

THE
STATE
THE SANDUSKY STATE THEATRE

FOR THE NEXT
100
YEARS
RAISING THE CURTAIN ON A NEW ERA



JUNE
2023

For almost a century, the Sandusky State Theatre has been a jewel on the Lake Erie shore—a place where locals and visitors alike come together to experience the power of the performing arts and enjoy special events as a community.



But on June 10, 2020, neighbors gathered at the Theatre to take in a very different sight. A storm with winds of over 55 miles per hour had blown the roof off the building, collapsed the auditorium ceiling, and destroyed the stage and seating areas. Although the damage was devastating, the catastrophe brought Erie County residents together to imagine a brighter future for the Theatre and the region.



Community members made their feelings known: **they could not picture Sandusky without the Sandusky State Theatre.** With their enthusiasm and support, Theatre stewards developed a plan to not only rebuild the Theatre, but to expand and improve it.

The roof has been repaired, and in the summer of 2022 the final phase of construction began. Now, as we prepare to reopen in spring of 2024, **we are excited to announce the \$7 million campaign to finalize the renovation and expansion of the Theatre and bolster the endowment to sustain the Theatre's future.**

▲ A CENTURY OF SERVICE TO SANDUSKY ▲



Amidst an ever-changing entertainment and economic landscape, the Sandusky State Theatre has endured and evolved.

Originally known as the Schine Theatre, it opened as a film and vaudeville house on **October 11, 1928** and entertained audiences for decades. When revue-style shows fell out of favor, the building fell into disrepair in the 1960s and 70s, but in **1988 Sandusky State Theatre, Inc. was founded to preserve the building and serve the people of north central Ohio through the arts.** That same year, the Theatre was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Its last major renovation took place in 1990.

The Theatre has hosted international entertainment icons and prominent local arts groups. **Shirley Temple, B.B. King, Willie Nelson, and UB40** have all graced the stage, and Michael Bolton performed at the Theatre's 75th anniversary celebration in 2003. Today, the Theatre is home to the **Caryl Crane Youth Theatre**, and regularly presents performances by the **Firelands Symphony Orchestra** and free educational and arts events sponsored by the **Lange Trust**.

— A COMMUNITY UNITED —

While theatres across the country stood vacant during the COVID-19 pandemic, Sandusky State Theatre leaders were busy collecting input to shape the plans for the building. Through a community survey, focus groups, and an open house, Sandusky residents shared what the Theatre means to them, as well as their ideas for the building's future.

Respondents made it clear that the Sandusky State Theatre is the heart of the community, and its historic, artistic, and economic value cannot be overstated. The Theatre building brings architectural character to downtown Sandusky and inspires pride in residents. It makes a wide range of performance and educational experiences available to all. And when audience members attend events at the Theatre, local businesses benefit from their patronage before and after the show.

Community members demonstrated their commitment to the Theatre's future by suggesting improvements that would serve Sandusky for the next 100 years. They envisioned flexible spaces that would bring in a more diverse range of cultural and artistic experiences, including speakers, comedy, jazz concerts, historical exhibitions, and the visual arts. They pointed out the need for accessibility features that would accommodate all patrons and promote better crowd control and circulation. And they called for modern technical infrastructure that would attract and accommodate world-class performances.

The Theatre is a valued local treasure—one that holds generations of fond memories and hope for the future of our region. The new Sandusky State Theatre will serve the community well because it is truly designed by the community.

— PRESERVING OUR HISTORY—BUILDING THE FUTURE —

The architects at the DLR Group are committed to meticulously preserving the building's historic character, while bringing the facilities up to 21st-century standards. Upon reopening, audiences will see familiar icons of the Sandusky State Theatre: the glorious chandelier that miraculously survived the storm; artisan-crafted plaster work framing the proscenium; and the Theatre's original Golden Voiced Marvel Page Organ.

And there will be new features to discover, too.



Crews are hard at work every day on the stage house, the auditorium interior, and an exciting new addition which includes:



A second venue - The modern design and flexible seating capacity (ranging from 150 to 225) will be well suited for jazz concerts, comedy shows, and other intimate performances and events.



An outdoor terrace - Wrapping around the back of the building on the second floor, this new space will provide patrons with room to socialize before performances and during intermissions.



Frohman's, a corner pub - This dapper new cocktail lounge is named in honor of Sandusky native Charles Frohman, the turn-of-the-century theatre impresario who originally produced Peter Pan in the early 1900s. Frohman's will serve quality spirits and libations during and outside of performance times, and earned revenue will be reinvested in Theatre operations.



An art gallery - Right next door to the main auditorium, patrons can peruse memorabilia and artifacts from the Theatre's past, as well as rotating exhibits of work by local, regional, and national artists.

The reopened Theatre will also include the following updates:



A larger stage and new dressing rooms that will allow the Theatre to accommodate touring Broadway shows and prominent musical acts.



A lift in the orchestra pit to raise and lower it as needed, depending on the type of performance.



Acoustic improvements that will augment all types of musical and theatrical performances.



Enhanced patron areas with aesthetic updates, improved traffic flow, multiple concession stands, bars, and additional restrooms.



Roomy ergonomic seats that match the auditorium's historic grandeur. The restored main auditorium will have a capacity of 1400 to 1500, depending on the type of performance.



Ample accessible seating throughout the auditorium for patrons with limited mobility.



WEST ENTRANCE



SECOND VENUE



MAIN AUDITORIUM SEATING



MAIN AUDITORIUM STAGE

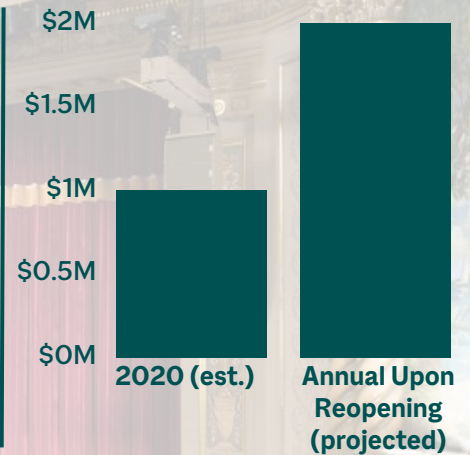
AN INVESTMENT IN OUR REGION

The reopened Sandusky State Theatre will not only be a community hub where the arts can flourish, but an economic catalyst that will bring business downtown.

When audiences come to see a show, local establishments benefit. A study conducted by Americans for the Arts found that the average audience member spends \$31.47 beyond the cost of admission at local businesses to cover food and drinks, transportation, and other event-related expenses. And on average, out-of-town visitors spend twice as much as locals at neighboring businesses when they attend a performance.



ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE SANDUSKY STATE THEATRE



Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 30,000 people attended shows or special events at the Theatre every year, contributing an estimated \$1 million to the local economy annually. Upon reopening, the Theatre will be programmed over 150 days a year and have an economic impact of over \$2 million per year—twice its previous impact.

Located in the heart of downtown, the Sandusky State Theatre is surrounded by attractive dining, shopping, and social activities for residents and visitors alike. The newly renovated Theatre and its diverse season will inspire tourists to stay longer and plan their trips around a show or concert, bringing additional revenue to shops, restaurants, pubs, distilleries, hotels, and more.

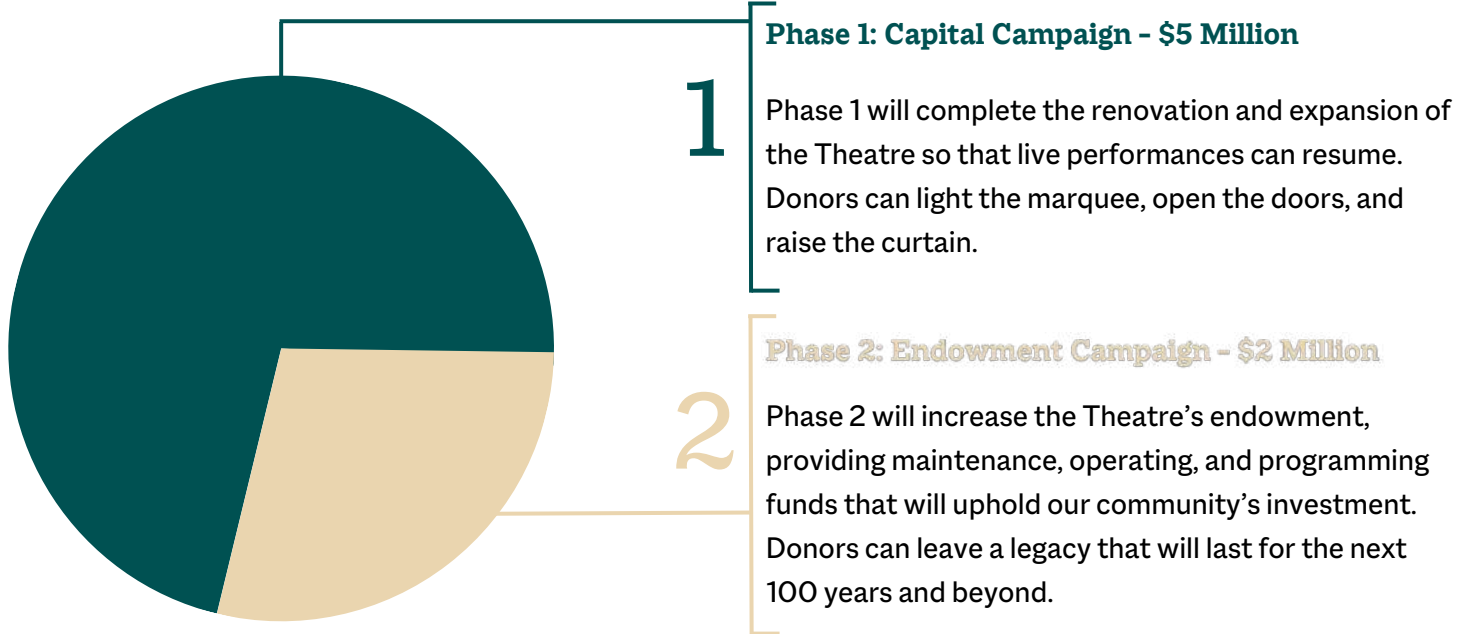
THE CAMPAIGN GOAL

TOTAL GOAL: \$37M

SECURED: ~\$30M

So far, the Sandusky State Theatre has secured nearly \$30 million of its total \$37 million goal. Thanks to generous private donors, public funding, federal and state tax credits, and insurance compensation for the storm damage, we are within sight of the finish line. This reimagined regional landmark is nearly complete.

The campaign will unfold in two phases:



AFTER THE STORM

The 2020 storm could have condemned the Sandusky State Theatre to close forever. But thanks to the stewardship of our community, what began as a disaster became an opportunity. With the support of visionary leaders and generous donors, the Theatre will soon welcome audiences and performers back with its combination of historic beauty and modern features.

An investment in the Theatre will sustain the heart of Sandusky, and our region will reap the economic and cultural benefits of this revitalized venue for generations to come. With your support, our community will grow stronger and more vibrant than ever.

It's time to raise the curtain on a new era.



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