways, green spaces, and conservation areas.

Community members, The Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Town of Mansfield, and University of Connecticut leaders, Storrs Center developers LeylandAlliance and Education Realty Trust, and officials from local and state government gathered recently to celebrate the commencement of construction on Storrs Center and the public/private partnership that is creating this highly anticipated town center. Governor Dannel Malloy, U.S. Congressman Joe Courtney, Secretary of State Denise Merrill, State Representative Gregory Haddad, Town of Mansfield Mayor Elizabeth Paterson, University of Connecticut president Susan Herbst, and Mansfield Downtown Partnership board president Philip Lodewick attended.

Since 2003, BL Companies was initially involved in the site development and permitting process and a key participant in the ongoing process of developing the master plan. In May of 2006, BL developed a conceptual space analysis of all the proposed commercial and residential uses in the entire development and have since designed the first two phases of development. In addition, BL Companies serves as the Engineer of Record on the realignment and reconstruction of Mansfield Rd. at the intersection with Storrs Rd. (Rte. 195).

According to Carolyn Stanworth, president and CEO of BL Companies, "Working on this public-private project for more than eight years has given BL two significant opportunities: one, to create a cohesive, well-designed new mixed-use development, and second, to provide the Mansfield community with a new vibrant town center they so long deserved."

Scheduled to be completed in 2012 and 2013, respectively, the first two phases of Storrs Center will include commercial and residential offerings. The retail and commercial space will be owned and managed by Storrs Center Alliance. EDR will develop, own, and manage the apartments in the first two phases which include approximately 290 studio, one-bedroom, two-bedroom, and three-bedroom apartments. The project was designed to meet stringent sustainability guidelines.

The new apartments, shops, offices, and restaurants are located within easy walking distance of the University of Connecticut main campus, E. O. Smith High School, Mansfield community center, and town hall.