

Colonial Theater presents

The Quest

A true story of abandonment, neglect,
restoration and triumph

A Narrative in Two Chapters



COLONIAL
AUGUSTA
THEATER

Downtown Augusta, Maine

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THE PLAYERS

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Prologue

Our story begins in 1913 when The Colonial was initially built to replace a vaudeville theater that had burned.

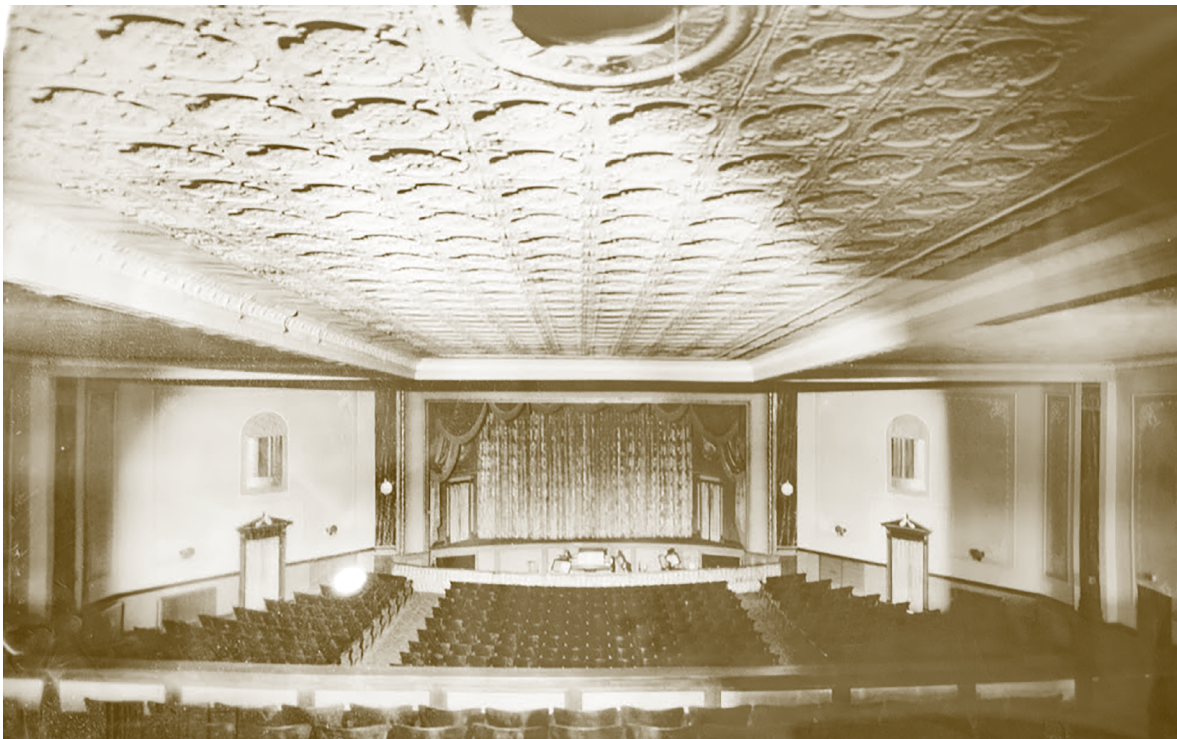
Another fire destroyed the theater in 1925. Consequently, the theater was rebuilt and enlarged in 1926. The Augusta Colonial Theater operated as a premier movie theater until 1969, when the doors were closed and locked.

A young man working for the City of Augusta, 19-year old David Barnard, became interested in saving the building in 1994. In 1995, he formed the corporation, Colonial Theater, Inc, in order to receive the theater as a donation from a local businessman who had used it for storage.

In 2010, the corporation received tax-exempt status as a 501(c)(3).

Subsequently, the building earned status as a “Certified Historical Structure” in 2014 by the National Register of Historic Places.

In the same year, Richard Parkhurst, a local developer and entrepreneur enamored with old buildings, history, and the dream of possibilities for Augusta, became involved with the reconstruction of the theater.



1926

Vision and Mission

To restore and operate the historic Augusta Colonial Theater as an arts and cultural center for the artistic , educational, and charitable benefit of the community.

In 1990, Augusta, Maine was a city of 21,585 people. By contrast, today, the city has a predominately older population of 18,851.

The impact of the Augusta Colonial Theater Renovation Project will be to attract a younger, more vibrant population to Augusta.

Augusta is the only capital city in the United States without an arts and cultural center and this fact alone sets the stage for this project. After having a robust cultural life in its earlier days, Augusta currently is often referred to as a “cultural desert.” We can change that.

The impact of completing the restoration of the Augusta Colonial Theater (ACT) into an expanded arts and cultural center will be enormous. As you study this case statement, you will recognize many areas of possibilities for sustainability in design plans created by Rick Goduti, our talented architect and former owner of Goduti-Thomas Architects of Portland, Maine. Sustainability will depend upon the many old and new partnerships in the trades, businesses, professions, and organizations dedicated to making Augusta and Central Maine a better place to live, work, and play.

Using historic tax credits earned by accurate restoration and conversion to income-producing projects and businesses in the new ancillary buildings, the ACT will anchor revitalization efforts in Augusta’s historic downtown area. This will not be just a theater; it will become a center of all things cultural and educational in the arts. The area will become a destination point for tourism with its unique shops, fine dining opportunities, and community gathering places. A restaurant, built on a level overlooking the Kennebec River, is projected to do \$1,000,000 worth of business in its first year of operation.



1951



1931

2021

Inside The Theater

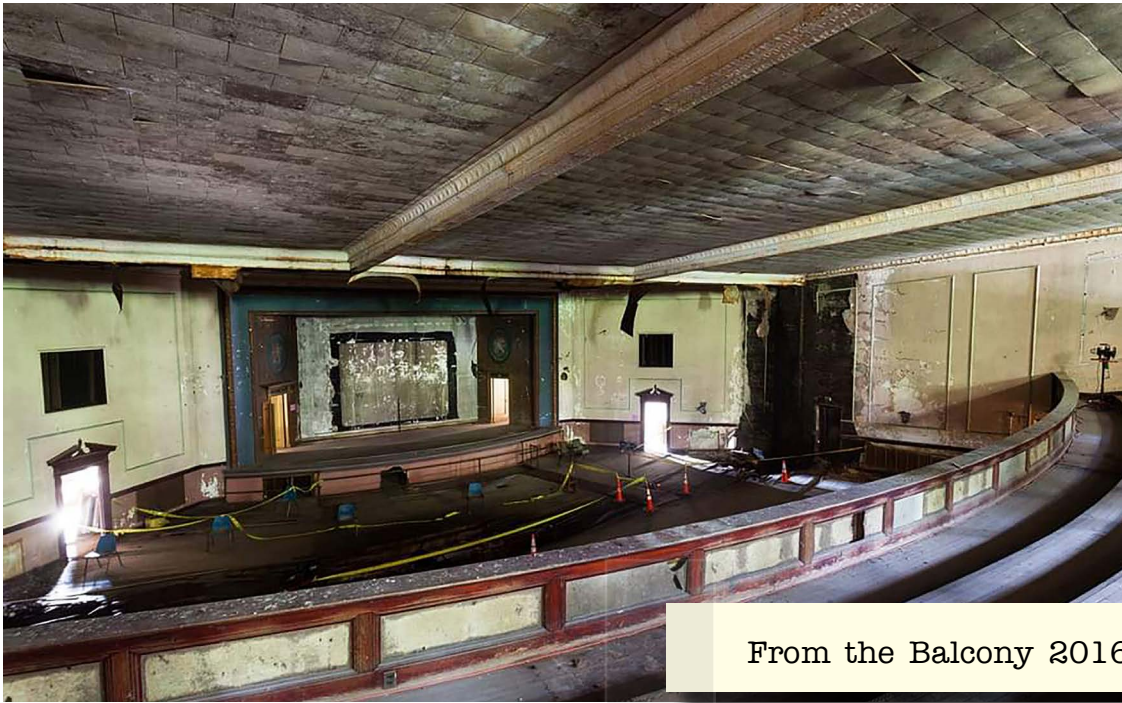
For over 40 years it remained abandoned and neglected. The roof leaked, causing serious water damage to the interior. Destabilization of the structure caused the city to place the building on the demolition list in the 1990's. In 2014, citizens rallied to have the building certified as a historic building by the National Register of Historic Places. In 2017, money was raised to repair the roof. In 2018, abatement of toxic coal ash in the basement of the theater was carried out under auspices of the Environmental Protection Agency which was followed by repair of the brick supporting piers in the basement. Floor rafters were replaced and a new sub-flooring was completed in 2019.

With the infrastructure of the building finally stabilized, the board was able to move forward to repair and restore the façade to look like it did in 1926. Grants were awarded from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission and other charitable funders to restore the facade.



Coal Fired Boiler System that was removed in 2017 along with toxic coal ash.





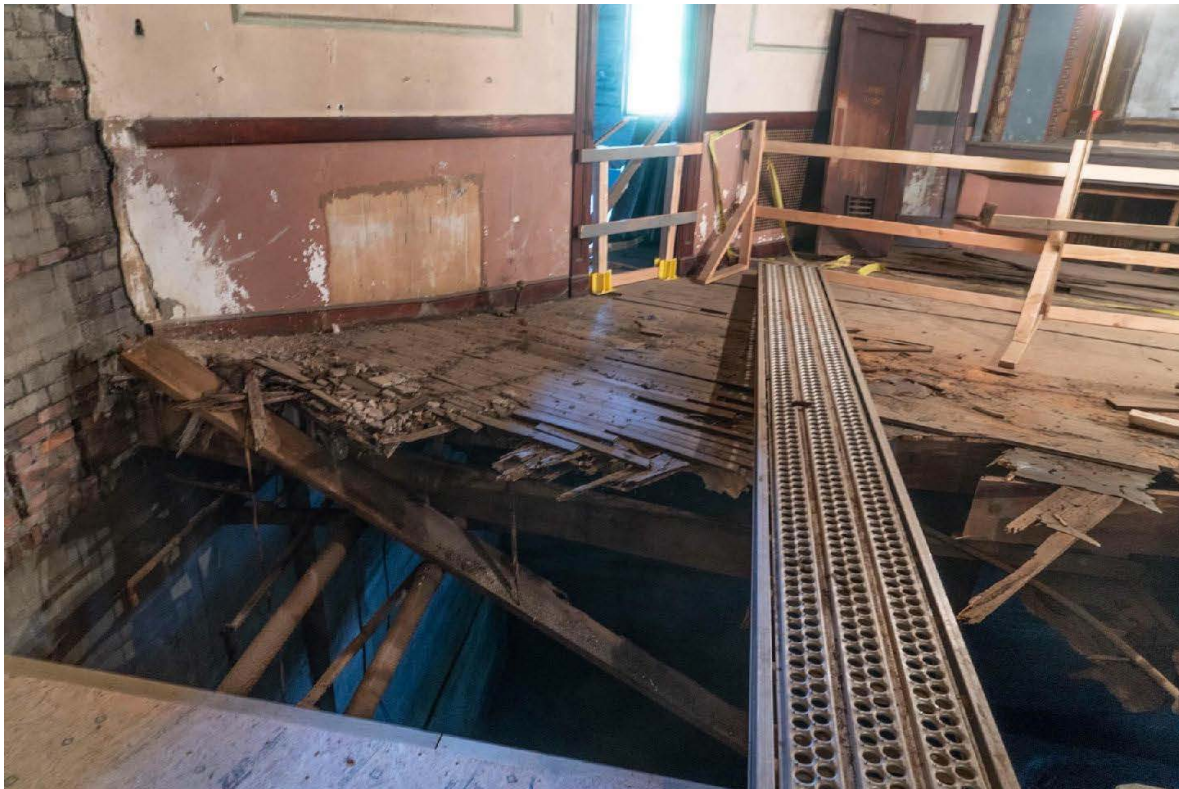
From the Balcony 2016



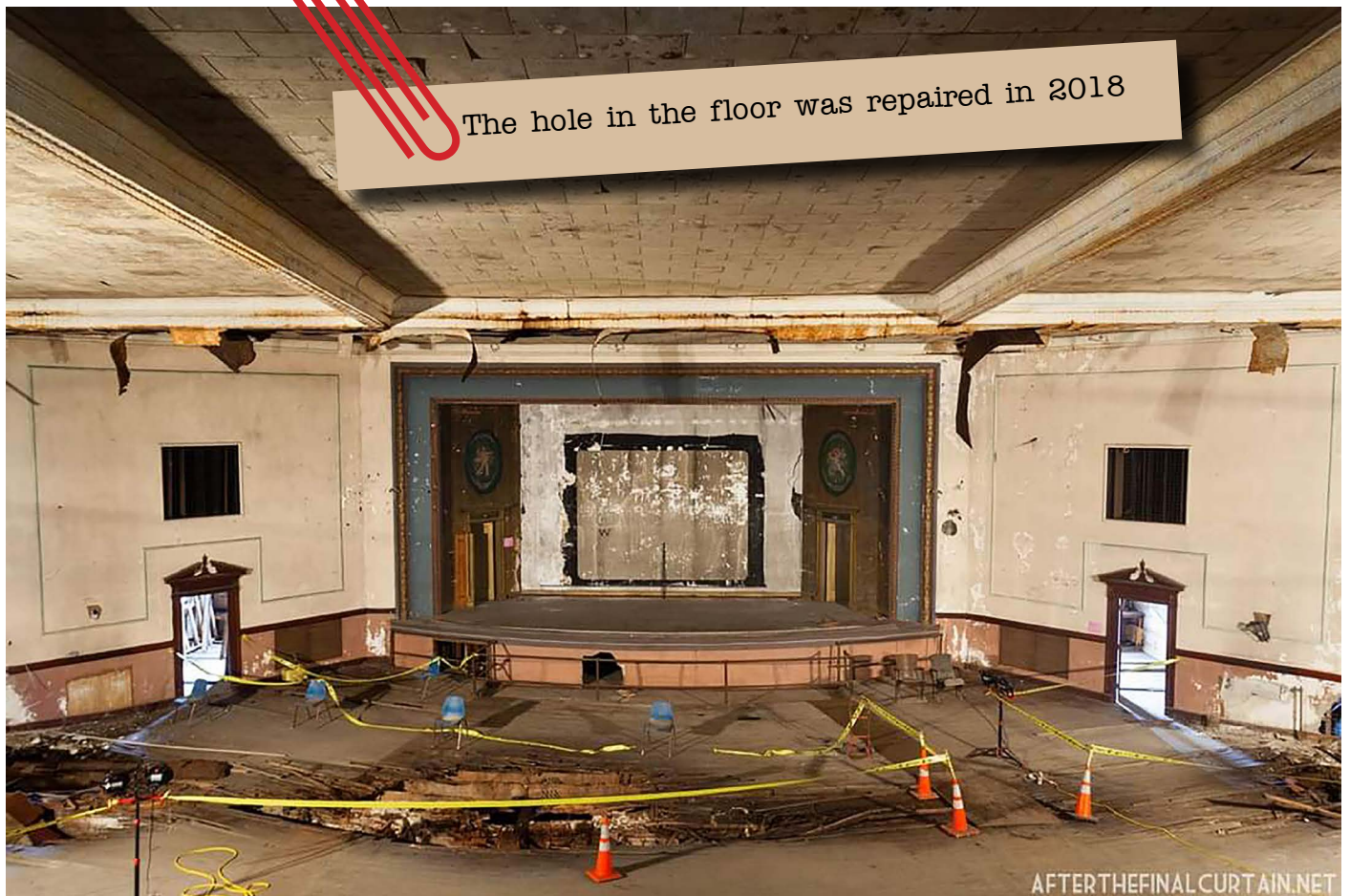
Janet Downes, Sam Tippet, Sue Parkhurst, Michael Hall, Richard Parkhurst, Shawn McLaughlin, Phyllis Von Herrlich,. The Augusta Colonial Theater is a National Historic site in the historic downtown area of Augusta Maine. 2014

Serious Work Begins

The first major challenge was a roof that leaked for 40 years. Significant water damage resulted in a large, rotted hole in the floor of the auditorium. The roof was repaired with assistance from G&E Roofing in Augusta, Maine and Skowhegan Savings Bank. This stopped on-going water damage and allowed the Board to focus on repairing the floor.



Deteriorating brick columns in the basement were repaired to support new subflooring. When historical architects arrived to consult on those repairs, TOXIC coal ash was discovered and work ceased until the Environmental Protection Agency came in and prescribed the abatement and removal.



Work On The Exterior

As we approached 2017, Amanda Taylor, Chair of the Grants Committee, helped to secure \$24,995.00 from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to repair and restore the façade of the ACT. The Standards of Historic Restoration allowed us to return to the façade of 1926, with its Art Deco multi-colored brick.

Gary Peachey of Peachey Builders led the search for workers, masons, and painters who were familiar with restoration capabilities and, as a board member, was willing to oversee the work.

The Art Deco element on the top of the theater presented a real problem. It was made 100 years ago of wood and tin with unusual zinc designs. Restoration required artisan workers who understood historic techniques. The solution came with the discovery of two very special businesses. Belgrade-based John Gawler and Daughters, and Molly O'Guinness Carlson, owner of Head Tide Archeological Conservation Laboratory. Gawler was classically trained in metal work and Carlson knew how to restore the zinc decorations. Another problem solved. Heros are everywhere.





Historically accurate exterior restoration in 2020

In The Theater ... A Celebration!

With the roof repaired, the floor and basement reconstructed, and the façade restored to 1926, the Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce highlighted our success.

During the end of the first Covid restrictions, 250 visitors entered the space for the first time in 50 years, toured, and listened to board members lay out plans for the second chapter.



People gathered to celebrate the end of Phase One of the restoration of the Augusta Colonial Theater June 2021.





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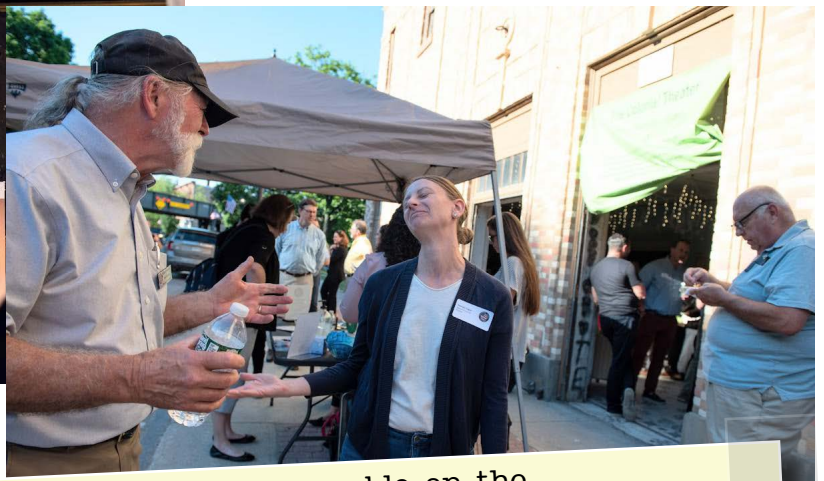
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Welcoming people as the theater becomes more useable on the journey to full restoration. Kennebec Valley Chamber Of Commerce Business After Hours, June 22, 2021.

Chapter II

NEW BEGINNINGS

With the initial stabilization completed, we presented the first live performance in 53 years to a sell-out crowd, starring native son and former resident of Manchester, Maine, Kent Axell.

Many in attendance shared memories of the Colonial Theater in its more robust days. This event gave us an opportunity to publicly introduce the vision for the new Arts and Cultural Center of Augusta.

We are constantly establishing new partnerships and affiliations with like minded organizations such as the Maine Arts Academy, now located in Augusta. We participate in art forums such as the Womans Luncheon for the Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce, where we were part of an arts panel that included Snow Pond Center for the Arts, Johnson Hall, and the Monmouth Theater.

Let us now showcase the pathway to success....





300 eager people gathered in a theater construction zone to be entertained by native son Kent Axell. For two hours we shared the future of the first arts and cultural center in the capital city of Augusta, Maine.

Meeting the design team

The Augusta Colonial Theater (ACT) is a Registered Historic Landmark, the only theater in the capital city designated as such. Our reconstruction comes under the Regulations and Standards of the National Park Service, requiring specialized skills in restoration and reproduction work. The building will be restored back to its 1926 appearance; there is little evidence about what it looked like before then.

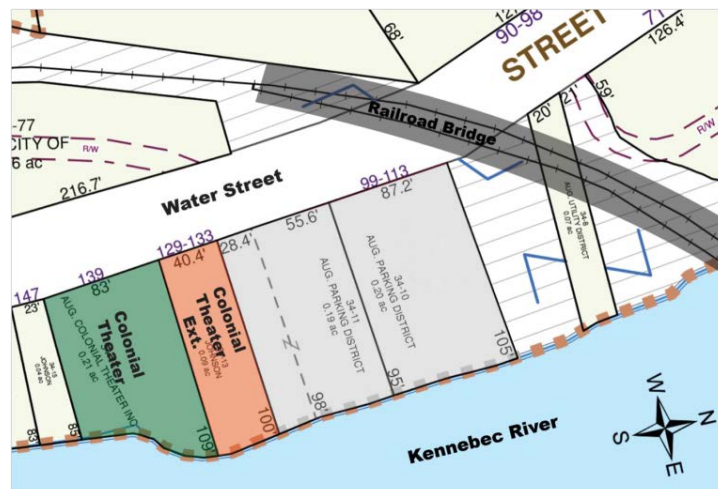
Located at 139 Water Street in the capital City of Maine, the Augusta Colonial Theater was originally built in 1913 from plans drawn by Harry Coombs. In 1925, a fire destroyed much of the structure. In 1926, the theater was restored and expanded to its present size from plans drawn by the architectural firm of Bunker and Savage.

Funded by a loan from the Augusta Board of Trade, the completion of the 50% Design Plan will allow updated estimates on material needs and construction costs. It will include restoration of the original building as well as two new additional spaces on the north side towards the railroad trestle. The Design Team includes professionals and board members Rick Goduti, historic architect, Gary Peachey, owner, Peachey Builders, Richard Parkhurst, developer and board president, Amanda Taylor, historic architectural specialist and board member, and Scott Hanson, Historic Consultant



Rick Goduti, historic architect, Richard Parkhurst, developer and board president, Amanda Taylor, historic architectural specialist, Gary Peachey, owner, Peachey Builders, and board member, and Scott Hanson, Historic Consultant. Note: Most of the original tile floor remains.

In addition there are others that have helped in researching the restoration work. Sutherland Consulting provided historically accurate plaster and paint colors throughout the theater and lobby. A variety of lighting, sound, and theater consultants, as well as structural, mechanical, and civil engineers have been employed while updating our plans.



Grants and Research

The facade was completed in 2020 with a grant from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. The project also received funding from the Davis Family Foundation, Morton-Kelly Charitable Trust, and Belvedere Fund from the Maine Community Foundation, to assist in restoration activities.

Today, we are moving forward with \$160,000 in additional funding from the Maine Development Corporation and Maine Commission on Historic Preservation and matching funds provided by the Randy MacKay Foundation to finish the doors and windows on the front of the building. Also, the south side alley way will be rebuilt to provide updated safety exits. This will increase our ability to accommodate up to 450 guests for performances, while we continue restoration.

A research team of Board President Richard Parkhurst and Board member Michael Hall, Director of the Downtown Alliance, visited four restored theaters in New England to gain knowledge regarding what has worked in similar-sized New England Cities. Interviews and visits led to informed decisions regarding our own best plan of action.

Lessons learned from several months of research visiting restored theaters in upper New England

Theaters do not survive on ticket sales alone. Concessions selling candy, drinks, and quick snacks are important elements of any arts and cultural experience.

Significant revenues come from live acts, even though all theaters report that film and live-streaming are an integral part of their programming.

\$1.5 million has already been spent in restoration projects. \$200,000 more will be spent in 2023 to restore doors and windows. We have been allocated \$1.5 million in Congressionally Designated Funds in the current federal budget cycle through Susan Collins' office.

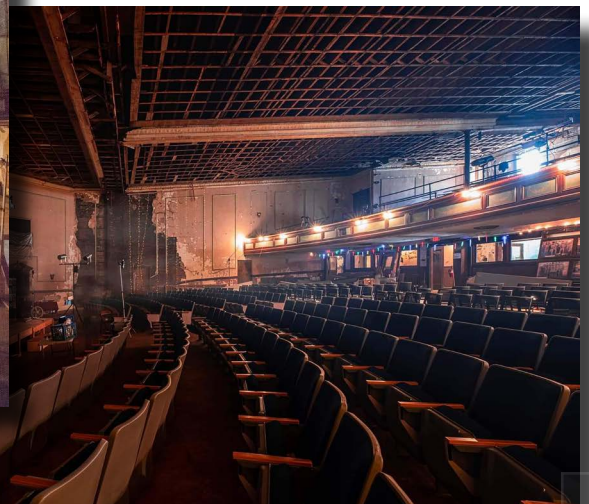




Before repair of damaged floor



After repair



Temporary seating for performances



2017



2020

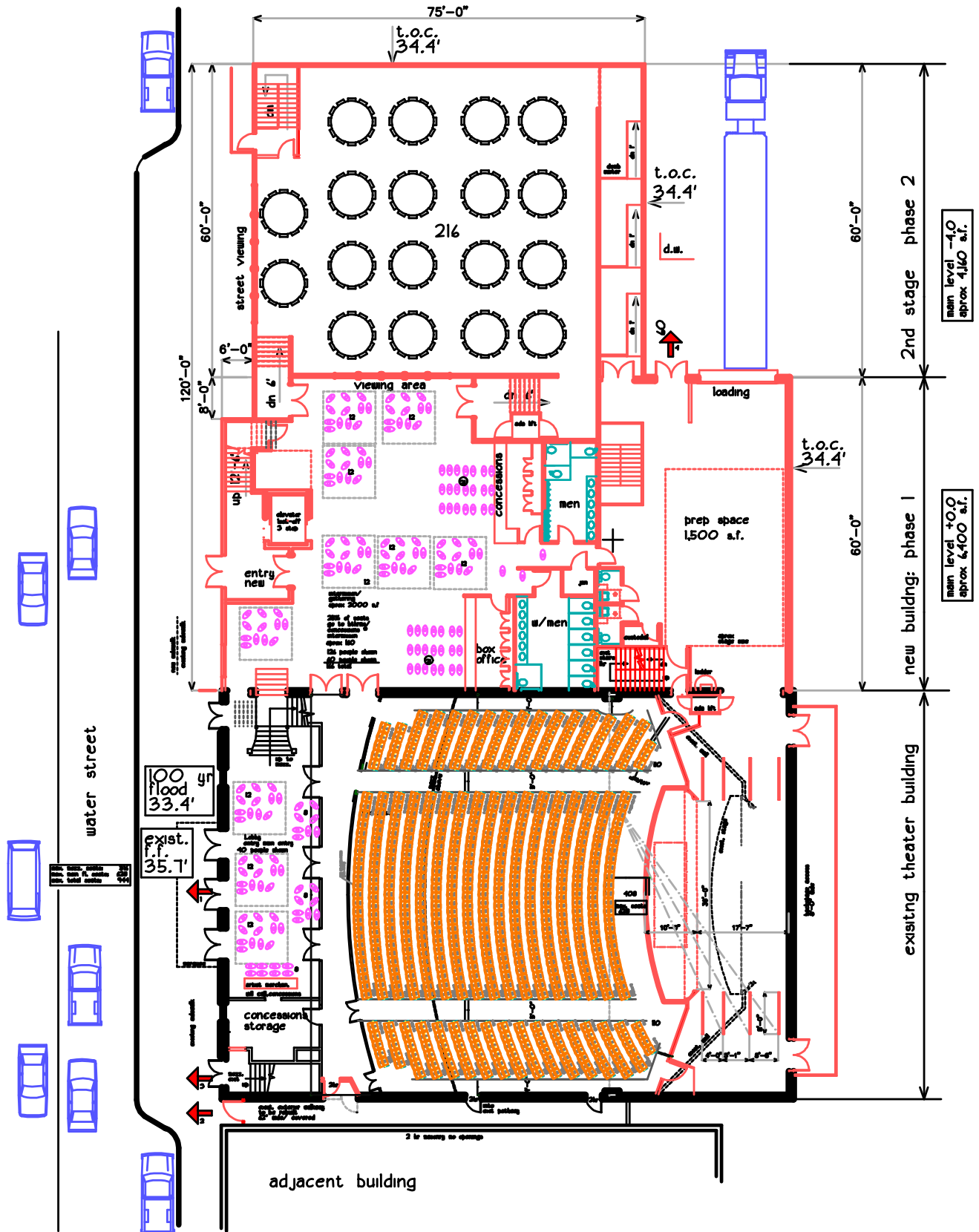
50% Design Plan: Restoration and Additions

We have designed a 1,000-seat, wheelchair-accessible arts and cultural center with an attached 3-level ancillary building on land that we own and a two story 216 person capacity multi-purpose space with a restaurant above. The attached ancillary building will support sustainability and ADA compliance. It will allow for full renovation and maximization of the historic building within National Park Service Standards, making the project eligible for Historic Tax Credits.

The new building will be placed on the north side of the existing theater and will house various services necessary for full operation of an arts and cultural center. There will be diversified restrooms, modern water supply systems, additional HVAC systems and conference/classrooms for public and corporate use.

In addition, on the WATER STREET LEVEL, we will include a 216 person capacity flexible multi-purpose space for use by the cultural center and the community, providing sustainable income to the center. It will have the capacity to convert into a conference and fund-raising space. In addition, as we restore and expand the existing stage on the WATER STREET LEVEL, a complementary open space in the new building, beyond stage left, will be created to hold sets, props, and staging. With great ease, these items can be moved on and off the vintage stage. It will be connected to LOWER LEVEL storage spaces using a stage elevator.





Water Street Level

On the MEZZANINE/BALCONY LEVEL, overlooking the Kennebec River, there will be an income-producing 54 seat restaurant to boost sustainable revenues. Projected income for the first year of operation is \$1 million. In addition, there will concessions, gift shops, an art gallery on the Mezzanine and Water Street levels.

We will have multiple beverage and food stations conveniently available before, during, and after performances.

ACT will not be “just a movie theater.” It will be a fully operational center for arts and culture that will include, but not be restricted to, live performances, lectures, concerts, international streaming performances and a home for a symphony orchestra. The pre-existing Youth Theater will be expanded, and a Senior Theater has already begun. These programs and more will utilize the new rehearsal and performing spaces. Programs will serve and include city and regional populations.

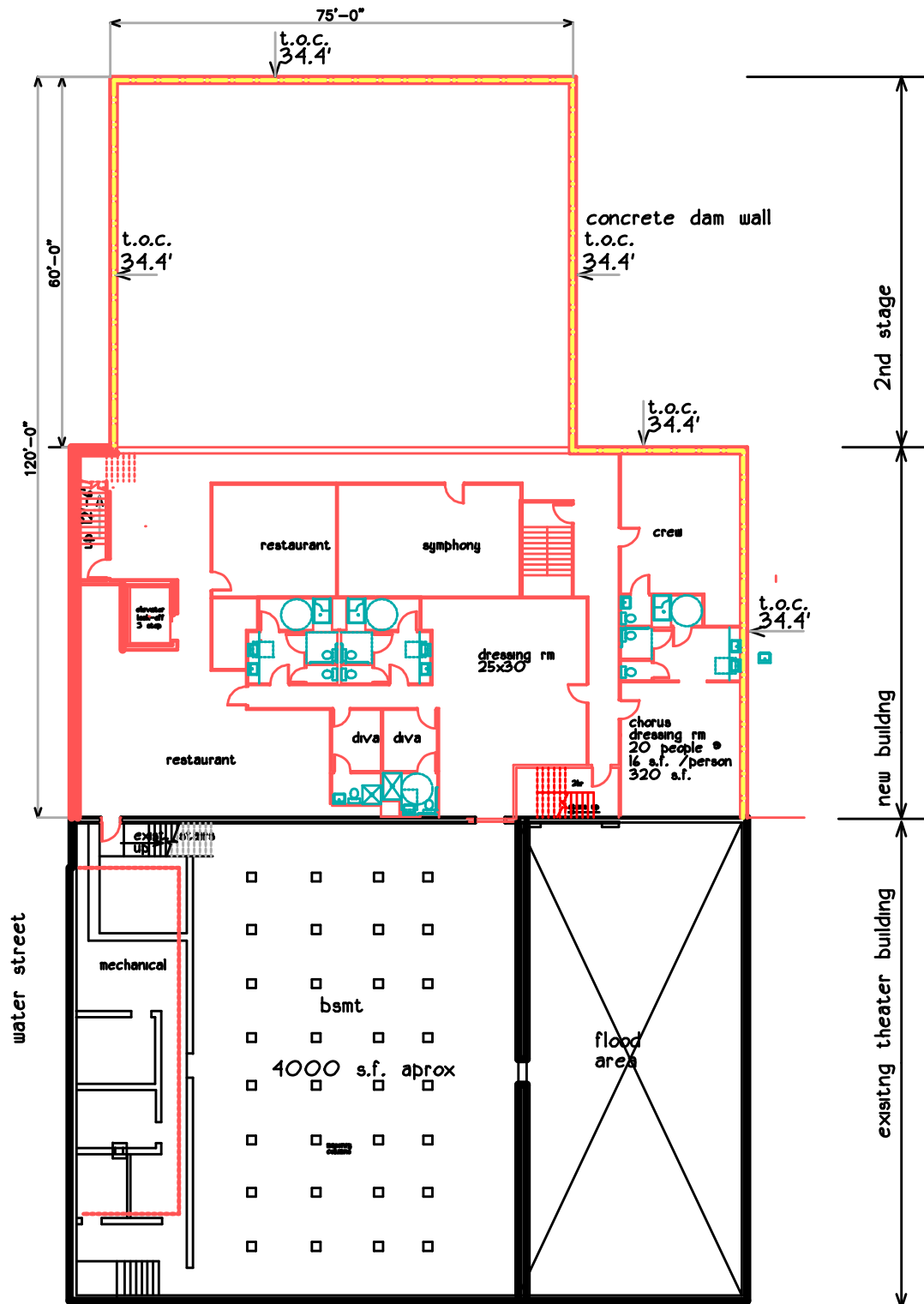
Two other performing venues in Augusta exist, but do not function adequately to provide the size and scope of services necessary for an arts and cultural center in the capital city. They are at the University of Maine at Augusta with seating less than 200, and the auditorium at Cony High School. Being a public school, concession offerings are limited to non-alcoholic drinks, unlike most full performing arts venues.

The LOWER LEVEL is the “workhorse level” of the arts and cultural center. It will have appropriately appointed dressing rooms, and storage areas for costumes, props, sets, equipment and restaurant supplies. Mechanical areas will house the air and heating system infrastructure equipment that allows efficient operations. Heating and ventilation will be placed throughout the flooring of the main auditorium, making the area evenly quiet and comfortable for patrons.

Lighting and sound equipment will have its own storage area when it is not being used in the general theater and balcony area. Newer technologies allow for greater portability and smaller size as compared to early projection and sound equipment.

Deliveries will enter through the platformed area at the north side of the building, with easy access to the stage elevator and adjacent storage areas. Parking will be available beyond the delivery area. Within walking distance, additional parking is available throughout the downtown area and at Mill Park.

All buildings will have a concrete dam wall and the remaining lot will be filled to above the 100 year flood plain.



Lower Level

Setting the Stage for the Future

Our Mission is to restore and operate the historic Colonial Theater in downtown Augusta for the artistic, educational, and charitable benefit of the community.

Our vision is for the state-of-the-art cultural facility to be located in the north end of Augusta's historical district and housed in the restored Augusta Colonial Theater. The Augusta Colonial Theater depends on individual donors, grants, and corporate contributors.

According to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), audience demand has grown 12% since 2000, adding an additional \$730 Billion to the National Economy.

The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reports that arts and culture contributes \$1.6 Billion to the Maine economy. Arts in Portland alone generate \$57 Million in household incomes to residents. In 2015, non-profit arts organizations generated \$150.6 million in economic activity annually that supported 4,190 jobs and generated \$12.3 million in state and government revenue. Arts and culture make money and stimulate local economies.

A key finding from the Maine Arts Commission in "Fortifying Maine's Creativity and Culture" five-year (2015-2020) plan is this: "The more creative activities and places there are in a community, the higher the pride and affection residents have. Over time, these communities show a higher GDP, a prime element in local economic viability." Artsactionfund.org reports that non-profit arts groups in Portland, Maine generated \$46.6 million in economic activity. Audiences of 1.0 million people added another \$29.million in related expenses for a total of \$75 million for the city in 2015, and this generated \$8.6 million in local and state taxes and 2,372 full time jobs.

The restored Augusta Colonial Theater as an arts and cultural center is the catalyst for an arts corridor and will boost revitalization of downtown, contribute to the local economy and elevate the quality of life.

This is why Arts matter. People matter. Communities matter.

Highlight of comparable theaters

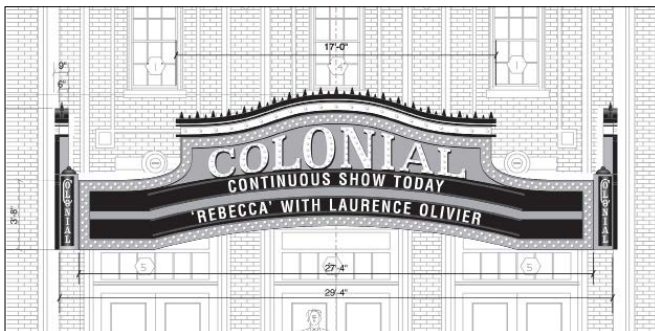
City, State	Pop.	Name & website	Year opened	Seating capacity	Annual attendees	Income*
Waterville, ME	16,406	Waterville Opera House www.operahouse.org	1902	810	30,000	\$1,014,066
Rockland, ME	7,179	The Strand Theatre rocklandstrand.com	1923	350	40,000	\$788,036

Description	Labor	Materials/Equipment	Total
HISTORIC RENOVATION (Existing Building)			
Sitework /Demolition	\$160,000	\$ 60,000	\$220,000
Concrete	\$150,000	\$290,000	\$440,000
Masonry	\$320,000	\$ 80,000	\$400,000
Steel	\$ 60,000	\$140,000	\$200,000
Carpentry	\$136,000	\$440,000	\$576,000
Thermal & Moisture	\$ 60,000	\$ 80,000	\$140,000
Doors & Windows	\$ 26,000	\$103,000	\$129,000
Finishes	\$ 24,000	\$280,000	\$304,000
Specialities	\$ 65,000	\$ 80,000	\$145,000
Equipment	\$100,000	\$700,000	\$800,000
Furnishings	\$ 50,000	\$525,000	\$575,000
Special Construction	\$ 40,000	\$ 16,000	\$ 56,000
Mechanical	\$ 70,000	\$400,000	\$470,000
Electrical	\$150,000	\$220,000	\$370,000
General Conditions	\$300,000	\$ 75,000	\$375,000
New Service Addition (20,000 sq. ft.)			\$2,000,000
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION BUDGET			\$7,200,000
Initial Revenue Shortfall (24 months startup)			\$1,300,000
Total Budget			\$8,500,000

Financial Projections for a Future with Possibilities (Three Years Hence)

	Description	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
REVENUE	Memberships - Corporate	\$178,500	\$178,500	\$178,500
	Memberships - Individual	\$76,500	\$87,975	\$103,811
	Sponsorships & Grants	\$150,000	\$172,500	\$203,550
	Live Events	\$825,500	\$948,750	\$1,119,525
	Film & Streaming	\$60,000	\$69,000	\$81,420
	Concession Sales	\$105,000	\$120,750	\$142,485
	Rentals	\$60,000	\$69,000	\$81,420
	Miscellaneous	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000
	TOTAL REVENUE	\$1,500,000	\$1,691,475	\$1,955,711
EXPENSES	Live Events	\$532,000	\$611,800	\$721,924
	Film & Streaming Rights	\$42,000	\$48,300	\$56,994
	Concession Cost of Goods Sold	\$28,000	\$32,200	\$37,996
	Salary - Executive Director	\$70,000	\$80,500	\$94,990
	Salary - Box Office Manager	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000
	Other Wages & Benefits	\$332,000	\$381,800	\$450,524
	Occupancy Expenses	\$126,000	\$126,000	\$126,000
	Insurances	\$98,000	\$102,900	\$113,190
	Marketing & Outreach	\$112,000	\$128,800	\$151,984
	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,400,000	\$1,572,300	\$1,813,602
	Net Income	\$100,000	\$119,175	\$142,109

Projections are based upon research conducted with restored theaters currently in operation. This research included site visits and discussions with Executive Directors of Portsmouth (NH) Music Theater, Colonial Theater in Keene, NH and Colonial Theater in Concord, NH. Membership revenue is projected to increase 4.5% in year 2 and 6% in year 3. Other revenue items are projected to increase 15% in year 2 and 18% in year 3. Salaries and benefits collectively are projected to increase 13% in year 2 and 16% in year 3. Insurances are expected to increase 5% in year 2 and 10% in year 3. Occupancy expenses are projected to remain constant. All other expenses are projected to increase 15% in year 2 and 18% in year 3.




COLONIAL AUGUSTA THEATER
 PRESENTS
 THE SENIOR PLAYERS IN
SILVER IN 3 ACTS
 3 Scenes in Silver Lives
 AT THE COLONIAL THEATER



Friday October 21st 7:00 PM
 Sunday October 23rd 2:00PM


COLONIAL AUGUSTA THEATER
 PRESENTS
SILENT MOVIE FESTIVAL
 AT THE COLONIAL THEATER



Contact Email: director@augustacolonial.org
 Visit: <https://colonialtheater.org>


COLONIAL AUGUSTA THEATER
 PRESENTS
PERFORMANCES BY
Symphonies



Contact Email: director@augustacolonial.org
 Visit: <https://colonialtheater.org>

The Colonial Theater is a signature landmark of Downtown Augusta and is recognized on the National Register of Historic Places.

Today, a renewed effort is underway to restore and operate the theater



139 Water Street, Augusta, ME

<https://colonialtheater.org>