

Memorial Boulevard School Theater Report

*"One must,
from time to time,
attempt things
that are beyond
one's capacity."*

Auguste Renoir



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Executive Summary and Formal Recommendation

It is the conclusion of this Theater Sub-Committee of the Mayor's Task Force on Memorial Boulevard School, that creating an arts and cultural center is not only a viable choice for the building, but doing so, will be an economical asset to the city, as well as a support for downtown businesses and revitalization. The interest shown by local theaters, arts groups and the general public has demonstrated a strong support for the concept and enthusiasm for usage of the theater.

The theater is in good physical shape and does not require much money to be operational. Obtaining status on a state and national preservation list now opens the door for grant money and tax credits.

The city unions have shown great cooperation in working with the task force to get the theater up and running, and therefore we see no reason to doubt future involvement with similar spirit.

The case study presented in this report of the Niagara Arts and Cultural Center has provided a road map for success, as well as advice derived from their challenges. We feel that our community and our building has more going for it than what Niagara had to work with, and their success is a testament to what can be achieved in Bristol. Our demographics, location, community support, city support and the fact that MBS sits at the gateway of downtown are all strong indicators of projected success.

We therefore recommend that the City of Bristol retain ownership of the Memorial Boulevard School building and surrounding property, so as to save and protect the historic theater, and work with the task force to draft a phased plan of partnership, to achieve a financially sustainable entity for the citizens of Bristol and surrounding communities.

Supporting the Arts

“Mayors understand the connection between the arts industry and city revenues. Besides providing thousands of jobs, the arts generate billions in government and business revenues and play an important role in the economic revitalization of our nation's cities.”

Douglas H. Palmer

Mayor of Trenton, NJ President, The United States Conference of Mayors

The findings from Arts & Economic Prosperity III send a clear and welcome message: leaders who care about community and economic development can feel good about choosing to invest in the arts.

Robert L. Lynch

President and CEO, Americans for the Arts

Across America, cities that once struggled economically are reinventing and rebuilding themselves by investing in art and culture. Both are proven catalysts for growth and economic prosperity. By creating cultural hubs, nonprofit art businesses help cities define themselves, draw tourists, and attract investment. Federal support for America's nonprofit cultural organizations must go on if we hope to continue enjoying the substantial benefits they bring.

Louise M. Slaughter

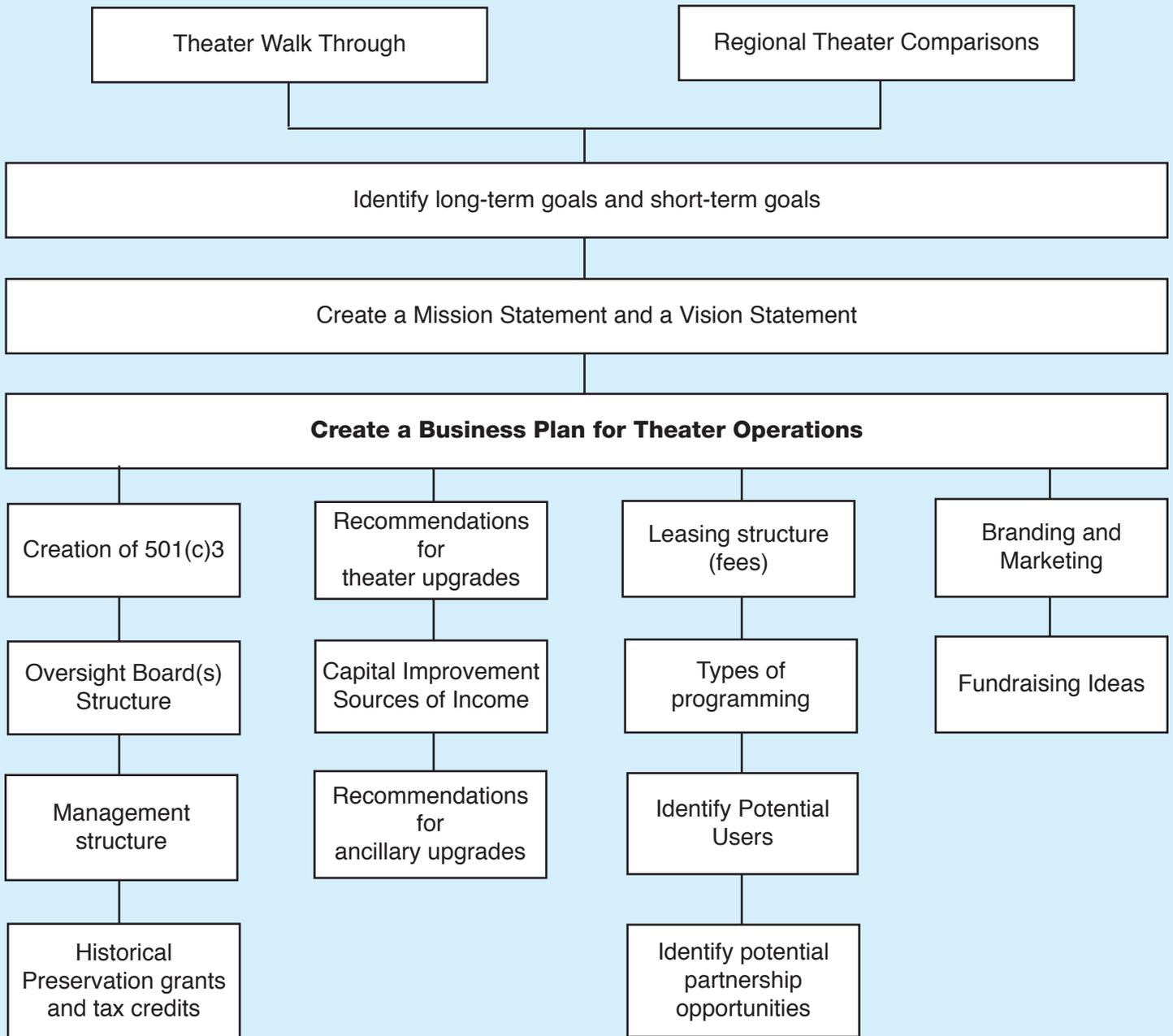
U.S. House of Representatives (NY) Co-Chair, Congressional Arts Caucus

10 Reasons to Support the Arts

1. **Arts promote true prosperity.** The arts are fundamental to our humanity. They ennoble and inspire us—fostering creativity, goodness, and beauty. The arts help us express our values, build bridges between cultures, and bring us together regardless of ethnicity, religion, or age. When times are tough, art is salve for the ache.
2. **Arts improve academic performance.** Students with an education rich in the arts have higher GPAs and standardized test scores, and lower drop-out rates—benefits reaped by students regardless of socio-economic status. Students with 4 years of arts or music in high school average 100 points better on their SAT scores than students with just one-half year of arts or music.
3. **Arts strengthen the economy.** The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reports that the arts and culture sector represents 3.25 percent of the nation’s GDP—a larger share of the economy than tourism and agriculture. The nonprofit arts industry alone generates \$135 billion in economic activity annually (spending by organizations and their audiences) that supports 4.1 million jobs and generates \$22.3 billion in government revenue.
4. **Arts are good for local merchants.** Attendees at nonprofit arts events spend \$24.60 per person, per event, beyond the cost of admission on items such as meals, parking, and babysitters. Attendees who live outside the county in which the arts event takes place spend twice as much as their local counterparts (\$39.96 vs. \$17.42)—valuable revenue for local businesses and the community.
5. **Arts drive tourism.** Arts travelers are ideal tourists, staying longer and spending more to seek out authentic cultural experiences. The U.S. Department of Commerce reports that the percentage of international travelers including museum visits on their trip has grown steadily since 2003 (18 to 24 percent). The share attending concerts and theater performances has grown from 14 to 17 percent since 2003.
6. **Arts are an export industry.** U.S. exports of arts goods (e.g., movies, paintings, jewelry) grew to \$72 billion in 2011, while imports were just \$25 billion—a \$47 billion arts trade surplus.
7. **Arts spark creativity and innovation.** The Conference Board reports that creativity is among the top 5 applied skills sought by business leaders—with 72 percent saying creativity is of high importance when hiring. The biggest creativity indicator? A college arts degree. Their *Ready to Innovate* report concludes, “The arts—music, creative writing, drawing, dance—provide skills sought by employers of the 3rd millennium.” Nobel laureates in the sciences are 17 times more likely to be actively engaged in the arts than average scientists.
8. **Arts have social impact.** University of Pennsylvania researchers have demonstrated that a high concentration of the arts in a city leads to higher civic engagement, more social cohesion, higher child welfare, and lower poverty rates. A vibrant arts community ensures that young people are not left to be raised solely in a pop culture and tabloid marketplace.
9. **Arts improve healthcare.** Nearly one-half of the nation’s healthcare institutions provide arts programming for patients, families, and even staff. 78 percent deliver these programs because of their healing benefits to patients—shorter hospital stays, better pain management, and less medication.
10. **Arts mean business.** The Creative Industries are arts businesses that range from nonprofit museums, symphonies, and theaters to for-profit film, architecture, and design companies. A 2014 analysis of Dun & Bradstreet data counts 750,453 businesses in the U.S. involved in the creation or distribution of the arts that employ 3.1 million people—representing 4.2 percent of all businesses and 2.2 percent of all employees, respectively. (Download a free Creative Industry report for your local community.)

Metrics for Success

Memorial Boulevard School Theater Analysis



MBS Theater Walk Through

A walk through was conducted that included Jeff Dunn who is the Executive Director of Landmark Community Theater in Thomaston, CT. Some of the findings gathered from that meeting was an enthusiastic interest in the theater with many more possibilities, due to the overall height of the stage (flying, large props) and the overall size being larger than the Thomaston Opera House. He was interested in coming back with his technicians to do a more detailed analysis of the space.

He said he had a movie projector that we could use for a movie night venue and we were also set up perfectly for a food concession. He said we have a true gem, especially considering it is located at the gateway to our city.

The only concern was the ceiling which will need to be painted due to flaking paint/plaster. Also a large hole in the ceiling caused by water damage from the air handler system that has since been fixed.

Overall, the theater is in good shape and just needs a good cleaning. Seats are in better shape than some of our existing school auditoriums. Any broken seats could be removed for handicapped seating.

Regional Theater Comparisons

In analyzing surrounding theaters, a lot of information was gathered that compared the potential of the Memorial Boulevard School Theater with other theaters in the area. Five theaters are highlighted in the chart that follows:

- The Palace Theater in Waterbury, CT
- The Warner Theater in Torrington, CT
- Landmark Community Theater in Thomaston, CT
- Ridgefield Playhouse in Ridgefield, CT
- Niagara Arts & Cultural Center in Niagara Falls, NY

The theater in Niagara Falls, NY is highlighted as the best comparison to Memorial Boulevard School because it was a high school slated to be demolished, the theater is of similar design and size, the city is of similar size to Bristol with some shared demographics and the community rallied to save the building and theater.

Questions	Palace Theater	Warner Theater	Landmark Community Theater	Ridgefield Playhouse	Niagara Falls Theater
What did it take to obtain community support and funding to get your theater up and running?	Build out & restoration: State of CT bonded \$30M Community support was more difficult. Theater was vacant for 18 yrs. Financial bonding gave them leverage in putting forth a business plan.	Built in 1931 as a movie theater. Abandoned, was to be demolished in 1982. Saved by citizens who formed Northwest CT Assoc. for the Arts.	Built in 1884. LCT rents & manages the Thomaston Opera House. LCT is a 501(c)3. LCT pays \$1,250 per month. Raised seed money to begin operations. Support from local businesses also.	Built in 1938, was an auditorium of an old high school. Was abandoned in 1972. Currently operates as a 501(c)3. Two levels has approx. 560 seats	Theater is not upgraded yet. Still operating as an auditorium. Used on a limited basis currently. Was a high school auditorium and is of similar size and design as MBS theater, but not in as good operating condition as MBS. Their upper balcony is not usable due to structural upgrades that are needed, seats are wooden and uncomfortable, and much cosmetic work needs to be done.
How has the demographics of your town & surrounding areas helped or hindered the success of your theater?	Early days, Waterbury was supportive of the programming mission. 10 yrs. later, the population has decreased, but impact has increased in surrounding towns.	Blue collar town but draws Litchfield County and has a strong downtown presence	Situated between the Waterbury, Torrington and Bristol. Has patrons from Litchfield, Terryville, Water-town, Harwinton and other towns. 10% of all sales from Torrington.	White collar upscale town. Draws a more sophisticated crowd.	Blue collar town Usage of space is all local
How much work had to be done to refurbish your theater both in money and time?	\$30M State grant to bring the theater up to code and refurbish \$2M endowment 2 year project	\$9M raised to restore over several years. Additional \$8M raised for adjacent building for arts school, black box and studios	Facility is operational but it needs a \$3-5M restoration/remodeling. Funding: donations, grants, local, state and federal funding.	Ridgefield invested town funds. State grant of \$200K. 600 residents & local businesses. Local talents volunteered.	\$2.5M needed to upgrade Currently rent space to incubator businesses & 70+ artists. 1 year leases. Also rent theater.
How much do you rely on the talents of supporters to operate your theater vs. paid staff? What is your operating budget?	\$15M budget 14 full-time staff 55 part-time staff 150 volunteers 150 union stage hands	\$2.5M operating budget 11 full-time staff 25 part-time employees	295K operating budget 100 volunteers 1 full-time Executive Dir. 1 part-time asst. 1-2 part-time technicians	\$ XX operating budget 8 full-time staff 8 part-time staff Extensive Board of Directors	\$320K operating budget 5 part-time employees 4 volunteers 6 from agencies like Welfare to Workfare
How much of your funding comes from revenue vs. fundraising or annual appeals?	60% seats/bar revenue 40% donations	80% revenues 20% donations	70% ticket revenues 30% contributed income	Has extensive sponsors & underwriters, as well as benefit performances	60% rentals 40% memberships, donations, fundraising, events
What kinds of shows bring in the most revenue?	Rock n Roll musical concerts \$10-\$12 per person for ancillary revenue	Family shows or national entertainers, i.e., Charlie Daniels, John Legend	Depends on demographics	Musical acts	Currently have mixed programming
What are the greatest obstacles in maintaining a fiscally viable theater?	Competition due to size and national draw	Theater is not suitable for Broadway productions	Sources of income besides tickets sales	Size of theater	Usage

Questions	Palace Theater	Warner Theater	Landmark Community Theater	Ridgefield Playhouse	Niagara Falls Theater
What things do you have to rent for a particular show?	Light and sound to augment certain shows.	Light and sound to augment certain shows.	Costuming for specific shows	N/A	N/A
How do you approach obtaining funding for capital improvements to your theatre, including technical equipment like lights and sound systems?	Have a Development Officer. Hold special events like wine dinners and annual appeals	Capital campaign	Grants, local & private contributors, state arts organizations	Underwriting Buy a seat tag Wish List Advertising Sponsorships	Ongoing capital campaign
Do you handle the publicity for shows and marketing of the theatre in-house or do you outsource that?	In-house	In-house	In-house	In-house	In-house
Does your community have access to leasing your theater for performances by local groups?	Yes, have a community outreach program. Groups pay 50% of what the theater would rent for normally, basically \$2 per seat plus house staff services.	Yes, rentals are usually in June for dance recitals and graduations	Yes	Yes. Rates are based on non-profit vs. for profit status. Charges for rehearsal space, weekend vs. weekday, facilities manager/cleaning or marketing	Yes
What is most profitable, programs geared towards children/families or adults?	Adult programs that result in ancillary income like bar revenues. But the community productions do better with children's programming. (1 kid on stage generates 6 tickets sold)	Family shows or national music entertainers	Have had good success with live stage productions of children's plays, i.e., Charlotte's Web, James and the Giant Peach	Adults	Mixed programming
What are the residual dollars spent in your town that can be attributed to the presence of your theater?	One paid admission = \$21 in residual money	Definite uptick in business for restaurants and bars	\$22 of residual spending for every ticket sold	Restaurants and other businesses have increase in business	No information available
Has the presence of a theater in your town actually generated new businesses?	Yes, 30% increase overall in restaurant business. Community productions however do NOT result in much downtown business as people tend to see a show and go home.	Yes	Yes! New restaurants have opened & others have expanded. The theater is a selling point for Thomaston.	Yes	Space, not theater has generated incubator businesses

Additional Information	Palace Theater	Warner Theater	Landmark Community Theater	Ridgefield Playhouse	Niagara Falls Theater
<p>The Palace operates as a 501(c)3</p> <p>It has 2,600 seats and tours national artists</p> <p>The size of their venue drives the programming</p> <p>75-80 performances a year</p> <p>City of Waterbury owns the theater.</p> <p>For every ticket sold, \$1 goes into a fund for only capital improvements</p> <p>They have a Board of Directors that oversees the financial, but the day to day operations are handled by an Administrator and paid staff</p> <p>Advice to us: Begin with community groups using the space to build a brand. Have reasonable expectations. Start with some tribute concerts. Get a liquor license to create a gathering place before a show.</p> <p>Depending on what form the rest of MBS takes on, the Palace might be interested in augmenting a partnership.</p>	<p>The Warner is a 1,770 seat theater</p> <p>\$3 of every ticket sold goes towards preservations costs</p>	<p>519 seat theater. 212 seats however are in the mezzanine without elevator access. They also block 30 seats for limited views.</p> <p>This theater operates as a partnership between a non-profit theater company and the town of Thomaston.</p> <p>Thomaston Bank has agreed to back LCT with a \$15K grant should they not be able to meet their monthly rent.</p> <p>LCT will donate \$.50 for every ticket sold towards a restoration fund and will be aggressive about seeking grant money</p> <p>Box office receipts will be audited at the end of each year and for every seat over 15,000 sold, LCT will give the town \$1</p> <p>Has a Board of Trustees</p>	<p>Approx. 530 seat theater</p> <p>Community donated time, talent and dollars to get the theater up and running.</p> <p>Theater has an extensive donor and membership list. Also have a \$500 seat plaque program with a \$2,500 seat plaque/reservation per season. Have many shows underwritten, along with gala or benefit events. Also have a multi-tiered sponsorship list.</p> <p>For a small theater, they have a state of the art sound and acoustic system. They also put a lot of emphasis on marketing, fundraising and other sources of revenue.</p>	<p>The Niagara Falls Theater is still not an upgraded, fully functional theater. It is still considered an auditorium.</p> <p>The community rallied around saving the theater and building, but focused on renting the entire building first while trying to raise the money they need to refurbish the theater space.</p> <p>They currently have a waiting list for studio rentals.</p> <p>Building mostly houses incubator businesses and arts based groups like artists, recording artists, musicians, dance groups and artisans.</p> <p>When the theater is renovated, they hope it covers 75% of their operating budget.</p> <p>Currently have a year round schedule of programming</p> <p>\$25 a year memberships which includes: – Voting privileges</p> <p>Tax deductible donations Planned giving Locker plaques</p>	

Case Study

Niagara Falls, NY

“There were many naysayers and most thought we could not make the project work,” said Executive Director, Kathie Kudela. “We just celebrated our tenth birthday. We were the developer, the planner, the financier, the property manager, and still are. This is a total grassroots effort.”



This former High School in Niagara Falls, NY was architecturally and historically significant, but after becoming outdated as a school, the building required a new use.

Built in 1923-1924 to the design of William B. Ittner, of St. Louis, MO, and Simon Larke and C.F. Obenhack of Architectural Associates, the building is situated in a densely built residential, commercial and institutional neighborhood. This Classical Revival style former high school is notable as an intact example of standardized school design of the period. As one architectural guide noted, "The imposing design provided for every modern, educational convenience known to the era." The building is three-story with concrete and steel structure, cut stone and masonry façade, and classically inspired details. After being slated for demolition the building was saved by Save Our Sites in Niagara Falls, Inc. The new use for the former school is Niagara Arts and Cultural Center (the NACC) which is now the largest multi-arts center in up-state New York and is home to more than 75 artists and arts groups. In addition to its artists in residence, the NACC is also home to two theaters, two art galleries, an interactive children's center and a Niagara Falls High School alumni center. The galleries host wide-ranging exhibitions, while the theaters regularly feature a broad variety of musical, theatrical and dance activities. The NACC is a 20th century education center that offers public art, music and dance classes after school hours and year round.

The NACC continues to grow as an education center offering adult and children classes to the public. Summer programs for kids offer an array of art, music, dance, and technology classes to area elementary, middle and high school students.

Celebratory and fundraising events, rental space for meetings, small conferences, and parties, enhance the NACC's community value.



The Niagara Arts and Cultural Center has progressed from an improbable dream to a vibrant reality.



NACC Main Gallery space



NACC Studio space



Classrooms have been made into studio spaces for artists, musicians, art/music teachers and incubator businesses.





Hallways are adorned with artwork. Locker plaques were a successful fundraising campaign.





NACC Main Grand Theater currently seats 999.



NACC Smaller Woodbox Theater seats 75.

Questions we posed to the NACC

What was the condition of the building when you took it over?

Used as a school until 2000. Had let it go. Majority was usable. Needed mostly cosmetic. There were holes in the roof. Discount in rent rates given until repaired.

Did the building meet all local and state codes including ADA?

If not what had to be done before you received a CO? We do have an elevator. The majority is not difficult to access.

Was asbestos an issue? If so how was the issue overcome?

Asbestos was contained. If there was any asbestos it was remediated in 1995.

Are there any major building improvements that can not be delayed for up to five years? IE: Boilers, Electrical, Roof, Lavatories?

Roof needed to be done costing \$1M. Got an ETF grant and had 5 years to get it done. Driveway needed to be done.

What are the top five things that you would do to the building if you had the funds available now?

1. Upgrade heating system. The original is from the 1990's. It's hard to regulate old and new.
2. Wi-Fi
3. Security System with cards rather than keys. We are open 24-7 to our tenants. Several tenants are here late hours so they help with the security checks and are given a break in rent.
4. Theater upgrade. Have an auditorium that needs a major upgrade. Used minimally right now for local performances.
5. Electrical

Where does most of your income come from?

Most of the income comes from the long-term and short-term tenants. Started out charging about \$100 a month for starving artists to fill the spaces. Currently charge an average of \$186 per month or \$2.50 a square foot.

Hold a lot of events for kids in the building, on the front lawn grounds etc. Rent the space as well to anyone for anything.

Artists host shows in the galleries netting \$1000-\$2000 per show.

Creative development, building program, State Ed grants, big program grants...go after whatever is available.

Volunteers are a big part of helping the place run. Still have a lot of volunteers but started out with all volunteers.

Do you own the building or does the city own the building?

We bought the building from the city for \$1 and therefore own it, including all the costs associated with its upkeep.

How does owning the building affect your bottom line?

Rentals only cover half of our operating expenses, but hopefully that will change when the theater gets renovated. But owning the building adds a level of financial stress and pulls our resources from being able to market the space and explore its possibilities to having to concern ourselves with mowing the lawn and budgeting for repairs.

Why did you buy the building?

We bought the building because the city council and politics in general are extremely corrupt in Niagara Falls, as are the unions. It would have been far more costly for us to achieve anything under those conditions, especially when the union strong arming was so great.

What is your greatest obstacle?

That 90% of the city is below the poverty line and it has changed the landscape of the city. Our building no longer sits in a nice, safe part of town anymore which means getting people to come out for an evening of theater is a tough sell to those who think the area is not desirable. There is also no on site parking.

What is your advice for us?

Partner with the City of Bristol. Come up with a plan that allows the city to retain ownership of the building but is subsidized with rentals. That is the best way to insure that the building remains in good condition which affects the surrounding area, and gives you a chance to build a rental base that will ease the burden on the taxpayers.

Note:

In compiling information on the Niagara Arts and Cultural Center, a member of the Theater Sub-Committee of the Mayor's Task Force on MBS actually traveled to Niagara Falls, NY to visit the site, take photos and interview the executive director.

Niagara Arts & Cultural Center prepares to move forward on a major capital project

COVER STORY: With its funding restored for 2014, the Niagara Arts & Cultural Center moves forward on a major capital project

NIAGARA FALLS – This year should shape up to be more forward-reaching for the Niagara Arts & Cultural Center than last year was.

The organization spent a good portion of 2013 raising money to make up for a last-minute cut of \$30,000 in funding from city bed tax revenues. The funding for 2014 was confirmed earlier this month by the City Council.

A lot of things that were put on hold will again move forward, but perhaps most noteworthy is a big capital project on the horizon at the NACC (for those outside the Falls, it's pronounced "knack").

Officials want to upgrade the 999-seat Grand Theater, the auditorium inside the former Niagara Falls High School.

Aside from refurbishing the appearance, plans also call for restoring seats, improving sound and lighting in the room, and upgrading smoke detectors and the fire alarm system. The building's elevator is also being refurbished.

"It's the next logical step for this building because all of the other spaces are really fully utilized, but it's our inner core, these very large spaces that are very underutilized, and we have to make this building pay for itself," said Kathie Kudela, who served as executive director from 2006 until last week, when she stepped down to focus on the organization's capital projects.

While the space has been used for recitals, concerts and other shows in the past, a revamped auditorium would be able to be used more frequently for all types of shows.

The NACC, which opened in 2001, houses more than 70 artists and groups across several disciplines.

From painters, photographers, word workers and sculptors to ballet dancers, musicians, jewelry makers and actors, the collection of people who use space at the NACC is diverse. There's also a gallery, as well as the Woodbox Theater.

The facility also offers camps for children, has a community garden and has an annual beer-tasting fundraiser known as the "Art of Beer."

Because the building at 1201 Pine Ave. is on both the State and National Register for Historic Places, the work will have to meet historic preservation standards.

The cost of the project is estimated at somewhere between \$2.5 million and \$3 million.

The project also calls for being able to reopen the balcony, which holds about 300 people, in addition to the main floor's roughly 600 seats. The organization is currently working with an architect on the plans.

Keeping the theater at fewer than 1,000 seats will help keep the project's price tag down, Kudela said, because of additional costs triggered by that seating threshold.

When completed, a refurbished auditorium is seen as providing a new stream of income for the organization, as well as another cultural asset for the city. "We have some experts who are eager to help restore it, as we find funding," Kudela said.

The organization also hopes to see more out of its former gymnasium, certified by the state as a "qualified film production facility" and one of three certified sound stages in Western New York.

To deal with the funding cut last year, the NACC received a \$15,000 grant from the Oishei Foundation, which needed to be matched by \$15,000 in funds raised by the organization.

Because of the funding issue, events, program development, maintenance and capital projects were put on hold last year. Both Kudela and Katherine Johnson, who served as board president from 2007 until last week, argued for the reinstatement of funds before city lawmakers earlier this month.

Kudela said the NACC has become a civic center. "A civic center includes all ages, ethnicities, abilities, income levels and religions," Kudela said. "It's a gathering place where people from all parts of the city get to know each other in a very neutral setting. It's a place where so many things happen."

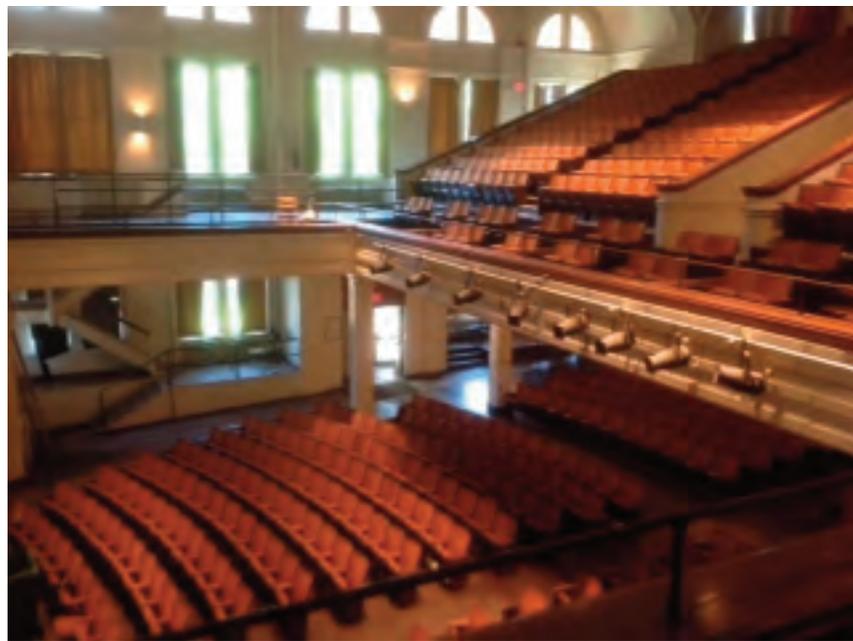


Kathie Kudela, executive director of the Niagara Arts & Cultural Center, shows off the auditorium, which officials hope to upgrade into a 999-seat "grand theater," with restored seats and improved sound and lighting systems.

MBS Theater

Mission Statement

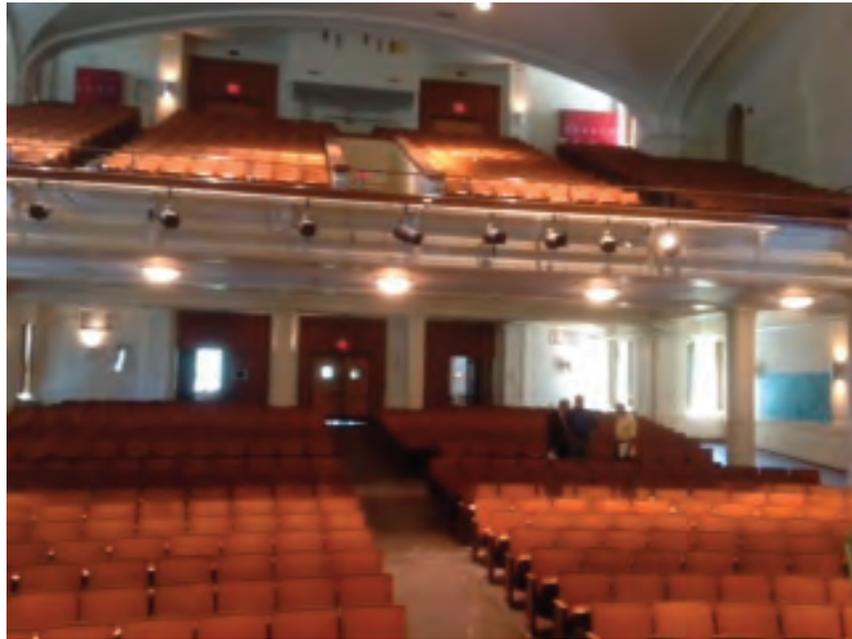
To protect and preserve our landmark theater, so that citizens of Bristol and surrounding communities can enjoy the finest in entertainment, arts and cultural experiences in a venue that has style, charm, spirit, and class.



MBS Theater

Vision Statement

To be an entertainment, arts and cultural destination for the citizens of Bristol and surrounding communities.



Potential Renters

The following is a partial list of entities that have expressed future interest in the usage of the theater. Four have signed letters of interest in being ongoing rental anchors.

- **Landmark Community Theater**
- **Bristol Brass & Wind Ensemble**
- **Jesse Gallagher**
- **New Britain Youth Theater**
- Bristol Choral Society
- Get Up Stage Company
- OM Show
- Various Dance Studios
- The Palace Theater
- St. Anthony's Holiday Showcase of Stars
- Bristol Reunion Jazz Band

LETTER OF INTEREST FOR MBS THEATER USAGE

To: MBS Task Force

Please accept this letter of interest by ***Bristol Brass and Wind Ensemble*** to rent the Memorial Boulevard Theater, located inside the former Memorial Boulevard School, on a regular basis once the theater is operational. I (We) would be interested in usage of the space for approximately ***40 rehearsals and up to 6 concerts a year.***

This Letter of Interest is intended for informational purposes only and is legally nonbinding on all parties. This letter does not serve as a final agreement, as any future agreement would require further documentation and approvals from the appropriate municipal authority, and the preparation of a definitive agreement, which would set forth the material terms and a commitment from us to definitively rent the theater space.

This Letter serves merely to indicate our early interest and intent to be a preferred renter once it is operational.

Sincerely,



Gregory R. Hahn
President
Bristol Brass and Wind Ensemble

Date: 10/8/2014

LETTER OF INTEREST FOR MBS THEATER USAGE

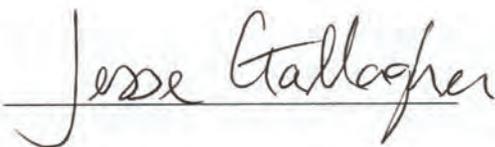
To: MBS Task Force

Please accept this letter of interest by **Jesse Gallagher** to rent the Memorial Boulevard Theater, located inside the former Memorial Boulevard School, on a regular basis once the theater is operational. I (We) would be interested in usage of the space for approximately **one musical/entertainment performance per month, initially.**

This Letter of Interest is intended for informational purposes only and is legally nonbinding on all parties. This letter does not serve as a final agreement, as any future agreement would require further documentation and approvals from the appropriate municipal authority, and the preparation of a definitive agreement, which would set forth the material terms and a commitment from us to definitively rent the theater space.

This Letter serves merely to indicate early interest and intent to be a preferred renter once it is operational.

Sincerely,



Jesse Gallagher
Owner
Seery Strings

Date: 10/6/14

LETTER OF INTEREST FOR MBS THEATER USAGE

To: MBS Task Force

Please accept this letter of interest by **Landmark Community Theatre** to rent the Memorial Boulevard Theater, located inside the former Memorial Boulevard School, on a regular basis once the theater is operational. LCT would be interested in usage of the space for approximately **one to six times per year.**

This Letter of Interest is intended for informational purposes only and is legally nonbinding on all parties. This letter does not serve as a final agreement, as any future agreement would require further documentation and approvals from the appropriate municipal authority, and the preparation of a definitive agreement, which would set forth the material and a commitment from us to definitively rent the theater space.

This Letter serves merely to indicate our early interest and intent to be a preferred renter once it is operational.

Sincerely



Date: October 6, 2014

Executive Director
Landmark Community Theatre



**New
Britain
Youth
Theater**

LETTER OF INTEREST FOR MBS THEATER USAGE

To: MBS Task Force

Please accept this letter of interest from New Britain rent the Memorial Boulevard Theater, located inside the for School, on a regular basis once the theater is operational. usage of the space for approximately one week each year, an might also be interested in developing programming specific collaboration with the MBS Task Force or other building adr

This Letter of Interest is intended for informational nonbinding on all parties. This letter does not serve as a agreement would require further documentation and approvals municipal authority, and the preparation of a definitive ag the material terms and a commitment from us to definitively

This Letter serves merely to indicate early interest a renter once it is operational.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Darren Farrington', is written over a horizontal dashed line.

Darren Farrington
Executive Director

Date: October 8, 20

Short-term Goals

Get the theater up and running

1. Make any necessary facilities improvements
2. Secure 3 anchor rentals
3. Operate as an established 501(c)3 status under Main Street Community Foundation
4. Create an area for concessions including alcohol with necessary approvals from the city as well as recommendations for ancillary upgrades
5. Secure at least one event per month
6. Create a pricing structure that would allow for a percentage of ticket sales to go towards needed improvements and identify what those improvements are
7. Identify potential users of the theater
8. Establish an oversight board and recommendations for management structure including a drafting of by-laws
9. Identify types of programming
10. Market the theater to obtain supplemental users
11. Identify potential partnership opportunities
12. Recommendations for rental fees
12. Engage the community in naming the theater
14. Fundraising ideas
15. Obtain information on historical preservation grants and tax credits

Long-term Goals

5-year plan

1. ADA compliant
2. Refurbish the theater including state-of-the-art lighting and sound
3. Operate under its own 501(c)3
4. Paid Administrative Staff consistin of: an Executive Director, Director of Finance, Director of Development & Marketing, Staff Accountant (some of these positions could be part-time)
5. Create an Executive Board, an Arts Advisory Board and a Leadership Board
6. Establish an extensive volunteer staff
7. Children's theater or summer theater camp
8. Black box theater
9. Crowdfund
10. Capital Fund drive
11. Solicit recording studios
12. Source a film studio that would be interested in creating a sound stage

Suggested Initial Business Plan

501(c)3

Go under the umbrella of the Main Street Community Foundation for the first five years and then operate under own 501(c)3.

Board Structure

3 tiered board structure that consists of:

- an Executive Board of no more than 9 people,
- an Arts Advisory Board of no more than 5 people, and
- a Leadership Board.

Management Structure

Management structure for the first five years that would consist of:

- a part-time Theater Operations Manager,
- a part-time Technical Assistant, and
- at least 50 volunteers to handle ticket sales, in-house promotions/marketing, ushering, concessions, etc.

Leasing/Rental Structure

- Non-profits
- Corporate
- Community
- Educational
- Movies
- Musical events

Capital Improvements

- Percentage of ticket sales
- Percentage of ancillary revenue
- Seat plaques
- Grants
- Sponsorships

General Fundraising

- Annual Appeal
- Alumni giving
- Planned giving
- Tiered sponsorships
- Business solicitation

Branding

- Engage the community in naming the theater
- Create a logo and a nickname for the theater
- Create theater core values

Marketing Plan

- Partner with community organizations
- Partner with local restaurants
- Website
- Social media
- Collaborative with museums in town

Revenue generation

- Three anchor rentals
- Supplemental rentals from local dance studios, Bristol Choral Society, OM Show, Get Up Stage Co. movies, corporate meeting space
- Partnering with a larger theater like The Palace in Waterbury
- Kids summer theater camp
- Acting classes
- Recording studios

Committee Contributors

The Theater Sub-Committee of the Mayor's Task Force on Memorial Boulevard School was comprised of many dedicated citizens who volunteered countless hours and months of meetings to prepare this report. They are as follows:

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*Respectfully submitted on October 8, 2014 by:
Theater Sub-Committee Chair Kim Villanti*