



# HISTORIC THEATRES

STATEWIDE SURVEY AND PHYSICAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

This report commissioned by the Washington state Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

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*Cover image of the Metropolitan Performing Arts Center, Spokane. Susan Johnson, photographer, Artifacts Consulting, Inc.*

*Digital edits by Matthew Stoffel, Rusty George Creative.*



# CONTRIBUTORS

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Circa 1936 photograph of the Grand Theater, Seattle. Image courtesy of PSTOS.



# PROJECT TEAM

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The project team included a broad and unflaggingly enthusiastic group. Mary Thompson's extensive experience in preservation policy and state government informed the funding history as well as tools and ideas for continued theater preservation. Our team is deeply grateful for the architectural expertise of Tim McDonald, principal with Artifacts Consulting, Inc. Mr. McDonald, a retired licensed architect, contributed as co-field surveyor and authored the physical needs chapter as well as many of the physical highlights and condition assessments. He worked with Jim Collins, structural engineer, vice-president, PCS Structural Solutions, to develop the cost estimate sections. We are immensely grateful for the tireless dedication of Susan Johnson, historic preservation consultant, project manager, and co-field surveyor. Ms. Johnson set up the field visits and crafted a majority of the report narrative. Christy Johnson of Artifacts Consulting, Inc. assisted in the edits and completed all of the database entry for each theater surveyed. Erica Sage of Sage Editing edited the volumes of draft text for the report. Renee Petterson and Matthew Stoffel of Rusty George Creative provided the report graphics and design. Michael Sullivan of Artifacts Consulting, Inc. served as the principal-in-charge providing vision and direction for this diverse team. Spencer Howard, partner, provided project support.





Clyde Theatre, Langley. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



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# OVERVIEW



*Photograph by Susan Johnson, Artifacts Consulting, Inc.*

This report is the product of a statewide survey and physical needs assessment of historic theaters conducted by Artifacts Consulting, Inc. under contract to the Washington state Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP). The primary objectives are to identify patterns of physical needs shared statewide amongst historic theaters and to provide DAHP and the state legislature with a body of knowledge that informs decision-making on how best to preserve our state's important heritage of historic theaters. This report will also be a resource for the theaters' stewards and their communities.



Capitol Theatre, Yakima. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



# SCOPE

Artifacts Consulting, Inc. (Artifacts) compiled a statewide list of the majority of operating theaters at least fifty years of age, built originally as theaters. This included a total of eighty live-performance, cinema (indoor and drive-in), and combination performance/cinema theaters. Survey teams comprised of two Artifacts staff members visited selected theaters, meeting with theater operators/owners and conducting a thorough exterior and interior walk-through. The survey collected basic structural, use, condition, and historical information on each theater. This historical information includes date of construction (DOC), building materials, and the primary physical concerns. Whenever possible, data on original and current building functions, as well as operational concerns, was also gathered. These physical needs were divided into subcategories: exterior issues, interior issues, and operational issues.

Exterior and interior subcategories are based on building material type whereas operational issues consider fire code and universal access code (ADA) compliance, ventilation systems, etc. While the focus of the physical needs assessment was on historic building elements, to report back on only such things as damaged plaster would give an incomplete picture of the obstacles faced by Washington's historic theaters. Theaters are complex spaces with multiple requirements for successful operation. As public gathering places, theaters need to be safe and relatively comfortable environments for their patrons. Depending on their function, theaters need to have adequate projection systems, sound/acoustic systems, and lighting systems. Furthermore, many single-screen cinemas face extreme financial challenges due to a movie industry that is geared towards multiplexes in its licensing and "profit taking." To this end, there are sections in this report that address the capital repair priorities, as well as some innovative opportunities for supporting theater preservation. These opportunities include various technical assistance aspects and theater-specific funding.



Circa 1940s postcard depicting the 5th Avenue Theatre, Seattle. Image courtesy of PSTOS.

Aspects of theater operation, such as projection systems, are indeed important considerations; however, for the purpose of this report, the focus of the cost estimates will be limited to historic building elements. Repair costs do NOT include projection or sound systems upgrades, as these systems have usually changed over a theater's lifetime and are therefore difficult to classify as historic features. Heating and ventilation systems, however, have not been changed in many cases due to a variety of factors, so they may be considered as historic features in many theaters. Cost estimates for their replacement have been gathered from a few theaters of various ages and sizes. Cost estimating models for seismic upgrades address the core building structure types but do not include exterior envelope components (such as cladding, cornices, etc.), as these varied too extensively from theater to theater.

The eighty theaters found eligible for this survey include a few that are currently being renovated and will be operating again as theaters within the next year. Fifty theaters were surveyed for interior and exterior features, and fourteen more were recorded based on their exterior features only. Not all owner/operators responded

to communication attempts; thus, not all eighty theaters were surveyed. The fourteen exterior-only surveys were for non-responsive theaters. During the field visits, a few theaters that are now closed with no reopening plans or former theaters with new building uses were also externally recorded as comparisons, or as snapshots of what can happen when theaters go dark. These are not counted among the eighty, but there are completed DAHP survey forms for them. Cost estimates for physical needs have been extrapolated based on the data obtained from the surveyed theaters. Details on how these cost estimates were calculated, along with details on how the surveys were conducted, are given in the [Methodology](#) section of this overview.



Vue Dale Drive-In Theater, Wenatchee. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



## PURPOSE

In recent years, Washington’s legislature has supported the renovation of a few large theaters (Fox, Spokane; Mt. Baker, Bellingham; Columbia, Longview). This study was conducted at the request of the state legislature in order to discover the probable extent of possible future funding requests from other historic theaters in the state. It is far more cost-effective to maintain and repair an operating theater than to reopen and restore one after it has been vacant for even a few years. For example, the Vogue Theater in Cle Elum had been closed for decades when local citizens Larry and Rosemary Putnam bought it. It is currently under renovation by a local nonprofit organization, Community Builders, and will reopen as a community theater for live performances and community events. The Vogue’s story is only one, among many, theaters that not only act as a piece of community identity and memories, but also as vehicles for economic revitalization, supplementing increasingly scarce school and community arts programs.

Why should the state legislature care about theater preservation? Since most theaters in this survey are privately owned, any legal requirement for government agencies to maintain cultural resources under their purview does not seem to apply. However, the state legislature should be involved with theater preservation for the same reasons that local governments, chambers of commerce, and anyone else interested in the future health of Washington’s communities should care: theaters are often considered the heart and soul of the downtown community. The challenges facing the continued survival of many theaters are complex and will require diverse support mechanisms and a broad range of local and statewide stakeholders.

Historic theaters have multiple roles in our communities. They provide versatile venues for local arts programs, as well as nationally touring performances. They are integral aspects of cultural tourism for large cities. They are cherished gathering spaces for rural communities and urban neighborhoods. In the past, theaters gave us the news and an escape from daily hardships. Today, many theaters provide unique spaces for political debates, high school musicals or graduations, and fundraisers for local arts programs. Theater-goers contribute to downtown nightlife, and they support local restaurants and businesses. In many ways, historic theaters are the visual, economic, and recreational anchors for downtowns and historic districts that are coming back to life.



Undated historic photograph of the Vogue (Lane) Theater, Cle Elum. Image courtesy of Vogue Theater.

As such, Washington’s historic theaters were surveyed to better understand what obstacles impede their continued operation. Thus, the findings of our physical needs assessment and associated cost estimates are presented along with background information on Washington theater types, distribution, ownership/operating formats, and considerations for how the legislature could support these important community spaces and cultural treasures.

# METHODOLOGY

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The basic progression of this project was an initial attempt to identify Washington's historic theaters and then filter that list of theaters through two main criteria:

- a) must have been operating as a theater for fifty years or more; and,*
- b) must be operating or under renovation as a theater now.*

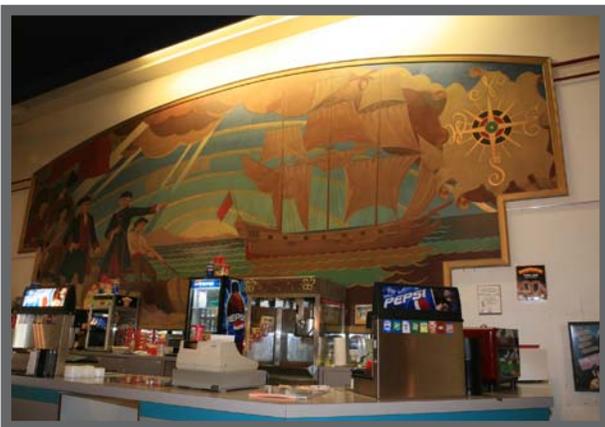
To compile the initial list, a variety of sources were referenced. The National Register of Historic Places, the Washington Historic Register, and Certified Local Government contacts provided the names and locations of theaters that are listed as historic at some level. Additionally, theater preservation organizations, such as the Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society, Cinema Treasures, CinemaTour, and the League of Historic American Theatres, provided invaluable information on many theaters past and present in Washington. Theater stewards themselves were wonderful sources for the locations of theaters that were not mentioned anywhere else except word of mouth. Thus, the list of operating theaters at least fifty years old fluctuated as the survey project progressed. We found that some theaters had recently closed, but occasionally we also found a recently reopened theater. There may be more theaters in Washington that fit the criteria but were not found during this project because they are not listed on historic registers, not mentioned on any of various websites related to theater preservation, and unknown to any of the contributors to this study.

In December 2007, Artifacts Consulting, Inc. compiled a statewide list of all known operating theaters at least fifty years of age. Specifically, the building had to have been a theater for at least fifty years, although continuous operation was not required. The fifty-year qualification follows federal guidelines for the minimum age of historic buildings. The operational criterion limits this survey to theaters that are renovating and plan to reopen with a theater function within the next year. Theaters which are closed with no future use planned (such as the former Liberty Theater, Pasco) or which no longer function as cinemas/performing arts venues were not included in this survey. Theaters less than fifty years old that operate in historic buildings, (such as the Grand Cinema, Tacoma) were also not included.

Some historic but non-operating theaters were recorded from their exteriors if they were in close proximity to a theater on the survey list. Their information is presented in the Washington state Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) field survey forms, separate from this report. It is estimated that, at one time, Washington had more than 300 operating theaters. It is possible, that many more theaters existed than the

300 thought to have been in operation. The eighty extant, operating historic theaters are few in comparison and may continue to decrease in number. As this report is being written, the Everett Theater is seriously considering having to close their doors unless a capital campaign succeeds in raising \$75,000,000.

The eighty eligible theaters for this assessment include both live-performance and cinema venues. Theater owners and/or operators were contacted by as many methods as possible, including email, phone, postal mail, and fax. Initial questionnaires were designed to confirm each theater's date of construction and basic building data (presence of a stage, balcony, etc.). Questionnaires were distributed by email, mail and/or fax. Site visits were scheduled



Mural in the Admiral Theatre, Seattle. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



with every theater that remitted the questionnaire. In some cases, owners/operators did not complete a questionnaire but expressed interest in participating. When site visits were scheduled with a responsive theater, further contact was attempted with non-responsive theaters in the same area. If there was still no response, the surveyors made good faith attempts to record at least the locations and exteriors of as many theaters as possible. Fifty theaters were surveyed on the interior as well as exterior, and another fourteen were recorded on the exterior only. Sixteen were not visited.



Undated historic photograph of the Liberty Theatre, Wenatchee. Image courtesy of PSTOS.

Each interior/exterior survey was completed by a team of two Artifacts staff members in conjunction with the theater owner and/or operator. The surveys collected basic structural, use, condition, and historical information, including date of construction, building materials, original function of the theater, previous alterations, and operational, maintenance, and condition concerns. Physical needs were divided into subcategories under exterior issues, interior issues, and operational issues. Exterior and interior subcategories are based on building material type whereas operational issues consider fire code and universal access code (ADA) compliance, functioning ventilation system, etc. Exterior subcategories include concrete, masonry, wood, metal, and paint. Interior subcategories include plaster, marble, wood, terrazzo, paint, and miscellaneous. The assessment portion of the project recorded the condition and amount of repair needed for each material. Exterior assessments also noted the condition and extent of repair needed for window, door, marquee, and roofing materials.

Background research on theater types, forms, and functions provided a basis for the resource typology in [Chapter 1](#). Two classification systems were developed. The first classification, by structural type, addresses considerations that might be important for engineers or architects if, say, seismic retrofitting becomes important for a given theater. The second classification, by original function, builds on the context and theater history established by the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Nomination: Movie Theaters in Washington state from 1900 - 1948. This expanded classification could be useful for any theaters that wish to apply for listing on a historic register, thus taking advantage of financial incentives. Findings on the ages, structural types, and functions of surveyed theaters are presented in the same section with the typology as a backdrop.

Findings related to the physical conditions and other operational obstacles are presented in [Chapter 2](#). Apart from the physical needs cost estimating, modified DAHP field survey forms were completed for the sixty-four visited theaters. Data entry of those hand-written forms is ongoing, and the electronic versions will be submitted to DAHP per their stated format preferences. Included in [Section 2.5](#) of this report are profiles of each of the sixty-five visited theaters visited from the total list of eighty.

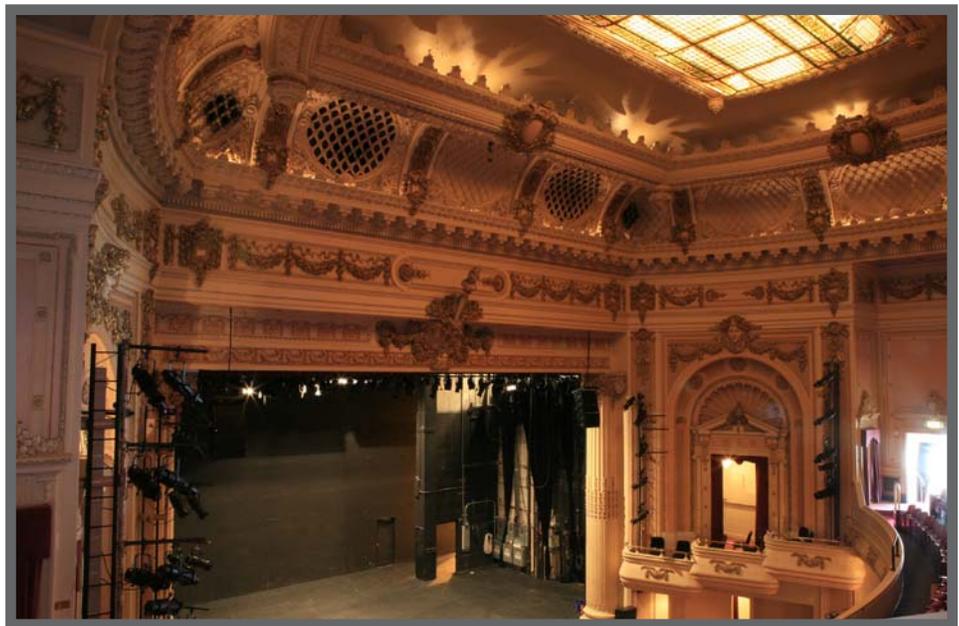
The most common physical issues were determined through an analysis of condition data from the survey. Average amounts of damage to each building material were paired with individual material costs per square foot from the 2008 *RSMeans Building Construction Cost Data* book to develop unit costs for the most common interior and exterior physical needs. Material and labor, profit, and overhead are included in the unit costs. Also, an additional 50 percent was added to each theater's cost estimate. This additional amount is to cover "soft costs," such as planning, design, contract administration, and construction setup and staging. The additional 50 percent also covers cost inflation for building material, transportation, and labor. It should also be noted that

the structural (seismic upgrade) costs are for the installation of those structural components needed to meet existing building codes.

Cost estimating for this report is limited to preservation-related needs. Repair costs do NOT include projection or sound systems upgrades, as these systems have usually changed over a theater's lifetime and are therefore difficult to classify as historic features. Heating and ventilation systems, however, have not been changed in many cases due to a variety of factors, so they may be considered as historic features. Essential building system upgrades are also considered preservation treatments when done sensitively. Further information on the physical needs and repair costs is given in [sections 2.4 and 2.5](#).

Because this report is intended to inform state leaders on not only the physical needs of theaters but also give a broad understanding of the role theaters play in our communities' economic and cultural vitality, findings that may be useful for economic planning and development efforts are included. A discussion of the existing theater preservation support mechanisms, including a summary of existing funding sources and suggestions for new or improved mechanisms is presented in [Chapter 3](#).

Regarding the use of "theater" vs. "theatre," it seems that -er more often refers to the actual building or a cinema, whereas -re is the term preferred in the drama sphere or refers to a drama company. We have tried to preserve the name of each building as used by its operator, but "theater" has been the default term.



Pantages Theater, Tacoma. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



# PHYSICAL NEEDS SUMMARY

The materials and workmanship used to construct the surveyed theaters were generally high-quality. However, the life spans of materials versus those of the buildings themselves exist on different time frames. Long-term preservation of theaters must consider materials and systems compatible with an extended building life span. It is critical to keep to a minimum the introduction of modern, short-lived elements and systems, or at least employ these more modern elements and systems such that they can be later reversed. The intent of this physical needs assessment is not to prioritize individual theaters or focus on the needs of individual buildings. Rather, the emphasis is on examining the broad patterns of issues observed in the surveyed theaters. As such, five major issues of physical needs were identified during the statewide survey. They are the most pressing needs affecting stabilization, preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and continued use of historic theaters. In order, they are as follows: roofs; interior surfaces (plaster, generally); exterior facades; building systems; and, mar-quees. Universal access (ADA) and seismic reinforcement are also commonly noted challenges for historic theaters.

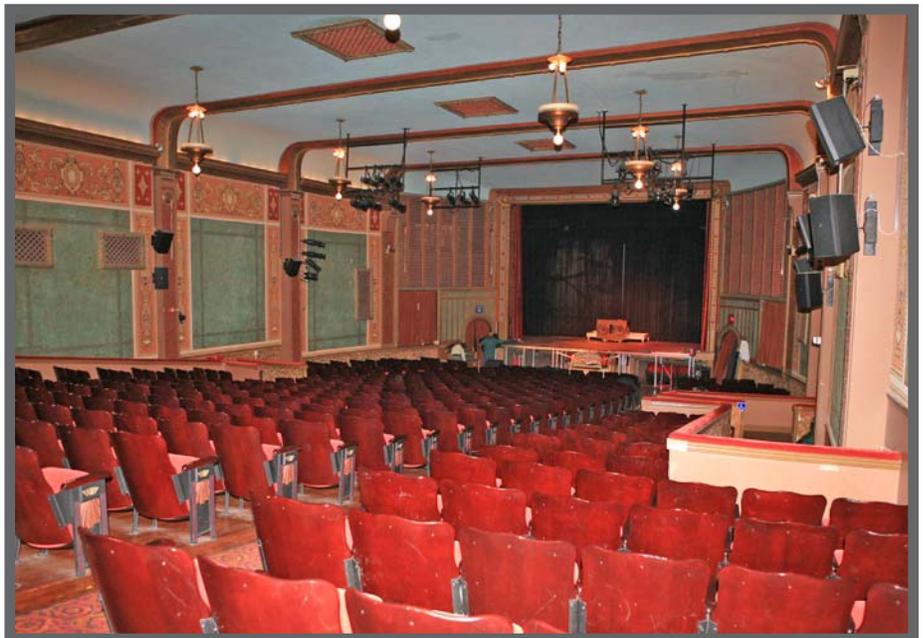


Historic photograph of the State Theater, Olympia. Image courtesy of Harlequin Productions.

# NON-PHYSICAL NEEDS SUMMARY

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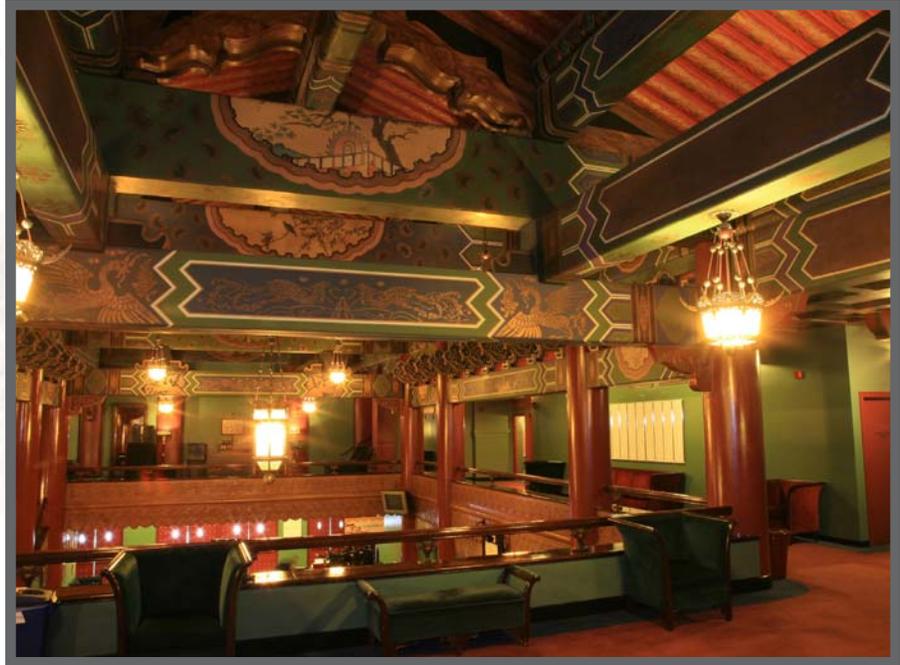
During the course of this survey and physical needs assessment, it became clear that a well-functioning theater needs a holistic approach. The physical needs assessment was intended to discover what theaters need as far as restoration or repair to historic fabric. However; some theaters need or want little assistance with regard to their historic fabric but need physical help with non-historic elements or assistance that relates to their business, not their building. Examples of non-historic physical needs are seismic retrofitting or general updating of seating, projection systems, and other elements that will likely not be considered for state funding. Those are addressed in greater detail in [Section 2.3](#). Examples of non-physical needs include help with small business development, organizational capacity building for nonprofit theater operators, and theater advocacy. These issues are addressed in greater detail in [Chapter 3](#). It should be noted that technical assistance is divided into structure-related and business-related assistance in this report. Historic and non-historic physical needs fall under the former and non-physical needs under the latter.



Lincoln Theatre, Mount Vernon. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



# 1.0 RESOURCE TYPES & DEVELOPMENT



*5th Avenue Theatre. Photograph by Susan Johnson, Artifacts Consulting, Inc.*

This chapter presents background information on theaters as cultural resources. Section 1.1 *Theater Ages* addresses the range and patterns in ages of historic theaters in Washington. Two different identification systems are given in section 1.2 *Theater Type Classification*. The first system is based on structural type. The second is centered on the original function as a brief overview of theater evolution. Geographic distribution is covered in section 1.3 *Theater Locations*.



Mount Baker Theatre, Bellingham. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



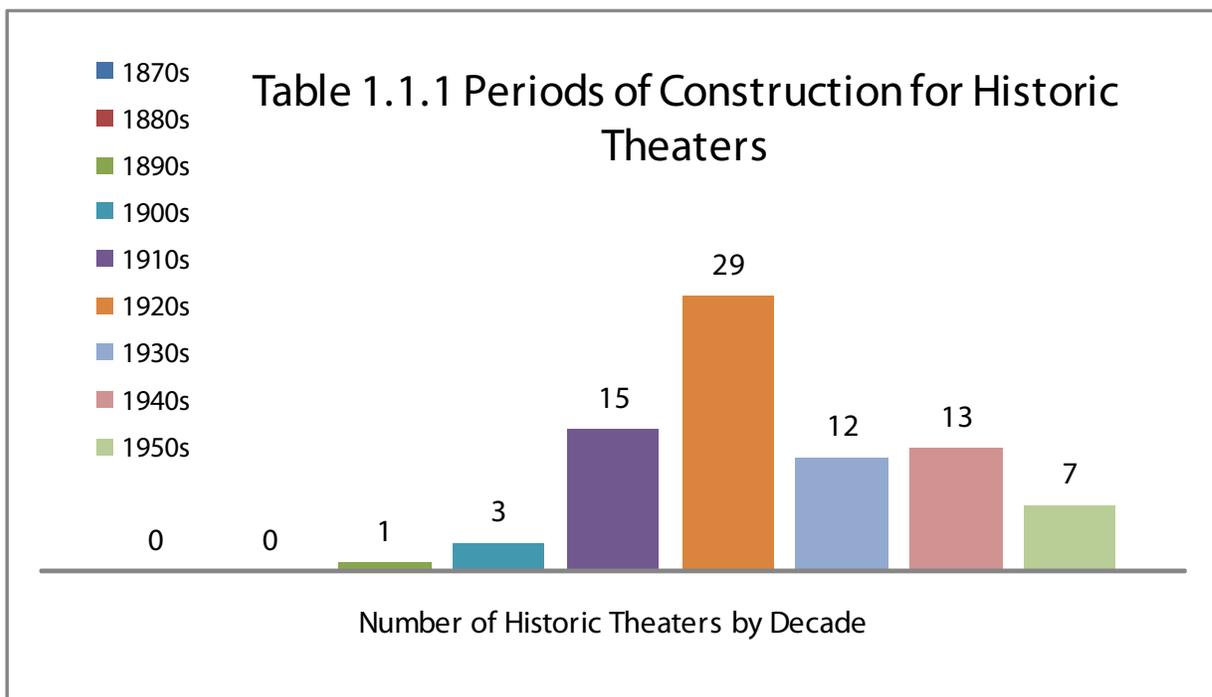
# 1.1 THEATER AGES

The age of historic theaters in Washington state spans the late 1800s through the fifty-year cut-off date of 1958 at the time of this report publication. Building ages in this survey were determined by the date of construction (DOC) of the structure housing a theater. In most cases, that date is the same as the theater’s beginning. Some theaters, however, were created in existing buildings. For example, the Audian Theater in Pullman is housed within the Jackson Block, erected in 1915. The theater was created when an auto garage’s space was converted in 1930. The Chehalis Theater was opened in 1938, but its structure had been a 1923 car dealership. In cases such as these, the DOC is that of the existing building’s construction, not the theater. All theaters in this survey opened at least fifty years ago.

The oldest of the operating/renovating historic theaters is the 1897 Uptown Theater in Port Townsend. Built as a fraternal International Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) hall in a booming port town, it was later made into a roller-skating rink and then a cinema. The large open space of the hall was well suited for its conversion to a movie theater, but it does not have some of the typical character-defining features of a purpose-built theater of that time period (e.g. a proscenium arch). The building is currently owned and operated by the grandson of the man who converted the hall into a cinema in the early 1950s. There is a dance studio on the second floor.

At the other end of the age range, the youngest operating historic theater in Washington is the Auto Vue Drive-In (1954) in Colville. In fact, three of the four drive-in theaters in this study are among the youngest historic theaters. The other two are the Wheel-In (1952, Port Townsend) and the Vue Dale (1953, Wenatchee). This seemingly indicates that drive-ins were the most popular type of theater being constructed during that time. There are only four indoor theaters that date from the early 1950s: the Clark Fork Theater in Metaline Falls (ca. 1951-52), the Roxy in Newport (1951), the Sunset in Connell (1952) and the Lee in Ephrata (1950).

Only four theater buildings constructed before 1910 remain, but there are fifteen from 1910 to 1919.<sup>1</sup> The mean for the construction year is 1929 while the median is 1926. Theaters built between 1920 and 1929 are the most



numerous among the eighty theaters found to be historic and still operating or renovating as theaters. Erected during those ten years were twenty-nine buildings that housed or later housed theaters. The following decade did not see even half this amount of theater construction, with only twelve built in the 1930s and thirteen in the 1940s. Seven theaters date from the 1950s.

These figures reflect the date of construction of the building that houses the theater. If the opening year of a theater is considered instead of the shell construction, the decade counts do not shift by more than two or three in any direction. The 1920s still reign as the height of new theater construction or openings, whereas the 1930s and 1940s appear to be a combination of new construction and the conversion or recycling of buildings into theaters.



Rialto Theater, Tacoma. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



## 1.2 THEATER TYPE CLASSIFICATION

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There are two ways in which the survey team classified theaters. The two classification models are based on physical structure and original function. Under the structural model, the four categories are wood frame, unreinforced masonry, concrete, and composite structures (blending two or more structural models and materials). With regard to original function of each building, the four categories are performing arts, cinema, combination performing arts and cinema, and neither performing nor cinematic arts.



Auto Vue Drive-In under construction, 1953. Image courtesy of Auto Vue Drive-In/Steve Wisner.

TABLE 1.2.1 CHARACTER-DEFINING ELEMENTS

STRUCTURAL ARCHETYPE	FRAMING MATERIAL	FRAMING SYSTEM	CLADDING/INFILL MATERIAL	ROOF TYPE	BUILDING HEIGHT	EXAMPLES
Wood Frame	Original framing is entirely wooden	Framing system may be balloon, platform, or post-and-beam	Cladding is horizontal wooden siding	Gable with parapet or false front	Buildings are 1-3 stories	Uptown (Port Townsend), First Stage, Grand, Nifty
Unreinforced Masonry	Original framing consists of brick or stone	Framing system involves pilasters which support roof and upper floors if present	Cladding is brick, glazed brick, tile or terra cotta	Flat or flat-on-hip with parapet	Buildings vary in official number of stories, but all appear to be at least 2 stories from the exterior	Everett, Moore, Raymond, Vogue
Concrete	Original framing made of poured in place or block concrete	Framing system involves concrete pilasters which support roof and upper floors if present	Cladding is poured in place concrete or concrete block; may have stucco; front facade is normally painted	Most commonly flat with parapet, but barrel vault is also possible	Buildings range in height	Ruby, Sunset, Elma, Concrete, Fox (Spokane), Kiggins, Narrows
Composite	Original framing is of a different material than wall infill	Framing system may have more than one type of material (ie, concrete and steel)	Cladding varies	Most commonly flat with parapet	Buildings are normally 3 or more stories high	Columbia, Fox (Centralia), Met (Spokane), Paramount



## 1.2.1 STRUCTURAL ARCHETYPES

There is a great deal of overlap in the range of construction dates for the various structural types. Wood frame theaters are sometimes contemporary with unreinforced masonry and/or poured-in-place concrete theaters. However, the other character-defining features are more distinct. For example, wood frames are more likely to have gable roofs than the other structural types. Knowing the structural model and materials is crucial to understanding how to maintain the building over time, how to retrofit it for seismic activity, and, in general, what the physical needs are and will be. For example, a reinforced, poured-concrete structure will need less seismic reinforcing than an unreinforced masonry structure. Brick walls need repointing over time whereas poured-in-place concrete walls need little maintenance apart from occasional cleaning and monitoring for cracks or spalling. Theaters, like most building types, reflect broad changes in building technology but also broad socio-economic realities of their time.

Given the small number of examples of theaters that are older than 1910, it is hard to generalize about whether or not there was a predominant building material or type for theaters at that time. However, wood was the most readily available construction material in the Pacific Northwest in the mid- to late nineteenth century. The Uptown Theater in Port Townsend (1897), originally an Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) hall, is the only nineteenth century building in this survey. In keeping with the period of construction, it is a wood frame structure. The four theaters built before 1910 are either wood frame or brick.

By the second decade of the twentieth century, theaters were erected with a greater variety of construction materials and structural models. Concrete, a building material from antiquity that had fallen into obscurity, became increasingly more common whereas wood and brick became less common. Concrete was reinvented in the mid-eighteenth century, but the process and mix of ingredients have continued to evolve since then. Portland cement, a replacement for hydraulic lime cement, was invented in the 1840s. Buildings in the U.S. of the early twentieth century, like Chelan's Ruby Theater (1913), experimented with concrete, as well as factors for improving concrete's performance and utility. The 1919 Portola Theater in West Seattle, later expanding and reopening as the Admiral in 1942, is another early poured concrete building. Along the back (alley) side of the Admiral, some common mistakes from the early twentieth century forays in concrete are visible. However, more conservative, trusted ways of building were still being used in a few cases, as seen in the wood frame theaters in Issaquah (First Stage, 1913) and Waterville (Nifty Theatre, 1919). The adherence to older construction methods and materials may be related to builder preference and what materials were available.

After World War I, the use of concrete became more sophisticated and widespread. Lessons were learned, such as to use smaller aggregate, to embed the reinforcing rebar deeper, and to vibrate the poured material in order to avoid air pockets. The theater-building boom of the mid-1920s, which happened across the U.S., made use of this improved technology; most theaters of that era are poured concrete structures. The 1926 Skinner Building in Seattle, home to the 5th Ave Theatre, and the 1927 single-screen Elma Theatre in Elma, are examples of poured concrete structures, albeit at different size scales. Many early wood frame theaters burned, and their brick or concrete replacements were touted as fireproof. The Vogue in Cle Elum (1923) is one example of this. Brick pilasters have brick and hollow clay tile infill walls, yet the roof structure is wooden trusses. Originally named the Lane, it replaced a wood frame theater that burned in the 1918 fire that claimed much of downtown Cle Elum.<sup>2</sup> The Concrete Theater in Concrete, WA was also built in 1923 in order to replace an earlier wood frame building that burned in the town fire of 1915.<sup>3</sup> Not only did the Concrete Theater showcase the new fireproof building material that was being locally produced, it served to entertain the workers that two cement companies brought to the town formerly known as Baker. Some theaters of the 1920s reflect the tentative introduction of poured concrete into established structural models. One such example is the 1925 Columbia Theatre for the Performing Arts in Longview, with its heavy timber post-and-beam bracing and poured concrete infill walls.



The Great Depression resulted in a downturn in theater construction. Where there was a well-funded will, however, there was a way. Fox Studios invested in perhaps one of the last movie palaces to be built, the 1931 Fox Theater of Spokane. J. P. Kiggins, a Vancouver business leader, made a similar move in Vancouver by commissioning the Kiggins Block in 1935. Both the Fox and Kiggins Theaters are fine examples of poured concrete structures with Art Deco ornament integrated into exterior walls. In fact, most of the theaters built in the 1930s and 1940s are of poured concrete. The Fox in Centralia (1930) is a hybrid structure of poured concrete, steel, and brick.

Given the economic hardship of that decade, some small theaters seem to have logically been erected with locally available, cost-effective materials. The Clyde Theater in Langley (1937) has heavy timber post-and-beam framing with hollow clay tile infill on the side and rear walls; the front wall is wood frame. Concrete block (CMU) construction appears to dominate in theaters of the 1950s, including the Roxy (1951) in Newport, the Sunset (1952) in Connell, and the Auto Vue Drive-In (1954) in Colville. (See [Table 1.2.1](#))

### 1.2.1.1 WOOD FRAME

The first structural archetype, wood frame, includes buildings that have only wooden elements in their framing. These buildings all have horizontal wood cladding (of various types), have foundations of various types, and are two to three stories in height. Roof types are generally gable with parapets or false fronts. Their entries vary from at grade to a short flight of steps, but most have recessed entries with ticket windows to one side. The last example of this archetype, the Nifty, was built in 1919. The Clyde Theater (1937) is between this archetype and the composite; it has wood framing, but it looks like a poured-in-place concrete structure from the exterior.

Character-defining features:

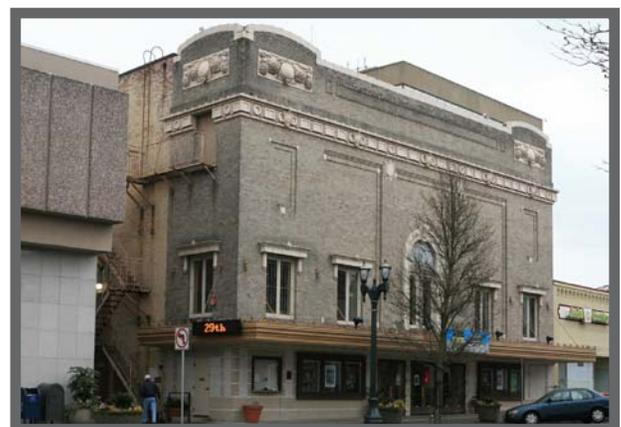
- *Original framing is entirely wooden*
- *Framing system may be balloon, platform, or post-and-beam*
- *Cladding is horizontal wooden siding*
- *Gable has parapet or false front*
- *Buildings are one to three stories*



Historic photo of wood-framed Kenyon Hall. Photo courtesy of Kenyon Hall/Lou Magor.

### 1.2.1.2 UNREINFORCED MASONRY

The second structural archetype is unreinforced masonry. In all cases, these theaters are made of structural brick walls that are exposed or partially clad in terra cotta or glazed brick on the exterior. Foundations vary from stone to poured concrete. The height of an unreinforced masonry theater depends on the overall building size. The Moore Theater, an example of this archetype, is part of a larger building, the Moore Hotel. An additional example, the Everett Theatre looks like a three-story building because of the height of its auditorium, but it is technically one story. This structural type generally has flat roofs with



Masonry structure (Everett Theatre, Everett). Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



parapets. Theaters in this survey, that fit this type, were erected between 1901 and 1923, with two outliers from the 1930s.

Character-defining features:

- *Original framing consists of brick or stone*
- *Framing system involves pilasters that support roof and upper floors if present*
- *Cladding is brick, glazed brick, tile, or terra cotta*
- *Roofs are flat or flat-on-hip with parapet*
- *Buildings vary in official number of stories, but all appear to be at least two stories from the exterior*

### 1.2.1.3 CONCRETE

The concrete archetype includes both poured-in-place and block forms of concrete. Typically, the smaller concrete theaters are single-story buildings that appear to be just that from the exterior. However, there is wide range of sizes for this archetype. Roof forms are usually flat with parapets, but examples of barrel vault roofs were also observed. Cladding on the side walls and rear is usually exposed or painted concrete; in the case of poured-in-place concrete, the imprints of board forms are easily visible. Front facades are generally finished or parged concrete and painted. The earliest extant example among Washington's operating theaters is the Ruby Theater in Chelan, built in 1913. This archetype continues to be built today.

Character-defining features:

- *Original framing made of poured-in-place or block concrete*
- *Framing system involves concrete pilasters that support roof and upper floors if present*
- *Cladding is poured-in-place concrete or concrete block; may have stucco or parging; front facade is normally painted*
- *Roofs are most commonly flat with parapet, but barrel vault is also possible*
- *Buildings range in height*



Concrete structure (Alpine Theater, Colville). Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

### 1.2.1.4 COMPOSITE

Some of the composite structures are slight mysteries. Without original plans or places where inside pilasters could be seen, the analysis of a few buildings in this category is based on visual observations combined with architectural expertise. For example, the Fox Theater (1930) in Centralia has concrete pilasters, steel ledgers, and brick infill walls. It is assumed that the concrete pilasters encase steel columns and the joints between the ledgers. Regardless, the Fox is considered a composite archetype because the framing (concrete) is different from the wall infill material (brick). Construction of this type starts with the 1925 Columbia Theater for the Performing Arts in Longview, with its wooden post-and-beam framing incorpo-



Composite concrete and brick structure (Fox Theater, Centralia). Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

rated with concrete walls. There are a number of 1940s theaters that were not visited, but it was observed that composite structures were built at least into the 1930s. This is the least understood archetype; thus, it is difficult to quantify the character-defining features, but we put these forward for consideration.

Character-defining features:

- *Original framing is of a different material than wall infill*
- *Framing system may have more than one type of material (e.g. concrete and steel)*
- *Cladding varies*
- *Roofs are most commonly flat with parapet*
- *Buildings are normally three or more stories high*



Early 20th c. interior photo of Moore Theatre, Seattle. Image courtesy of Moore Theatre.



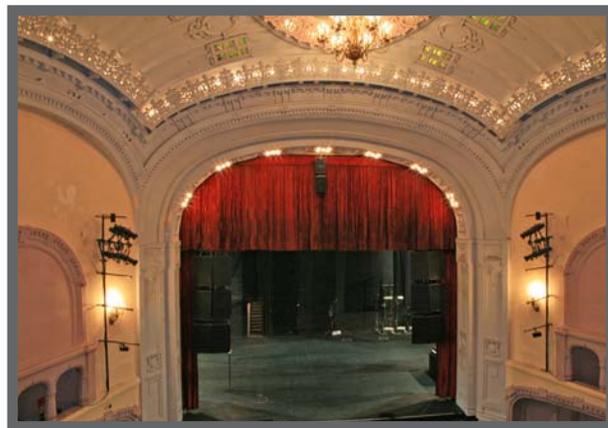
## 1.2.2 FUNCTION ARCHETYPES

Renowned architect Louis Sullivan once proclaimed, “Form follows function!” In the case of theaters, form type does follow function. Theaters have come in various shapes and sizes, materials and styles. However, when original building function is considered, theaters easily fall into four broad categories. Each category has a distinct set of character-defining features that directly relate to practical needs. Theaters were either built as performing arts venues, as cinemas, or as combination venues for both cinema and performing arts. A few theaters have been created in buildings originally designed for non-theatrical use. As may be expected, the functions of many theaters have changed, most transforming from a combination of live stage acts and film to solely performing arts. However, there are several examples of former cinemas that have been converted to performing arts venues. In determining the original function of a building, we used the historical information available on each theater. The original function of every theater has not been confirmed. Only those theaters with confirmed original functions were used in testing the character-defining features of each archetype.

### 1.2.2.1 PERFORMING ARTS ARCHETYPE

Unfortunately, many of the early performing arts theaters in Washington and across the U.S. have been lost to fire, redevelopment, or a new, non-theater use. This survey only examined functioning theaters at least fifty years old. Only five theaters confirmed as being built expressly for live stage acts, fit the criteria of being at least fifty years old. One of those five theaters is actually the cabin associated with the Kitsap Mountaineers Forest Theatre, an outdoor venue that has more in common with the drive-ins than the other performing arts venues. Of the remaining four, three were surveyed on the interior as well as exterior. From the background research on this form type, these three match all of the character-defining features developed for this report. All five theaters of this type were built by 1920.

Although theater interiors were not extensively analyzed in terms of their stage style and the relationship between stage and auditorium, these two aspects are important considerations when evaluating theater function.<sup>4</sup> In performing arts theaters, stage form usually determines auditorium shape. Historically, stage forms were either proscenium or open-thrust.<sup>5</sup> The main differences between the two forms were that proscenium stages ended at the proscenium arch overhead, and the audience watched from one side, whereas an open-thrust stage projected into the audience, making observation possible from three sides.<sup>6</sup> A third stage form, the arena stage, is located in the middle of an audience and is observed from all sides. The only stage types seen in this survey were either proscenium stages or shallow thrust stages, with the audience facing the stage from one direction.



Performing arts stage (Moore Theatre, Seattle). Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

Auditorium shapes and seating arrangements have taken multiple shapes and orientations throughout history. The Farnese Theatre (Parma) of 1618, the oldest example of a proscenium theater, had an innovative new seating arrangement and auditorium shape; they were long and narrow instead of semi-elliptical, as was common up to that point.<sup>7</sup> Of course, sight lines change as the stage itself changes, so the new auditorium plan simply reflects the new proscenium stage form. As opposed to modern cinema seating, which directly faces a screen, the seats in a performing arts auditorium are arranged in arc rows and allow patrons to look out over the audience. Although side boxes were common features of performing arts auditoriums in the past, many have been

TABLE 1.2.2 CHARACTER-DEFINING ELEMENTS

<u>ORIGINAL FUNCTION</u> <u>ARCHE-</u> <u>TYPE</u>	<u>STAGE</u>	<u>PROSCENIUM-</u> <u>ARCH</u>	<u>FLY LOFT</u>	<u>AUDITORIUM</u>	<u>ORCHES-</u> <u>TRA PIT</u>	<u>BACKSTAGE/</u> <u>DRESSING</u> <u>ROOMS</u>	<u>MARQUEE</u>	<u>DOC</u>	<u>EXAMPLES</u>
Performing Arts	Full, various types (proscenium, apron, thrust)	Present, often elaborate	Present, large	Seats arranged in arc rows; have large balcony	Present	Sizeable space behind and/or below stage for artists, prop storage, etc.	Hard canopy only; perhaps with theater name; not a true marquee by definition	Before 1921	Moore, Everett, Columbia
Cinema: indoor	Depending on the type, some have small/faux stages or none at all	Rarely present	None	Seats arranged in straight rows; may have small balconies	None	None	Hard canopy marquee present to advertise showings; vertical marquee often present as well	After 1913	Ruby, Sunset, Rialto
Cinema: outdoor	None	None	None	None	None	None	Detached marquee at roadside	1940s-1950s	Vue Dale Drive-In, Auto Vue Drive-In, Wheel-In
Combination Performing Arts/Cinema	Full, usually a proscenium type	Often present and elaborate; some are plain openings	Present, small to medium	Seats arranged in slightly curving rows or straight rows; large theaters have balconies	Present	Sizeable space behind and/or below stage for artists, prop storage, etc.	Hard canopy marquee present to advertise showings; vertical marquee often present as well	early 1900s to early 1930s	Liberty (Wenatchee), 5th Ave, Fox (Spokane), Fox (Centralia), Mt. Baker, Columbia, Pantages, Paramount
Non-theater	None or small	Rarely present	None	Seats arranged in straight rows; may have small balconies	None	None	Varies	Varies	Uptown, Audian, Chehalis, Temple, Chalet



removed in intervening years. Balconies, though, have been retained. However, with the social stigma and poor sight lines that generally characterize second balconies, most of them have been removed from U.S. theaters.<sup>8</sup> The Moore Theater in Seattle is the only known operating historic theater in Washington with a second balcony.<sup>9</sup>

In order to accommodate the performers and any supporting musicians, the orchestra pit and dressing rooms were essential features. Lobbies were large compared to the later cinema type due to the less frequent performances (only one or two per day) and larger audience capacity. Fly lofts, or the backdrop storage area behind and above the stage, were full-sized. Marquees, or the signage that advertises current and/or future performances, were typically not part of the building itself. However, projecting, hard-shell canopies, sometimes with the theater's name, were always found over the entrances. Posters highlighting performance times or information were hung near the entrance, often in special, framed alcoves. The Everett, Guild 45th, and Capitol (Yakima) Theaters are all stand-alone structures one to two stories in height whereas the Moore is part of a larger building. In contrast to the combination and cinema theaters, the performing arts archetype does not have commercial or retail space incorporated into the building. The other characteristic features are a balcony, a proscenium arch, a box office to one side of the entry, and a large lobby (larger than a cinema type, but about the same size as the combination type). Entrances were at grade with the sidewalk.

Character-defining features:

- *Stage is full; various types (proscenium, apron, thrust)*
- *Proscenium arch is present, often elaborate*
- *Fly loft is present; large*
- *Seats arranged in arc rows; have a large balcony*
- *Orchestra pit present*
- *Sizeable space behind and/or below stage for dressing rooms, prop storage, etc.*
- *Exterior has canopy only, perhaps with theater name; not a marquee by definition*
- *Built before 1921*

### 1.2.2.2 COMBINATION PERFORMING ARTS/CINEMA ARCHETYPE

At the end of the nineteenth century, vaudeville was an established form of theatrical entertainment. However, tastes were soon to change after Edison and Eastman developed a moving picture film in the early 1890s. In 1903, *The Great Train Robbery* was the “first feature-length motion picture”; movies caught on and were popular by the early 1920s.<sup>10</sup> The formation of movie studios also came about in the early 1920s.<sup>11</sup> Films with sound came in 1927.<sup>12</sup>

While there were many variations on the combination of early film and stage entertainment, vaudeville halls and movie palaces are the two main types of theaters that featured them. The latter were large, ornate theaters with full stages, comfortable seating, a balcony, an orchestra pit, and dedicated dressing rooms for the stage acts that accompanied the silent movie programming. There are a number of former movie palaces in this survey. The observed range of construction dates for combination theaters surveyed is between 1907 and 1931. The introduction of film in the early twentieth century and the



Combination house (Fox Theater, Spokane). Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

invention of movies with their own sound (“talkies”) in the late 1920s both correlate to that construction range.

Vaudeville halls were of various sizes. The Vogue Theater (1923, Cle Elum) is a modestly sized example of a theater that was built for both vaudeville and early films. Like the larger palaces, the Vogue has a functional stage, an orchestra pit, and a balcony. Depending on the overall theater size, the amount of dressing room space varied. The Vogue has limited backstage space while the Columbia (1925, Longview) has dressing and storage space in the basement, behind stage, and upstairs.



Adapted theater space (Audian Theater, Pullman). Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

Combination theaters seem to have maintained the seating arrangements and auditorium shapes of the performing arts theaters. Originally, seating was arranged to allow patrons to view their fellow audience members, as well as the stage, and consequently react as a group. Soon, however, rows were straightened slightly in order to encourage a deeper relationship between each patron and the screen. Especially in the movie palaces, getting lost in the story on screen was enhanced not only by the fantastical architectural styles but also by facing the screen/stage more directly than before.

Ticket lobbies were designed so as to facilitate efficient crowd flow from the entrance to the lobby.<sup>13</sup> Lobbies led into lavish halls and upstairs to mezzanines, both of which opened into the crowning glory, the auditorium. The three Washington movie palaces designed by R. C. Reamer all have paired staircases leading up to mezzanines that overlook the central lobby/hall.

On the exterior, movie palaces could usually be identified on the exterior by either a broad canopy or vertical marquee or both, often with elaborate lighting schemes.<sup>14</sup> Naylor writes, “Theater designers pioneered the use of electric lighting (including tracer, chaser, and stud lights) as advertisement.”<sup>15</sup> Central ticket booths, either detached or protruding from the building, divided the entries. Entrances were at grade with the sidewalk.

Character-defining features:

- *Stage is full; usually a proscenium type*
- *Proscenium arch is often present and elaborate; some are plain openings*
- *Fly loft is present; small to medium*
- *Seats arranged in slightly curving rows or straight rows; most theaters have balconies, which range in size*
- *Orchestra pit is present*
- *Sizeable space behind and/or below stage for dressing rooms, prop storage, etc.*
- *Exterior has hard canopy marquee present to advertise showings; vertical marquee often present as well*
- *Built between the early 1900s and early 1930s*

Character-defining features for drive-in's:

- *Large, free-standing exterior screen*
- *Parking area often with audio connections or speakers for individual use*
- *Free-standing concessions booth/stand*
- *Ticket booth, front gate and entry arrangement for drivers entering and existing*



### 1.2.2.3 CINEMA ARCHETYPE

With the debut of *The Great Train Robbery* in 1903, movies caught the imagination of entrepreneurs. Nickelodeons, now rare, were humble early movie houses. Often set up in small storefronts, they showed silent film vignettes; they did not last because their size did not meet seating demand.<sup>16</sup> Early twentieth century films were nothing like modern cinema productions. They were often short reels with simple, silent skits. A few theaters in our survey predate the early 1920s, when movies became popular on a broad scale.<sup>17</sup> It is not known how many purpose-built cinemas once existed in Washington, but the earliest extant is the 1913 Ruby Theater in Chelan. Ironically, the Ruby has an almost identical interior design to the 1923 Vogue, a combination theater. It would seem that early cinema theaters did not deviate much from accepted theater designs, and those designs were generally for performing arts functions. (See [Table 1.1.2.3](#))

As movies grew in popularity, the stories and the technology of showing them evolved along with the buildings that featured them. Proscenium arches disappeared. After movies could produce their own sounds, orchestra pits were no longer needed. Even seating changed as cinemas encouraged patrons to escape into the world of the movies. Continuing the trend of the movie palaces, cinemas provided completely straight rows, with each seat directly facing the screen. While some cinemas were still built with small or faux stages, including the Lynwood (1936) and the Sunset (1952), these were never intended for stage acts. They are only large enough for a person to address the audience.

On the exterior, a purpose-built cinema typically appears to be one to two stories in height, with windows on the second (balcony) level. Since theaters of this type have been built over the course of many decades, they vary in many ways (plan, presence of a balcony, etc.). However, all cinema archetypes in this survey originally had one screen. Most have at least one canopy or other type of projecting marquee, and many have vertical marquees as well. Entrances are recessed, but they are in various locations along a building's facade, typically at grade with the sidewalk and with a ticket window to one side or in the center, dividing the doorway.

A special type of cinema, the drive-in, does not share many character-defining features with the indoor cinemas. Although the first drive-in theater opened in New Jersey in 1933, the height of drive-in construction was between 1945 and 1955.<sup>18</sup> A drive-in typically includes a long driveway or entrance road for the line of cars waiting to enter, a main building with concessions and restrooms, a ticket window (either attached to the main building or in a separate booth), and, of course, a large field with the elevated screen. This field is the equivalent of an indoor theater's auditorium. Both the field and the main building function as social spaces equivalent to a lobby, and the entrance road or driveway is merely functional space for circulation. Integrity of the clubhouse is desirable, but the circulation and open spaces are probably the most important. Many drive-ins have been demolished or closed.

Character-defining features:

- *Depending on the age, some have small/faux stages or none at all*
- *Proscenium arch is rarely present*
- *No fly loft*



Cinema from the beginning (Rialto Theater, Tacoma). Source: Rialto Theater Records.



Detached ticket booth (Mt Baker Theatre, Bellingham). Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

- *Seats arranged in straight rows; may have small balconies*
- *No orchestra pit*
- *Exterior has hard canopy marquee present to advertise showings; vertical marquee often present as well*
- *Earliest known extant example in Washington built 1913*



Original, and operating, popcorn machine in the Sunset Theatre, Connell. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



### 1.2.2.4 NON-THEATRICAL ARCHETYPE

Buildings in this category were built for purposes other than a theater but were converted more than fifty years ago. The Chehalis Theater was converted to a cinema in 1938 from a 1923 car dealership, but it looks as if it has always been a theater. The Audian Theater in Pullman was created in 1930 inside a structure built in 1915; the previous occupant of its space was an auto mechanic's garage. Both examples were converted during the Great Depression, a time when there were government restrictions on resources and new construction. Recycling buildings evaded such restrictions and required less capital investment. This is not to say there were no new theaters built in the 1930s. However, the number of converted theaters during the 1930s and 1940s is higher than during other decades. Because of the lack of similarity among original functions for the buildings in this category, the only character-defining feature they seem to share is that they have a movie screen, an auditorium, and most were converted to cinemas as opposed to performing arts use. Some have stages; some do not. Some have balconies; some do not. Height, types of signage, entrances, and floor plans all vary.

Character-defining features:

- *If present at all, stage is small*
- *A proscenium arch is rarely present*
- *No fly loft*
- *Seats arranged in straight rows; may have small balconies*
- *No orchestra pit*
- *No backstage or dressing room space*
- *Marquee forms vary if present at all*
- *Construction dates vary*



## 1.3 THEATER LOCATIONS

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Historic theaters are located across the state in cities large and small, in urban neighborhoods like West Seattle or the U District, as well as in historic downtowns of communities with less than 300 people.<sup>19</sup> Of the eighty historic theaters either operating or under renovation, twenty-four are in eastern Washington and fifty-six are in western Washington. It should be noted that of the non-eligible historic theaters (closed or being used for a non-theater purpose), four were found in the east and only one in the west. Both sides of the state have many more closed, converted, or demolished historic theaters, but a count of these is outside the scope of this study.

There is no rule of correlation between community size (measured by population<sup>20</sup>) and the number of historic theaters in operation. The highest number of operating (or temporarily renovating) historic theaters is in Seattle. There are twelve theaters for more than half a million residents, or one theater per 48,850 residents. The next highest number of operating historic theaters is in Tacoma, where there are five theaters for just over 200,000 residents. That equates to one historic theater for approximately every 40,000 residents.

With less than 300 residents, Metaline Falls is the smallest community with a historic, operating theater. Vancouver is one of the largest communities in the state, with over 200,000 residents and only one operating historic theater. The fact that smaller communities may have a higher concentration of historic theaters, if measured as a percentage of theaters to residents, is further illustrated by the cities that have more than one operating historic theater. The state capital has two theaters, the same number as Colville. Port Townsend has four theaters, more than Spokane's three. Further investigation might show that theaters in smaller communities or more rural areas have less real estate or redevelopment pressure on theaters. Or, it may be that smaller communities are more connected to their local theater(s). The reason some theaters have survived and others not may be a better topic for economic or community planners to debate. One lesson learned from this survey is that small communities are not necessarily destined to lose their theaters. Conversely, larger urban areas may have to fight to keep their theaters operating in the face of redevelopment.

The number of historic theaters in any given area is only one measure of density. With the wide range in theater sizes, the total number of historic theater seats available in a given community should also be considered. From this perspective, the 1,500 seats of Yakima's Capitol Theatre or the 1,500-plus seats in Bellingham's Mt. Baker Theatre reflect their community size when compared to the 276 seats of the G Theater in Mossyrock.



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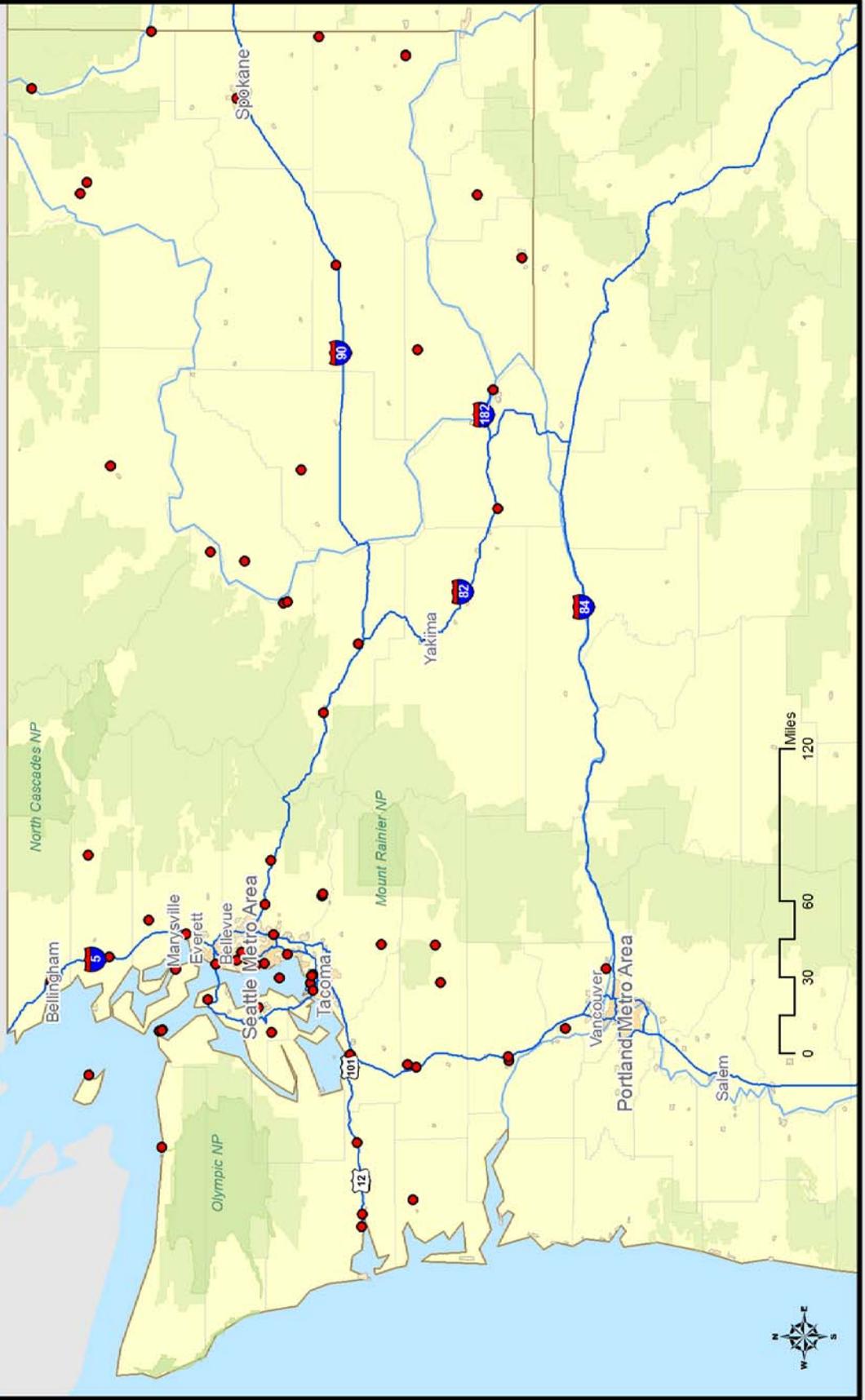
### (Endnotes)

<sup>1</sup> Included in the fifteen 1910-1919 theaters is the 1918 cabin, which is an associated

Fox Theater, Spokane. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

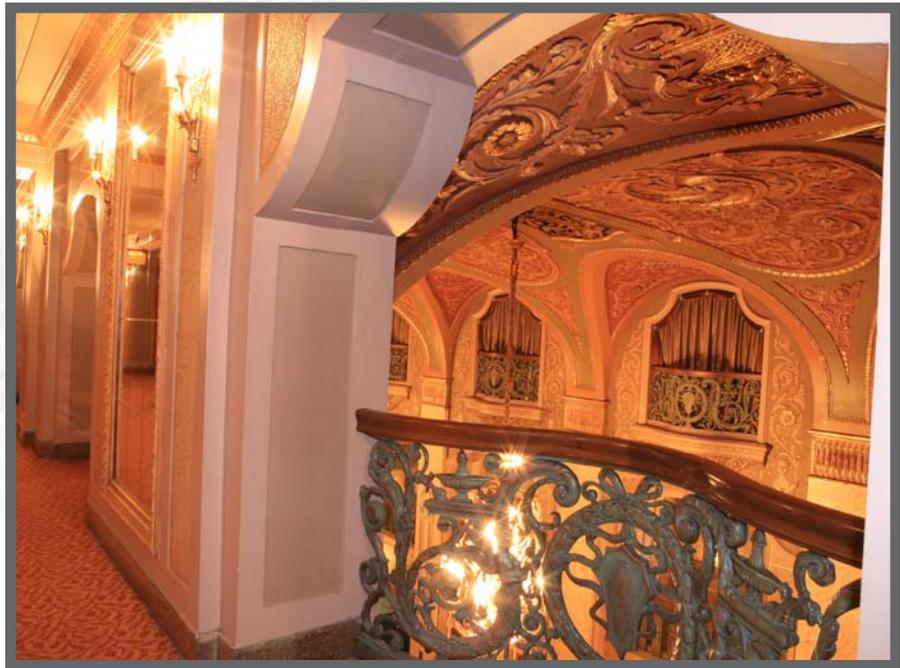


# Washington State Historic Theaters





## 2.0 PHYSICAL ASSESSMENT



*Paramount Theatre. Photograph by Susan Johnson, Artifacts Consulting, Inc.*

In Chapter 2, the needs of historic theaters are examined. Section 2.1 *Patterns of Operational Issues* addresses business models and programming. Section 2.2 *Patterns of Physical Issues* is organized around materials and construction type. Section 2.3 *Patterns of Other Issues* directs attention to building issues apart from the established interior/exterior categories. These “other” issues include building systems and several building code aspects as they relate to historic theaters. Capital repair priorities and associated cost data are presented in sections 2.4 and 2.5. At the end of this chapter are individual theater profiles.



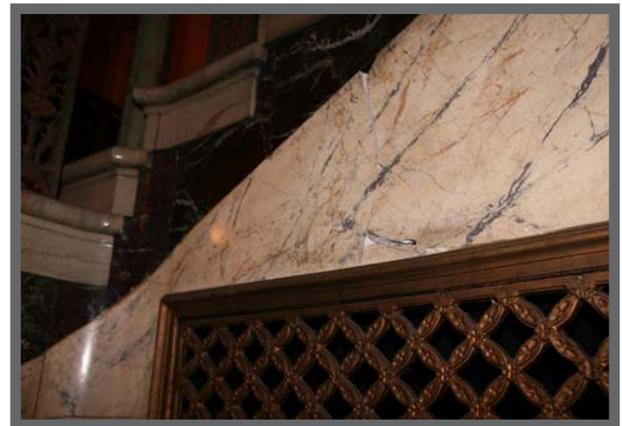
Detail of silk covered sound baffling which has deteriorated from moisture and coal dust saturation over many years. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



## 2.1 PATTERNS OF OPERATIONAL ISSUES

Many theaters have changed their function over time, and some theaters more than once to keep up with shifts in entertainment trends and technology. Film eventually replaced vaudeville after years of coexistence. Television later altered national attendance at the movies. Throughout these major shifts in consumer demand, theaters have adapted in order to remain in business. There is a constant tension between continued business viability and preservation of character-defining elements of each building. Thus, physical needs of theaters relate closely to operational issues. This section will address trends in operational issues and their implications for physical needs.

During the survey process, most of the theater building owners who responded were also the theater business operators. All of the owners who responded to this survey wish to see their theater continue. For the part of theater operators, all of those who responded are committed to the survival of their business operation. Furthermore, many community members approached the survey team in order to express their support and enthusiasm during a field visit. The theater owners and/or operators who did not respond to this survey may have been concerned about participating for fear of being listed on a historic building register or going on record with failure to meet various building codes. Furthermore, time is a limiting factor for many theater stewards, as they may also work outside of the theater business to augment income. Some are volunteers with a nonprofit theater operation and were not able to participate in a field visit. A non-responsive owner/operator may not necessarily be disinterested in future support.



Detail of broken stone veneer lining a stairwell. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

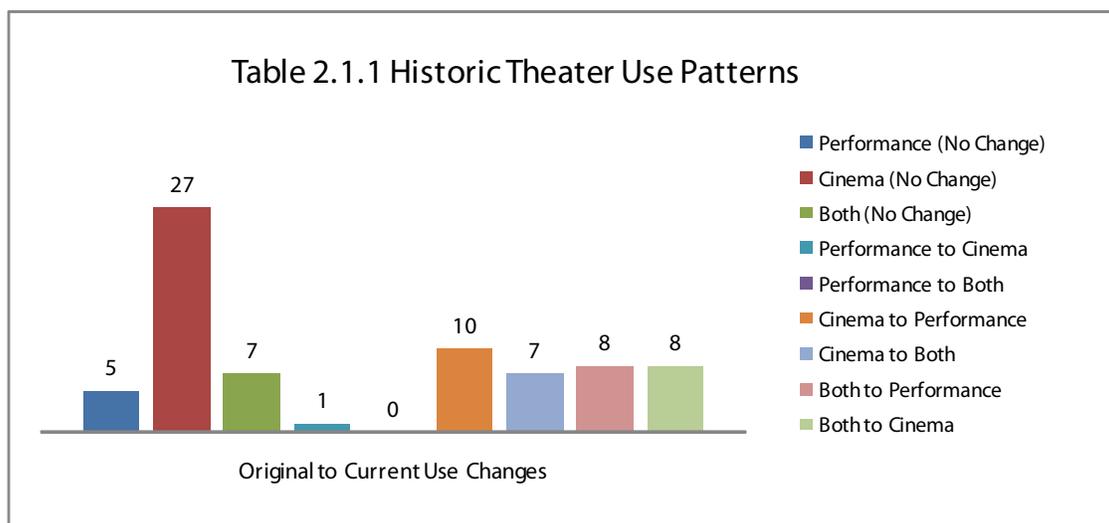
## 2.1.1 CONTINUATION VS. CHANGE OF ORIGINAL FUNCTION

A change in function does not necessarily involve a loss of integrity. For example, a combination theater, such as a silent movie palace, requires few visible alterations to be successful as either a single-screen movie house or live-performance venue. This sort of function change simply uses elements of the theater that are already present, perhaps with a change in projection or sound technology. These adaptations are largely invisible to the audience and do not interfere with the character features.

However, due to the more complex set of building features needed for live performances (e.g. appropriate stage size, backstage storage and dressing space, good acoustics, and perhaps an orchestra pit) versus cinemas (e.g. projection system, screen), a change in function from a dedicated cinema to a performance venue is more difficult. This type of function change generally involves a large-scale renovation and alterations to the character-defining features. Another example of a significant change, though not necessarily due to a shift in function, is increasing the number of auditoriums of a cinema. Without having access to every theater's interior during this survey, it can only be said that at least two theaters have balconies that have been subdivided and enclosed in order to create more screens. One theater was originally just a cinema while the other was a combination vaudeville and silent film theater.

Alterations on the large scale, such as making a cinema into a performance hall or subdividing a cinema, are generally beyond acceptable limits as defined by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation. Those building owners/operators are consequently ineligible for listing as individual resources on historic registers and for public funding for preservation. Most of the highly altered theaters were either adapted to remain competitive or closed for a period of more than ten years and suffered a high degree of deterioration (e.g. water damage from leaking roofs). In order to reopen, those that were closed have had renovations to bring the theater back to good condition at the sacrifice of integrity. Ironically, ineligibility for funding as a result of inappropriate alterations by preservation standards is usually balanced by a lack of physical needs. Restrooms have usually been created and/or expanded on the ground floor, seating has been fixed and/or replaced, and ADA seating areas have been added along with fire suppression systems.

Any historic theater that is still operating as some type of theater and retains at least a good degree of integrity is seen as the best use for that building. Theater buildings that are currently used for non-theatrical purposes (mostly religious or commercial), but that retain a good degree of integrity, should be considered for future support if they are to be returned to theatrical use, but these buildings should only be considered after requests from high-integrity, functional theaters are met.



Theaters that remain in operation as either a performance or film venue, but that have a low level of integrity, are farther down the priority list for any future technical or financial support from the state. With few exceptions, the theaters with good condition but low integrity are doing well with regard to operations. This report is not intended to encourage theater owners to renovate their buildings without concern for preservation ethics. On the contrary, it is hoped that theaters needing some repairs or updating will consider preservation ethics and balance the inherent character of their buildings with modern audience needs.



5th Ave Theatre, Seattle. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

## 2.1.2 OPERATIONAL MODELS

During conversations with theater owners and/or operators, data on owner/operator models were gathered along with building data. In many cases, county assessors confirmed this data. The ownership of unvisited theaters was also recorded when available. Thus, there is data on the type of ownership and management for almost all of the eighty theaters eligible for this survey. There are three models for theater ownership: private, public, and nonprofit. Those three categories also apply to theater operation. In many cases, the theater owner is a separate entity from that which operates the business within the building. The majority (fifty-four theaters out of eighty) is privately owned, but there are ten publicly and sixteen nonprofit-owned historic theaters. One publicly owned theater is currently awaiting a management plan.

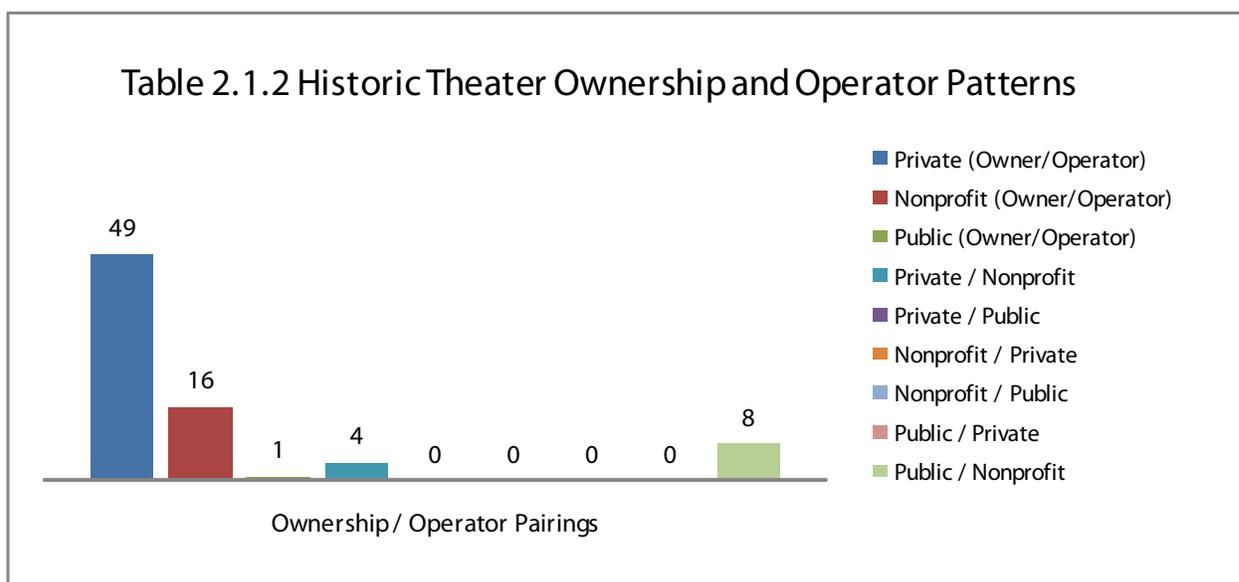
### 2.1.2.1 PRIVATELY OWNED/PRIVATELY OPERATED

Fifty of the fifty-four privately owned theaters are also privately operated. Data on how many private theaters are operated by the owner versus a second private entity was not specifically recorded. Private ownership can take various forms, including different sorts of corporations (i.e. Limited Liability Corporations). Corporations might hire a general manager for the theater business. In other cases, an individual might own a theater outright. Anecdotal evidence suggests these solitary owners are also the managers. A few cinemas in Seattle are owned by individuals but leased to a theater chain. Another model of private ownership/operation is a landlord who leases the building to an independent (non-chain) tenant/theater manager. The success of these various permutations is difficult to quantify. For each variation, there seems to be at least one theater business flourishing and one struggling. Hence,



7th Street Theatre, Hoquiam. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

the ownership/operation model for private theaters may have less to do with success or failure as other factors (e.g. business acumen of the manager, willingness of owner to maintain building, etc.). One clear benefit of private ownership is the eligibility to use tax credits for building rehabilitation/restoration.



### 2.1.2.2 PRIVATELY OWNED/NONPROFIT OPERATED

Four privately owned theaters are leased to nonprofit operators, but all of those are working on transitioning to nonprofit ownership. Ideally, the nonprofit operator has a long-term lease from a private owner; unfortunately, there is still little incentive to make long-term investments in the property by the operators. The privately owned, nonprofit-operated model is the least sustainable.

### 2.1.2.3 PUBLICLY OWNED/PUBLICLY OPERATED

There is one theater that is owned and operated by a local government. The Raymond Theater has a manager who works for the city, a board of directors, and volunteers. A second publicly owned theater is currently awaiting a management plan.



Stone and brick foundation. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



Facade detail showing missing stained glass window, damaged stucco. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

### 2.1.2.4 PUBLICLY OWNED/NONPROFIT OPERATED

Eight theaters are publicly owned and nonprofit-operated. Two are on state property, with the other six belonging to local city governments. The Mt Baker Theater in Bellingham is technically owned by the public utilities district and operated by the nonprofit Mt Baker Theater Association. The business appears to be doing well, and the building is well maintained. In fact, it is undergoing a large renovation/restoration effort in 2008 to update the heating and air circulation systems. Nonprofits typically do not have the funds for major building upkeep, like roof replacement, so this model seems to work well when property owners support the theater's survival and perform appropriate maintenance. In return, the community benefits from the continued arts presence.

### 2.1.2.5 NONPROFIT OWNED/NONPROFIT OPERATED

Sixteen theaters are owned and operated by nonprofit organizations. Most of these are performing arts theaters with drama troupes as operators, but several are mixed-use theaters run by volunteer groups. None of the nonprofit-owned theaters are purely cinemas. Like the privately owned/privately operated theater model, there are both highly successful and highly endangered examples under this model. In order to thrive, nonprofit operators not only have to be good at running a business but also adept at working with boards of directors and volunteers. Private businesses do not have the added pressure of working with boards and volunteers, but nonprofits generally qualify for more sources of funding for building preservation than private businesses. Since nonprofits cannot take advantage of federal tax credits, some may sell titles to a holding institution for seven or eight years as a way to claim such credits, thus raising money for rehabilitation/restoration.



Example of a former combination theater which had its balcony enclosed for a second movie auditorium; divider has now been removed as part of restoration. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



## 2.1.3 OPERATIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

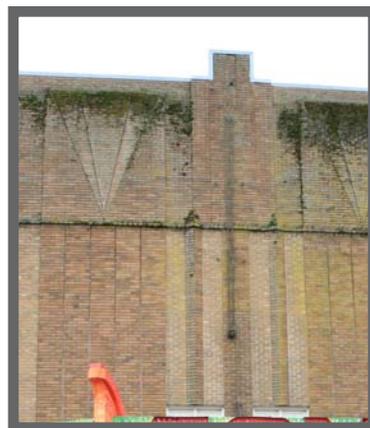
A successful theater operation is a complex amalgam of meeting patrons’ expectations for ambiance, customer service, cleanliness, comfort, ticket/concessions prices, and the variety of films/performances available. One obstacle that many historic theaters in Washington face is an outdated business model. Single-screen cinema owners generally realize the challenge of maintaining an aging building while still operating a viable business. However, being a successful manager of a small theater requires a diverse set of knowledge and skills. Running a business and running a theater, including projection and the other technical aspects, are often required of the same individual. In general, the technical expertise is paramount, and the business expertise is often learned by necessity.

An improved business plan, including more efficient marketing and partnering with the local community, is one operational challenge to historic theaters. Some theaters do not have a website on which to list their movie times or upcoming performances. Some have simply not connected with programming options that are desired by the community; the types of films that do well in one area may differ markedly from those that will do best elsewhere. Nonprofit theater operators may benefit from organizational development/capacity building in order to best utilize their volunteers and their boards of directors.

Low profit margins were noted under every owner/operator model. For the majority of theaters, profit margins are insufficient to allow for major building repairs/maintenance. Inadequate maintenance will result, and has in some cases, in physical deterioration and a downward spiral. While the degree of deterioration varies by theater, access to technical assistance should be open to all.



Example of shallow rebar, too large aggregate in early concrete work. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



Detail of a mossy, exterior brick wall in need of cleaning/repointing.. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

## 2.2 PATTERNS OF PHYSICAL ISSUES

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Theaters of an earlier era were vehicles capable of transporting their audience outside the ordinary. Even in an era when everyday buildings were much more decorative than the buildings of today, theaters were the most imaginatively designed and decorated structures. For the price of a ticket, anyone could step off the sidewalk through the doors, take a seat, and be transported to Egypt, China, or a Moorish garden courtyard in the early evening. The illusion began even before the show had started. The walls of the Moorish courtyard or the imperial palace in China weren't stone or wood but plaster, paint, and lighting. Not all theaters surveyed were grand palaces. Many were quite modest. But, all the theaters that have retained their historic elements maintain that ability to transport the patron out of the ordinary and to another place.

Although these are houses of illusion, they are built with everyday materials. Exterior walls are often concrete or brick. Steel or wood trusses support the roofs. Under the brightly colored carpets, the floors are concrete or wood. The mechanical, electrical, and structural systems are all behind the scenes, supporting the final surface illusion.

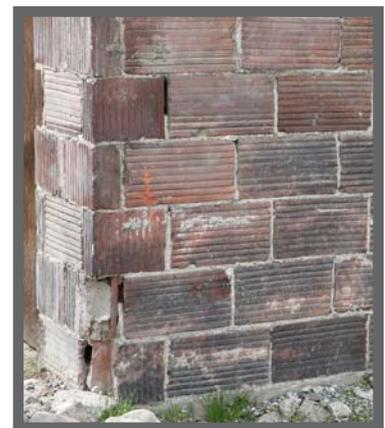
Physical issues tend to exhibit consistent patterns of development due to the commonality of causes (e.g. weather exposure, deferred maintenance) and building material. Age, in contrast with contemporary materials that depreciate from the moment of installation, does not hold a significant role in the majority of historic theaters. The material utilized in the construction of these theaters has life spans in terms of centuries, far exceeding contemporary planning efforts. The brick, stone, and steel will not fail in any of our lifetimes due to age. Rather, factors such as water infiltration, seismic activity, fire, or deferred maintenance will cause failure or deterioration. Thus, given the quality of original materials, the most effective strategy for preserving theaters is to keep them in use and maintain the roofs, the exterior envelopes, and the structural, mechanical, and electrical systems.

Some theaters surveyed exhibited layers of changes, marking transitions from vaudeville houses to movie theaters or from a cinema to a performance hall. Although designed for a specific kind of entertainment, many theaters have adapted over the years. However, there is a limit to their ability to adapt without significant impact on the historic materials.

The following catalog explores the physical need issues identified during the statewide survey of historic theaters in 2008. After examining these issues for patterns of occurrence, the survey team has summarized the major issues affecting stabilization, preservation, and continued use of historic theaters. The intent is not to prioritize individual theaters; rather, it is to look at the common issues these theaters face. This report attempts to prioritize efforts for addressing the most immediate threats. Findings stem from the authors' collective experience working with historic structures, as well as the invaluable insight provided by theater owners during the field survey process. Future support for historic theaters should build upon the data presented here in order to help owners and operators understand and develop strategies for the maintenance and repair of their theaters.



Detail of damaged terra cotta. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



Detail of a hollow clay tile exterior clad wall. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



## 2.2.1 CONSTRUCTION TYPES

Based on construction, four basic building types emerged during the course of the survey: reinforced poured-in-place concrete buildings; composite buildings; unreinforced masonry buildings; and, wood frame buildings. The reinforced concrete structure is perhaps the most common type surveyed. Built relatively early, with few building standards and poor materials, these structures experience unique problems. The second most common building type is composite, often a concrete frame with masonry infill walls. These buildings have equally spaced columns to support the roof beams or trusses. The infill masonry walls carry none of the roof load. The larger, older theaters were often built using unreinforced masonry, with equally spaced brick pilasters that carry the roof beams or trusses. The fourth type, wood frame, included some of the oldest theaters surveyed. Each of the four building types has similar issues of damage, deterioration, and wear; however, they also manifest issues unique to their own building type. For example, a common issue among all building types is deteriorated roofing. On the other hand, a wood frame structure has the unique issue of wood rot in the foundation and/or sill plates.

This survey had a certain limitation—time. Making a full determination on the condition of structures requires an in-depth survey in cooperation with a structural engineer. From the brief survey visits, the great majority of structural systems encountered appear to be in good condition. During the survey, the following causes of deterioration were investigated: water infiltration (usually from roofs); infestation of animals or insects; and, stress caused by settlement or earthquakes. Water infiltration was the most common problem, usually because the roofing was or had been in poor repair. Enclosed space allows mold and rot to occur, but these problems appear to exist in only one of the wood frame buildings. Animals can be difficult to control, and there was often evidence of rats, bats, and birds in the buildings. However, these types of animals, all of which most often inhabit attics or basements, have caused only minor damage compared to that done by insects, such as termites. The wooden footings of one building in particular have become compromised because of termites. Little seismic damage was noted, and a few composite structures have been seismically reinforced.



Deteriorated wood post. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



Damaged metal entrance canopy. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

## 2.2.2 MATERIAL AND DETERIORATION TYPES

There were a few uncommon materials found during the course of the survey, including one material resembling Bakelite. From a distance, it looks like marble. No deterioration was observed, and definitive testing was not conducted. Another uncommon material found in only one theater is the acoustical wall and ceiling paneling, which appears to be made of compressed wood fibers encased in cement slurry. This section will focus on the most commonly occurring materials and the types of deterioration observed for each.

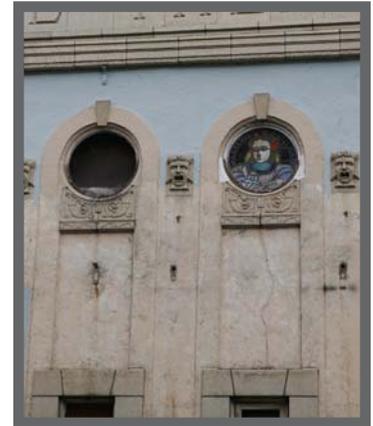
### 2.2.2.1 STONE

Traditionally, stone walls served as a structural building material. By the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, when many of these theater buildings were constructed, stone became obsolete as a structural element. Even as an exterior decorative cladding, the use of stone was limited to small areas. The survey did find two buildings where stone has been used as part or all of the structural foundation. In both cases, the stone foundations are in good condition and have supported the walls without settlement or damage from earthquakes (for over 80 years for one theater). Where exterior decorative stone is used, it is usually granite or marble for their dense strength and ability to take a fine polish. Sandstone is the third most used decorative stone.

Marble is an opulent stone well suited to theaters. The larger, older theaters often feature marble as trim, wainscoting, or a base separating and accenting the transition between floors and walls. Newer theaters exhibit less decorative marble. In more modest theaters, marble is confined to drinking fountains or in restrooms. In the theaters surveyed, marble is the stone most commonly used on the interiors. However, a few theaters incorporate marble on the exterior around entries, ticket booths, and any areas that the architect wanted to accent. The theater marble includes a variety of colors, patterns, and surface quality, but the types of deterioration and damage to the marble are consistent. The worst damage is broken pieces, which are difficult to repair and almost impossible to replace. Another common problem is the need for marble to be cleaned and polished.

Granite is a strong, dense stone often used at the base of a theater building or as columns, pilasters, window lintels, or keystones in arches. The granite seen in this survey was a gray stone with specs of black, reflective mica. Little deterioration or damage was observed.

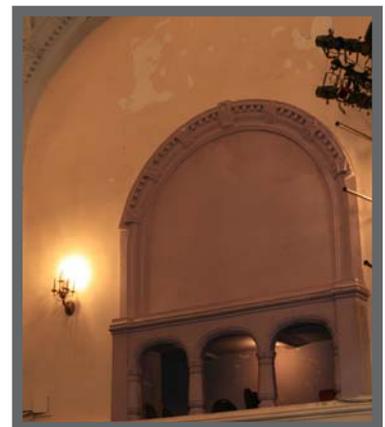
Sandstone is the most common building stone in the Pacific Northwest. Depending on where it was quarried, it can be dense and durable or soft and easily crumbled. While sandstone suffers from similar damage to which other stone is prone, including broken edges, it can also delaminate if water penetrates between the layers and freezes. This is particularly true of poor quality sandstone. However, the sandstone encountered during the survey was high quality stone, and little to no delaminating was visible.



Missing stained glass. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



Damaged proscenium arch plaster. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



Peeling interior paint. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



### 2.2.2.2 CONCRETE

Many of the historic theaters surveyed incorporated poured-in-place concrete. This is also referred to as form board concrete because of the distinctive patterns left by the individual boards used to construct the concrete form work. Poured-in-place reinforced concrete in the early twentieth century West was not particularly uniform. The cement, sand, and aggregate mixtures often used local material. The concrete varied by building site and sometimes even within a given building. Uniform regulations and standards had either not been established or were not strictly enforced. Concrete of that era displays several unique qualities, such as inconsistent sizes of aggregate (in many cases too large). Another unique quality was the placement of the reinforcing steel rods. Rods were often placed imprecisely and too close to the exterior surface. Concrete is usually poured in lifts (the amount of concrete that could be poured at one time), usually one lift per day. It is possible to identify each lift by the rough horizontal lines in the overall pattern of a form board concrete wall. These lift lines can create cold joints, an improper bonding between the previous lift and the newer lift, and are places where spalling can occur. In some cases, lift joints are entries for water to penetrate deep into the wall. Early concrete was not vibrated when poured into the forms. Rather, it was usually just consolidated by tamping. This practice led to voids (areas with no concrete or exposed aggregate). Sometimes honeycombs, or areas of connecting voids, occurred.



Stucco needing repair. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

Structural design defects occurred where the reinforcing steel is close to the surface of the exterior concrete wall. Corrosion of the reinforcing steel can occur and cause jacking (expansion of the steel), thus spalling the concrete surface covering. Another problem is the old steel fasteners left in the concrete walls. Over time, they have often corroded and jacked, thus causing sections of concrete to deteriorate. Water infiltration into a wall can also cause pieces of the concrete to be dislodged (spalling) when it freezes and expands. In order to prevent water infiltration, some of the buildings with exposed concrete were painted with vapor-proof paints or sealants. These paints often trap moisture behind the surface and cause further spalling.



Non-ADA compliant restroom. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

Much of the concrete deterioration can be attributed to the rough surface quality of the walls, as well as the loss of binder strength adhering the matrix of aggregate and sands. The reasons for loss of binder strength can be various and often are a combination of the following: improper mixes; poor-quality or improper ingredients; freeze-thaw actions, causing small cracks from within; loss of alkalinity, leading to corrosion of reinforcing steel within the concrete, which jacks and fractures the concrete; and, absorption of soluble salts, which expand as the walls dry out. The last reason, absorption of soluble salts, eventually leads to small internal cracking within the concrete and contributes to loss of alkalinity.



Seismic reinforcement example. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

Another sign of deterioration found in some of the larger buildings is cracking in the concrete where two sections, often of different masses, join. Without expansion joints at these junctions to relieve thermally induced stress or differential movement between the two masses, cracking often occurs.

Only one or two buildings surveyed used cast decorative concrete. Other than small areas that have been chipped, little damage was found in this decorative concrete.



### 2.2.2.3 MASONRY

Masonry in the early twentieth century generally has a consistent quality. In this survey, there was evidence of several types of masonry: brick; hollow clay tile; clay tile roofing; and, terra cotta.

The brick found in this survey can be divided into two types and uses. The first type is utilitarian, used as structure and infill. The second type is decorative, used as exterior cladding. Utilitarian brick is usually of a lesser quality than brick used for cladding. Fired at a lower temperature and consequently softer, utilitarian brick was often acquired from a local manufacturer and quality could vary greatly. Exterior brick, such as that used for cladding, was fired at a higher temperature. Often the surface is glazed or scored. In some cases, it was imported from manufacturers outside the region because of the decorative quality. The quality of both types of brick has been good for the most part. Failure is often not with the brick itself but with the mortar joints if repointing has been deferred for too many years.

Failing mortar joints have an increased potential to allow water into the wall behind. Where the walls are concrete with a brick veneer, this is a stabilization issue as metal ties that secure the brick to the concrete have often corroded. In those cases, the ties no longer function to hold the brick in place. Another form of failure is the location of fasteners in the brick rather than in the mortar joints. Often, these old fasteners were never removed once they became unnecessary. Many have begun to rust, and, with resultant water-borne corrosion “bleeding” down the face of the brick wall. At the worst, they are beginning to jack the brick surrounding them. In some cases, brick has been covered with a bituminous paint in an attempt to prevent water infiltration. This has done little and now presents additional work when repairing and repointing the brick. Finally, cases of spalling were discovered, but this was primarily on the softer brick used on the sides or backs of buildings. Most of the spalling to the decorative brick is at the pedestrian level where it was damaged, thus allowing water behind the glazed surface.

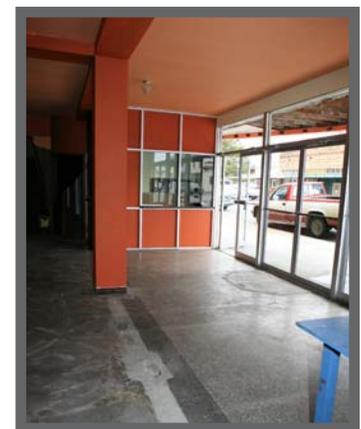
Terra cotta was possibly the most consistent masonry product of that era. It was manufactured by only a few regional companies that had perfected the process and quality. The greatest problems found in the terra cotta facades originate either from water infiltration in mortar joints (most often in the skyward facing joints) or where the glazed surface has been damaged. Water infiltration behind the glazed surface is leading to spalling. Water infiltration into the skyward facing joints corrodes the steel hangers that attach the terra cotta to the building structure, eventually resulting in the terra cotta dislodging from the building. Many of the buildings with terra cotta cladding and ornament have had various metal fasteners installed through the terra cotta. In many cases, this has been done with no thought given to properly locating the fasteners or to removing the fasteners and patching the holes once the fasteners are no longer necessary. Consequently, metal fasteners have begun to rust and “bleed” down the face of the terra cotta. In the worst examples, the fasteners are beginning to jack out the terra cotta surrounding them. Another problem found during the survey



Stabilization of interior plaster ceiling needed. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



Preserving a decorative plaster frieze panel. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



Example of a lobby which was expanded in the past; note change from concrete to terrazzo floor, shadow of former ticket booth near modern glass doors. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



is damage to terra cotta cladding at the pedestrian level, where it is typically broken on the edges or corners. Broken surfaces allow water to penetrate the clay and deteriorate the terra cotta.

Hollow clay tile is the most utilitarian masonry used in the buildings of the era and often used as an inexpensive infill material between structural elements. It was recorded on the exterior of several theaters but more commonly used for interior walls. Generally, theaters used hollow clay tile where fireproofing was required, such as walls to divide projection rooms from the auditorium. It is relatively fragile and difficult to repoint, but it holds up well when treated carefully. Some limited damage was noted where the tiles were struck with equipment or impacted by earthquakes.

The glazed ceramic tile found during the survey falls into two categories—basic tile used for the bases of walls and decorative tile used as accents or surrounds. A small amount of tile is broken but most is in good condition.

Clay tile roofing was seen on only a few of the surveyed buildings and usually for decorative effect. Clay tile roofing is generally not a common roofing material in the Pacific Northwest. Where it has been used, it seems to have endured the weather conditions quite well. Unless broken or damaged by careless workers or high winds, the clay tile roofing found in this survey is in good condition.



Detail of a canopy marquee with standing water. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

### 2.2.2.4 TERRAZZO

Terrazzo flooring and bases are common in recessed, exterior theater entries because it made a fine transition material from concrete sidewalks. Terrazzo is a durable material and has generally held up well in the buildings surveyed. Surface cracks were sometimes noted, probably where the underlying substrate has failed.

### 2.2.2.5 WOOD

In a part of the country where wood was abundant, there was the expectation of finding more theaters built exclusively of wood. The survey found only three. However, a great majority of the theaters have some wooden structural elements, such as roof trusses, joists, ceiling framing, or floor framing. Furthermore, many of the roofs were sheathed with wood decking. Even if the exterior walls are masonry or concrete, the interior walls were most often framed with wood (steel-framed walls have only recently come into common use).

Wood was also used for cladding, flooring, windows, and trim. None of the theaters have wood-shingled roofs, the wood cladding is either drop-siding or shingles. Wood cladding, windows, and trim frequently showed signs of damage and/or deterioration. Much of the damage was due to weathering because of deferred maintenance. The types and extent of the deterioration varied depending on the amount of exposure to the elements, level of maintenance, and surface wear for the interior elements. Some wood is rotting because it is perpetually wet due to a leaking roof or because the sill is resting on wet earth. Other wood deterioration is relatively minor and could be easily remedied



Restoration of various facade elements needed (missing shed roof, rusting metal rail, boarded over windows). Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

with a coat of paint or varnish. We discovered that other kinds of damage to the cladding and trim were caused by rot and/or insects. In these cases, replacement of the material may be required.

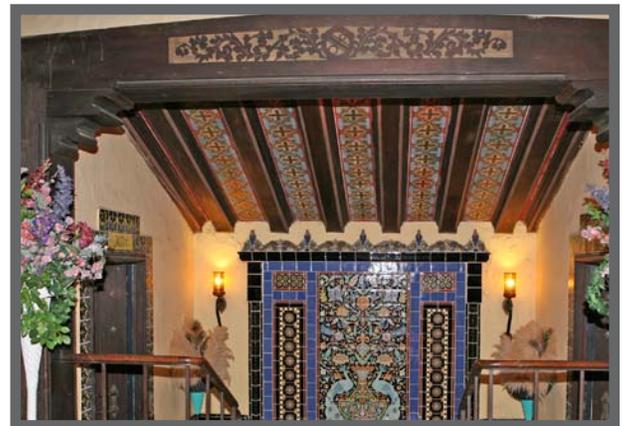
The most common type of wood found in these theaters is fir. Fir was an abundant resource and could be obtained in large, long sections for the columns and beams. As theater auditoriums became larger, fir could also be made up into trusses in order to span the increased distances. Even when structural steel became available, wood was less expensive. A predominate number of the theaters surveyed have roofs using wood as their structure. In an age before spray-on fire proofing, wood structural members had an added advantage over structural steel in that large wood members (like those in many of the theaters) would burn and char but remain structurally intact for a greater length of time before failing. Many theaters have fir floors that are, for the most part, in good condition. The greatest damage was wear from years of foot traffic, resulting in a need for refinishing.

### 2.2.2.6 METAL

Structural steel is not that common in the theaters surveyed. The survey did find structural steel roof trusses in the larger, older theaters, but wood timbers were considerably cheaper alternatives. Theaters with equally wide auditoriums are spanned with either of these two materials. The structural steel for roof trusses, columns, beams, and brick shelves all appeared to be in good condition. Only where water has been allowed to enter the buildings is there evidence of corrosion. Otherwise, little or no corrosion was found in the larger structural steel sections. However, there is widespread corrosion in exposed structural steel reinforcing rods in concrete. Reinforcing steel was often placed close to the surface of the exterior concrete. When water penetrates the wall, there is often corrosion (rusting of the steel), resulting in jacking (the expansion of the steel as it corrodes) and spalling (the cracking and deterioration of the concrete surface covering).

Other metal deterioration issues are the old steel fasteners left in concrete walls and the hangers that support terra cotta on building facades. Over time, the fasteners have often corroded and caused jacking and spalling in sections of concrete, brick, or terra cotta. Terra cotta hangers are having some of the same rusting and jacking problems as the steel fasteners.

Metal roofing, marquees, and ceilings are made up of relatively light gauge metal sheets and are easily bent or crushed. Metal theater marquees were most commonly found corroded or damaged from prolonged weather exposure, as were corrugated metal roofs and pressed tin ceilings. In marquees, the sheet metal exterior often covers a corroded inner structure. Many marquees need to be removed, restored, and reinstalled. Only one corrugated metal roof was surveyed and it needs to be replaced. Steel case windows were common among the theaters from the 1930s to the 1950s. Most are in relatively good condition but need to be weather-stripped, scraped, and painted, and to have the glazing putty replaced.



This ornate lobby fountain could operate again with restoration assistance. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

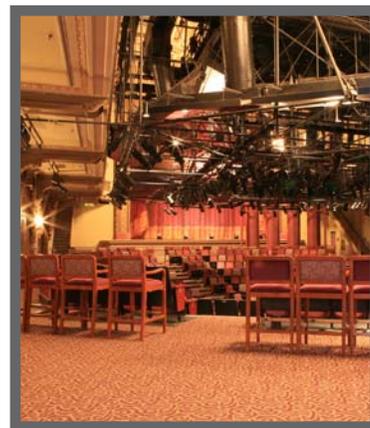


Looking down at an exterior balcony covered in moss. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



### 2.2.2.7 GLASS

Most theaters have few windows, and these are normally located on the front facade at street level in associated storefront space or on the balcony/mezzanine level. Hence, little window glass was found in the survey. However, stained glass and decorative glass, used in railings and lighting fixtures, is a common feature in theaters compared to other building types. When glass is broken or damaged by abrasion, it generally is not repaired; it is replaced. The survey found little damage to glass in windows or decorative glass, but the framework supporting the glass is often in poor condition. Some stained glass has suffered from weakened caning which is no longer able to hold the glass pieces in place. Repairing the framework, wood or steel window frames, or lead caning in stained glass is the most important need. The second most important need is cleaning, particularly interior stained glass.



Rehabilitated theater space. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

### 2.2.2.8 PLASTER

Most of the theaters surveyed were built when plaster was the common finish on interior walls, and some of the theater interiors have decorative plaster work. During the years these theaters were built, the material and installation of plaster changed little. The greatest change was to lath backing. In those years, the industry moved away from wood to expanded metal. Expanded metal had several advantages. It was a stronger backing, easier to install, and much more flexible, allowing it to form more complicated shapes.

The survey found that much of the damage to interior finishes was to the plaster. There are two causes of plaster damage and deterioration: one is water infiltration due to poor roofing, and the other is abrasion caused by human traffic. In some cases, water damage to walls and ceilings is extensive. One theater in particular has a leaking roof and large sections of collapsing ceiling plaster; the portions still in place have become a hazard. More commonly, roofing has been repaired, but plaster damage and staining is still visible. Regardless of the severity, damaged plaster should be inspected more closely by plaster specialists in order to determine potential repair strategies.



Roofing with holes and pools. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

Many theater interiors have years of accumulated dirt and grime where the walls and ceilings have never been cleaned. Some were cleaned during restorations fifteen or more years ago but are now dirty and again need cleaning.

### 2.2.2.9 PAINT

Many of the theaters surveyed had or still have elaborate interior paint schemes that include specialty paints and techniques. Faux painting and gilding for accents were common. Much of this has been lost due to leaking roofs, the main source of water damage to interior surfaces. Other damage to paint schemes is due to the accumulation of dirt throughout the years or being painted over in order to avoid the high cost of repainting in-kind. The survey found that much of the damage to interior finishes was to the plaster and with it the painted surfaces. Besides



Historic operational ventilation system. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

water infiltration, abrasion from human traffic or equipment/props was the greatest cause of damage to interior painted surfaces. In some cases, water damage to walls and ceilings is severe enough to cause plaster and paint to collapse or delaminate. Paint is stained from past roof leaks. Many interior paint schemes need cleaning in order to restore the historic color and pattern.

Exterior paint schemes are less elaborate than on the interior, yet they are subject to greater weathering. Exterior painted surfaces show a common pattern of severe deterioration, but interior paint is also a need for many theaters. The theaters with painted wood cladding are for the most part in poor condition. They need to be scraped, primed, and painted. Some of the concrete and brick theaters are also painted and need attention. For those structures, removing the existing finish and applying new paint can rectify exterior paint failure.

### 2.2.2.10 STUCCO

Original stucco finishes appear primarily on smaller, newer theater buildings. Even the older concrete buildings tend to exhibit painted concrete as opposed to stucco, which likely reflects cost effectiveness. Most of the stucco finishes are on the front facades of the newer buildings. On the theaters surveyed, the stucco is generally a simple flat surface cladding that has not been worked into decorative elements. Perhaps because the stucco is flat and simple, there is little evidence of damage. Where it is damaged, the cause is either water getting between it and the substrate (causing the stucco to delaminate) or from impact with vehicles or equipment. Stucco is easy to clean and maintain, as well as easy to repair, requiring simple tools, inexpensive material, and not a great deal of skill.

### 2.2.2.11 ROOFING

Roofing is one of the single most important materials protecting historic theaters. The vast majority of roofing materials used on the theaters surveyed are not historic. They may be the same type of roofing originally used, but the original material had a limited life and has in many cases been replaced once or perhaps several times. Survey results report that almost all damage to the interior surfaces (paint, plaster, wall fabric, etc.) was caused by water penetration from leaking roofs. To save historic –interiors—and in some cases exterior building –materials—even non-historic roofing material needs to be repaired or replaced.

The survey documents several roofing material types. These include hot-mop asphalt, single-ply membrane, corrugated metal, clay tile, and asphalt shingle roofing. The most common roofing encountered during the survey is built-up bituminous roofing. This is relatively inex-



Interior plaster walls and ceilings often show localized water damage, usually from a past roof leak.  
Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



pensive roofing and, until the introduction of single-ply membrane, the best material for the cost. It is also well suited for large surfaces. Many of the roofs using bituminous material need replacement.



## 2.3 PATTERNS OF OTHER ISSUES

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In [Section 2.1](#), operational issues such as owner/operator models are discussed. [Section 2.2](#) addresses physical issues, organized by exterior/interior and then by material type. This section will address building issues outside of the historic materials, including building systems, seismic reinforcement, and non-compliance with various building codes. In some cases, the building systems are indeed historic but are outside the anticipated funding scope for future state support. All of these “other” issues, in fact, likely exceed the scope of financial aid, no matter what source. Therefore, solutions to the patterns noted below may be best addressed by structure-related technical assistance.

All of the theater owners/operators who generously shared their time and their buildings are making good faith efforts to address the issues in this section. All are responsible, respectful of their patrons, and committed to trying to make their theater accessible, comfortable, and safe. Unfortunately, the cost of addressing these issues, especially seismic reinforcement, is prohibitive. This is especially true for the theater owners/operators who are barely keeping their doors open and the lights on. The other major obstacles to addressing these issues, besides cost, are floor plan limitations and the probable impact on historic material.



## 2.3.1 UNIVERSAL ACCESS

Strictly speaking, most theaters do not meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements and are therefore in violation of the Universal Building Code (UBC). However, under the International Existing Building Code (IEBC), incremental improvement is acceptable. Thus, theaters that have enlarged their restrooms in order to accommodate a wheelchair but still do not meet every aspect of the code could be counted as meeting code under the IEBC. Restrooms in small, single-screen cinemas were and are typically located on the balcony level or in the basement due to lack of available space on the ground floor. The lack of available ground floor space is still true for most theaters over fifty years of age, with a few theaters overcoming this issue by purchasing neighboring buildings and using the added square footage for ADA restrooms.

ADA requirements also include access to the lobby, auditorium, stage (if present), and balcony (if present). For all but a few historic theaters, the entry, lobby, and auditorium are at grade. The balcony is usually above the lobby and accessible by stairs only, and almost all stages in this survey are reached by steps, not ramps. As such, lobbies and auditoriums are generally accessible but may not meet specific criteria of the ADA code. Balconies and stages do not meet the code at all, with a few intentionally redesigned exceptions. Local building code officials seem to be understanding of what theaters face with regard to ADA obstacles. However, in order to ensure access for all patrons, the majority of theaters would benefit from technical assistance in the form of designing the space available to be utilized in a creative way.

## 2.3.2 SEISMIC REINFORCEMENT

In [Section 2.1](#), operational issues such as owner/operator models are discussed. [Section 2.2](#) addresses physical issues, organized by exterior/interior and then by material type. This section will address building issues outside of the historic fabric, including building systems, seismic reinforcement, and non-compliance with various building codes. In some cases, the building systems are, indeed, historic but are outside the anticipated funding scope for future state support. All of these “other” issues, in fact, likely exceed the scope of financial aid, no matter what source. Therefore, solutions to the patterns noted below may be best addressed by structure-related technical assistance.

All of the theater owners/operators who generously shared their time and their buildings are making good faith efforts to address the issues in this section. All are responsible, respectful of their patrons, and committed to trying to make their theater accessible, comfortable, and safe. Unfortunately, the cost of addressing these issues, especially seismic reinforcement, is prohibitive. This is especially true for the theater owners/operators who are barely keeping their doors open and the lights on. The other major obstacles to addressing these issues, besides cost, are floor plan limitations and the probable impact on historic material.

The survey found few historic theaters that had been seismically upgraded. The expense of a seismic upgrade without assistance would force many out of existence. In many instances, a substantial amount of historic interior material would have to be removed in order to accommodate the structure designed for a seismic upgrade. Original material would have to be removed and reinstalled or replicated. In some cases, the final design might permanently sacrifice primary historic material.



## 2.3.3 FIRE SUPPRESSION

Fire suppression is a serious consideration for enclosed public gathering spaces, especially in old buildings with low lighting, often outdated electrical systems, and seating capacities of several hundred to over one thousand people. Fire suppression is also an expensive consideration given the square footage and special design needs of theaters.

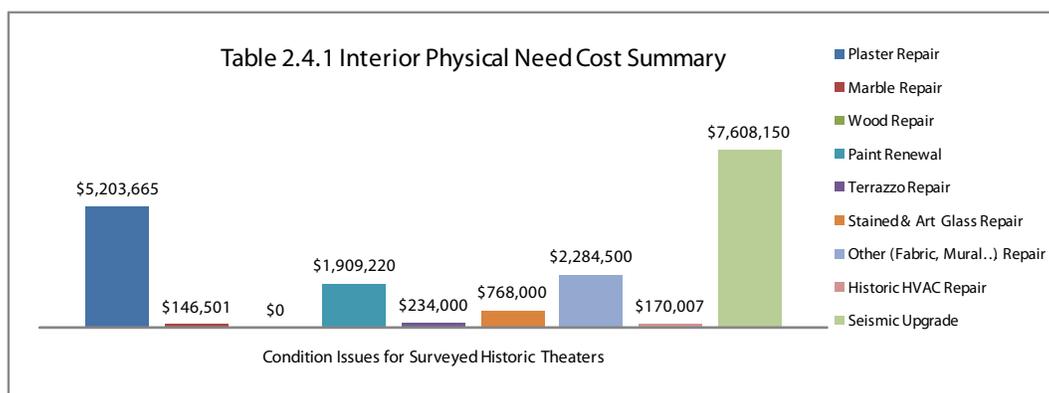
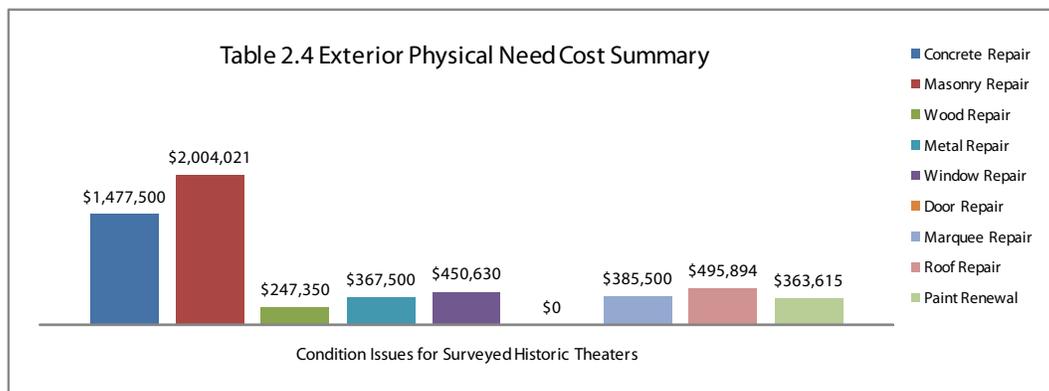
Few theaters in this survey have sprinkler systems. Most have either fire extinguishers or fire hoses or both. Given the height of the large performing arts auditoriums and the typically ornate plaster ceilings, installing a sprinkler system would be difficult. Not only are the auditoriums of historic theaters the primary space, but many are also painted with unique designs or murals. The challenges of installing sprinklers in a plaster ceiling without severely damaging historic material are beyond the skills of the average contractor. Here, again, is a potential topic for structure-related technical assistance from experts in this field.



## 2.3.4 HEATING/COOLING/CLIMATE CONTROL

From the basic building fan systems to swamp coolers to modern HVAC, theaters in this survey have a diverse range in relative efficiency of their climate control systems. The Capitol Theater in Olympia, like many, is stuffy and hot in summer and beyond chilly in the winter. Climate control is an important aspect of patron comfort, and sustainable business models require a reasonable temperature and ventilation. No one wants to pay to be uncomfortable, no matter how beautiful the murals in the ceiling.

For the theaters that have their original systems with everything functioning well, there is no need to change. However, for those with nonfunctioning original systems and no other system installed, technical assistance could take several forms. First, communication among theaters for the purpose of discussing who may have replacement parts to repair a historic heating/cooling system could be facilitated. Alternately, historic building experts might provide theater owners/operators with information regarding historic materials, new systems that are best suited to a theater's size, and where to install these systems in order to minimize the impact on character-defining features.



## 2.4 CAPITAL REPAIR PRIORITIES

The following section outlines a set of priorities for capital repairs based upon adherence to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, as well as the following three goals:

- 1) *keeping theaters standing and protected from the weather;*
- 2) *facilitating the long-term continued use of theaters; and,*
- 3) *attending to the vitality of the state's arts heritage.*

The following categories of building treatments are arranged from greater to lesser priority: stabilization, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration.

Despite the general high quality of original materials and workmanship in theater construction, life cycles of material and buildings themselves operate on different time frames. Long-term preservation of theaters must consider materials and systems compatible with an extended building life span. The introduction of modern, short-lived elements and systems should be discouraged or at least employed in such a way that they can be later reversed. It should also be noted that this physical needs assessment is not meant to prioritize individual theaters. Rather, the following sections examine broad patterns in the issues faced by theater owners and operators. As such, the five most pressing needs affecting stabilization, preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and continued use of historic theaters were noted. In order, they are roofs, interior surfaces, exterior facades, building systems, and marquees.

Leaking roofs is the most important of these five physical issues and the primary cause of damage to historic theaters in Washington. Roofing material generally is not historic; the original material has been removed or covered over. Most roofing is a sacrificial material with a limited life span. However, because theaters operate on tight budgets, the roofing must last longer than its intended life. This is often attempted with constant patching. In the theater buildings surveyed, leaking roofs have caused an extraordinary amount of damage to interior plaster, wall fabric, and paint. Even if a roof has been replaced or repaired, past damage to a theater's interior may not have been addressed.

The survey discovered a great deal of damage to plaster and paint surfaces. While much of the damage was caused by leaking roofs, some was also caused by everyday wear and the passage of people through the building. The water damage was severe in some theaters, with large sections of wall and/or ceiling plaster, as well as paint, delaminating from their substrates. In other theaters, there are more moderate damage levels (including stained ceilings and/or walls). However, in all these cases, the plaster needs restoration, repair, or replacement, which will require that the surfaces be painted again. One of the greatest losses caused by water is to murals and stenciled ceilings and walls. Wear caused by people and equipment moving through the public spaces has also caused some damage; however, it is usually confined to a limited height of about eight feet.

The survey cataloged four basic building types: reinforced poured-in-place concrete buildings, unreinforced masonry buildings, composite buildings, and wood frame buildings. Each of the four building types has similar issues of damage and deterioration, but each building type also manifests unique physical needs. For some buildings, the structure is also the cladding. For others, a cladding is applied over the structure. In many cases, the exterior material—whether it's concrete, stucco, brick, or terra cotta—needs repair, restoration, or replacement in-kind.

Structural, mechanical, electrical, and fire suppression systems are other areas where historic theaters have physical needs. In some of the historic theaters, the original mechanical and electrical systems are still be-



ing used. Most do not have a sprinkled fire suppression system, and systems are a patchwork of old and new. Integrating new mechanical, electrical, and fire suppression systems into historic theaters is normally difficult without damage to the existing historic material. Some theaters need entirely new systems. Others only need additions to existing systems, such as cooling added to the heating system. Still others need assistance to repair the historic system.

The fifth issue, marquees, presents multiple concerns. Theater marquees are made up of relatively light gauge metal sheets and are easily bent or crushed. Metal theater marquees were most commonly found corroded or damaged from prolonged weather exposure; the sheet metal exterior often covered a corroded inner steel structure. Nearly all of the marquees include electrical wiring, so water infiltration could pose a fire hazard. Many marquees need to be removed, restored, and reinstalled.

Improved accessibility per the International Building Codes (IBC) and International Existing Building Codes (IEBC) is an important update needed by most historic theaters. For reasons previously explained, access is extremely difficult given the floor plan of most old theaters and the average operating budget. Many theaters do not meet accessibility requirements for new construction; however, the IEBC offers alternative methods and approaches for improving accessibility while retaining character-defining features and spaces. Seismic updating is another sensitive issue for historic theaters. The composite or unreinforced masonry structures have the most need, but the process is prohibitively expensive and potentially damaging to integrity. Many of these buildings have survived several earthquakes with little or no damage. None of the theaters appeared to be severely damaged by earthquakes. However, seismic retrofitting could be a useful update for some theaters if the necessary funding were made available.

#### The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation:

1. A property will be used as it was historically, or be given a new use that maximizes the retention of distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships. Where a treatment and use have not been identified, a property will be protected and, if necessary, stabilized until additional work may be undertaken.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The replacement of intact or repairable historic materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Work needed to stabilize, consolidate, and conserve existing historic materials and features will be physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection, and properly documented for future research.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. The existing condition of historic features will be evaluated to determine the appropriate level of intervention needed. Where the severity of deterioration requires repair or limited replacement of a distinctive feature, the new material will match the old in composition, design, color, and texture.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.



## 2.4.1 STABILIZATION

Stabilization priorities are issues that need immediate attention in order to keep a building standing and to protect historic materials until preservation efforts can be funded and undertaken. The most common and critical component for theater stabilization is an adequate roof. While only noted for a couple theaters, foundation problems are also critically important stabilization concerns. Broken or damaged terra cotta is a common issue for theaters, but the severity of damage varies. Building envelope elements, such as siding, windows, and doors, while undeniably important to the overall longevity of a theater, are not critical items for stabilization.

### The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in a such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

## 2.4.2 PRESERVATION

This category of treatment represents the majority of issues for theaters, particularly on the interior spaces. Keeping a theater in use is the first step towards effective preservation, but regular maintenance is also crucial. Maintenance should be preventative, not reactive. Replacing or repairing building elements at their normal life spans will help reduce damage. For example, regular roof maintenance might include removing moss and cleaning out downspouts. Replacing the roof at material appropriate intervals will help prevent future plaster-damaged ceilings and walls. Preservation priorities for theaters also include the cleaning of historic elements, masonry repointing, and paint renewal. For those theaters with historic building systems, repairing those systems is counted under the preservation category.

### The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Restoration:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use which reflects the property's restoration period.
2. Materials and features from the restoration period will be retained and preserved. The removal of materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize the period will not be undertaken.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Work needed to stabilize, consolidate and conserve materials and features from the restoration period will be physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection, and properly documented for future research.
4. Materials, features, spaces, and finishes that characterize other historical periods will be documented prior to their alteration or removal.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize the restoration period will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated features from the restoration period will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials.
7. Replacement of missing features from the restoration period will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence. A false sense of history will not be created by adding conjectural features, features from other properties, or by combining features that never existed together historically.
8. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
9. Archeological resources affected by a project will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
10. Designs that were never executed historically will not be constructed.



## 2.4.3 REHABILITATION

Typically, the rehabilitation of a theater marks its transition into a substantially different use, such as a church or meeting hall. However, some theaters have been transformed from one type of theater to another, such as a cinema to a performing arts venue. Floor plans, windows, doors, exterior cladding, and interior surfaces often change. Restrooms and lobbies have been enlarged during theater rehabilitations while auditoriums have generally decreased in seating capacity. During this survey, no physical needs for restoration were recorded. However, theaters that need updated building systems may seek support in the future if funding is available.



## 2.4.4 RESTORATION

Restoration of damaged or missing historic elements includes repairing marquees, repairing murals, replacing missing facade elements, and other aspects that will improve aesthetic appeal. Consultation with the Washington state Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation is recommended in order to determine the degree and limits of each buildings restoration need.

TABLE 2.5 COST DATA SUMMARY

Total Number of Historic Theaters:	80
Total Number Surveyed Interior/Exterior:	50
Total Number Surveyed Exterior Only:	14
Total Interior Costs:	\$18,324,042.00
Total Exterior Costs:	\$5,792,010.00
Total Cost of Surveyed Theaters:	\$24,116,052.00
Total Projected Cost for all Historic Theaters:	\$37,592,179.20
Average Cost per Theater (Arithmetic Mean of Interior/Exterior Surveys):	\$469,902.24
Stabilization Costs (Roofs & Plaster Repair):	\$9,508,631.50
Average Stabilization Cost per Theater (Arithmetic Mean of Interior/Exterior Surveys):	\$101,450.38
Total Projected Stabilization Costs for all Historic Theaters:	\$8,116,030.40



## 2.5 CAPITAL REPAIR COST DATA

Condition data was compiled and analyzed in order to determine the most common issues and the average amount of damage to each building material. Totals for interior versus exterior repair costs are given in [Table 2.5](#). For the sixty-four surveyed theaters, the total of both interior and exterior repair costs is \$24,116,052. For the fifteen non-surveyed theaters, unit costs were extrapolated. The total projected repair cost for all of Washington’s historic, operating theaters is \$37,592,179.20. “Repair” includes all costs associated with the preservation, restoration and/or rehabilitation of historic building features, as well as basic building stabilization. Since stabilization efforts are the most immediate needs, total stabilization costs are also listed separately in [Table 2.5](#). Individual theater needs are given by exterior and interior cost tables on the building profile pages at the end of this section.

Cost figures were calculated based on observed patterns of physical needs. Material costs per square foot from the 2008 *RSMMeans Building Construction Cost Data* were used to develop unit costs for the most common interior and exterior physical needs. Material and labor, profit, and overhead are included in the unit costs. Physical concerns not covered by 2008 *RSMMeans Building Construction Cost Data*, such as marquee restoration, were estimated using costs reported by theater owners, craftsmen, or suppliers of specialty products. Often these are dealt with as lump sums.

Usable square footage was recorded for surveyed theaters; for non-surveyed theaters, building square footage was collected whenever it was available on county assessor websites. Providing a square footage cost for each material alongside the building size allowed for the calculation of the potential repair cost for the most critical building issues. For example, if a given theater was noted to have 25 percent of its interior plaster falling from its ceiling and walls, then 25 percent of the square footage of that building multiplied by the unit cost for plaster repair gives an approximate cost to repair its plaster. In order to extrapolate repair cost estimates to those theaters that either were not visited or were only recorded from the outside, an average percent of damage noted in the surveyed theaters per material (plaster, interior paint, roofing, etc.) was calculated as an estimation of the probable condition for any of the eighty theaters eligible for this survey.

An additional 50 percent was added to each theater’s cost estimate. This additional amount is to cover “soft costs,” such as planning, design, contract administration, and construction setup and staging. Furthermore, it covers cost inflation for building material, transportation, and labor. Costs do not include removal of existing historic or non-historic materials, their modification and/or reinstallation.

It should also be noted that the structural (seismic upgrade) costs are for the installation of those structural components needed to bring the building into compliance with existing building codes. Four structural building types were identified, including wood frame construction, unreinforced masonry construction, composite construction, and poured-in-place concrete construction. Each type was assigned a range of cost. The estimate used the higher end of the cost range in order to develop the final figure. The square footage for the structural component was calculated using gross square footage of the floor plan area without mezzanines or balconies.

While it is recognized that aspects of theater operation, such as projection systems, are indeed important considerations, it is most effective for the purposes of this report to limit our cost estimating to historic building elements. Repair costs do NOT include projection or sound systems upgrades, as these systems have usually changed over a theater’s lifetime and are therefore difficult to classify as historic features. Heating and ventilation systems, however, have not been changed in many cases due to a variety of factors, so they may be considered as historic features. Cost estimates for their replacement have been gathered from several theaters of various ages and sizes.



Of course, there is a wide range in the current interior conditions of the surveyed theaters. Those theaters that have been continuously used and maintained are in fair to good condition. Those that have been vacant and are currently under renovation to come back to active theater use are generally in poor condition. Theaters that had been vacant and have been rehabilitated usually are in good condition but have low integrity. Many theaters across the country closed in the mid-twentieth century. Those that managed to stay open generally do not meet current seismic or building code requirements for accessibility in new construction. With regard to the interior physical needs, theaters in good condition, with little physical deterioration, are offset in the cost averaging by theaters that have been closed at some point during their history. Only a few theaters have suffered extreme water damage, so the extrapolation of average condition seems to be a reliable model. Several theaters surveyed exhibited minimal to no physical needs. The lack of need was often due to comprehensive rehabilitation projects having just been completed. In these cases, no charts showing dollar value for needed repairs will be shown, an example being the ACT Theater, Seattle, WA.

The list below identifies theaters surveyed and included in the following profiles pages:

- *5th Avenue Theatre*
- *7th St. Theatre*
- *ACT Theatre*
- *Admiral Theatre (Bremerton)*
- *Admiral Theatre (Seattle)*
- *Alpine Theater*
- *Audian Theatre*
- *Auto Vue Drive-In*
- *Blue Mouse Theater*
- *Capitol Theater (Olympia)*
- *Capitol Theatre (Yakima)*
- *Chehalis Theatre*
- *Clyde Theater*
- *Columbia Theatre of the Performing Arts*
- *Concrete Theater*
- *D & R Theater*
- *Elma Theater*
- *Everett Theatre*
- *Fox Theatre (Centralia)*
- *Fox Theater (Spokane)*
- *G Theater*
- *Garland Theatre*
- *Grand Theatre, Taproot Theatre*
- *Guild 45th Theatre I*
- *Kelso Theater*
- *Kenyon Hall*
- *Kiggins Theatre*
- *Lee Theatre*
- *Liberty Theater (Ellensburg)*
- *Liberty Theatre (Wenatchee)*
- *Lincoln Theatre*
- *Lynwood Theater*
- *Metropolitan Performing Arts Center (MET)*
- *Moore Theatre*
- *Mt. Baker Theatre*



- *Narrows Theater*
- *Neptune Theatre*
- *New Ritz Theatre*
- *Nifty Theatre*
- *North Bend Theater*
- *Old Liberty Theater*
- *Olympic Theatre*
- *Omak Cinema*
- *Pantages Theater*
- *Paramount Theater*
- *Princess Theater*
- *Raymond Theatre*
- *Renton Civic Theater*
- *Rialto Theater*
- *Richland Theater*
- *Rose Theater*
- *Roxy Theatre*
- *Ruby Theater*
- *State Theater*
- *Sunset Theatre*
- *Tekoa Empire Theater*
- *Temple Theater*
- *Uptown Theater*
- *Varsity Theater*
- *Village Theater*
- *Liberty II*
- *Vogue Theater*
- *Vue Dale Drive-In Theater*
- *Joseph F. Wheeler Theater*





# 5TH AVENUE THEATRE

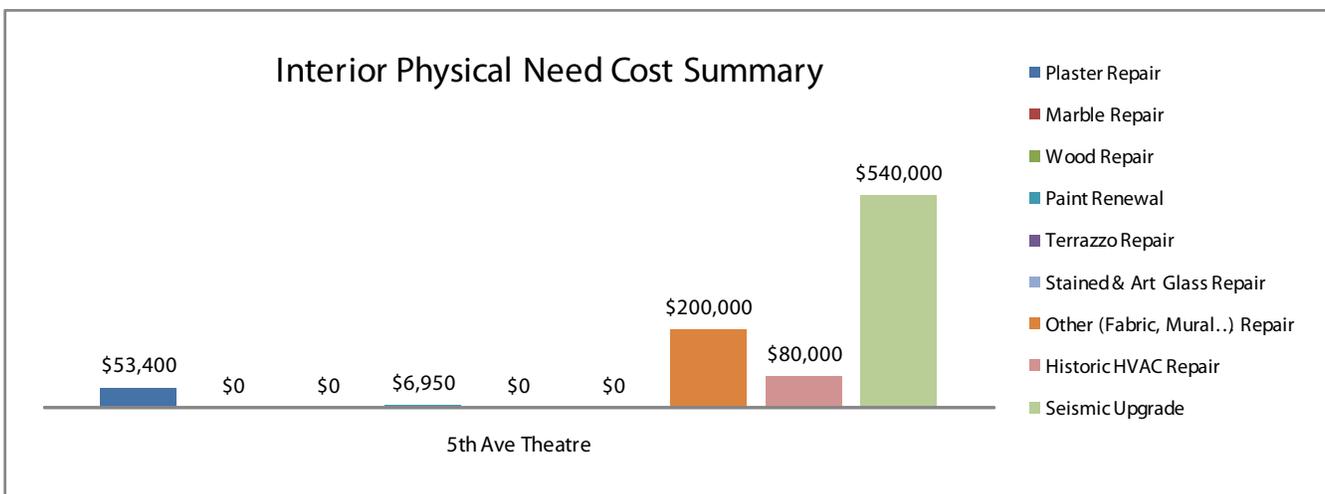


Field site: 72	Historic Names: Skinner Theatre
Location: 1308 5th Avenue, Seattle, King County	Register: State, National
Built: 1926 (R.C. Reamer)	Seats: 2115
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Silent Movies, Cinema
Ownership: Public	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** Housed within the eight-story Skinner Building, the 5th Ave Theatre is a former movie palace of the silent film era. Designed by R. C. Reamer in the Exotic-Far Eastern style, it has a similar floor plan to the Fox (Spokane) and Mt Baker (Bellingham) theaters. A recessed bank of entrance doors leads into a lobby and ornate hall. Midway along the hall and to one side, a grand staircase leads up to the mezzanine and balcony. Opposite the staircase, there are two auditorium main floor entrances. The balcony contributes to the second largest seating capacity among historic theaters in the state. Since it was designed for silent film and stage acts, there is a proscenium arch, full stage, and dressing room space. The auditorium’s plaster ceiling, modeled after an actual room in China’s Forbidden City, has as a centerpiece a dragon within a dome. Chinese motifs are used throughout all interior ornamentation and fixtures, from lights to lion statuaries. Structurally, the theater has a poured concrete foundation and walls. The Skinner Building is clad with cut stone and has office space above the ground floor shops.

# 5TH AVENUE THEATRE

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and excellent condition. There are no pressing stabilization concerns. Potential restoration efforts include building systems and interior finishes. The historic heating and air circulation system is still functioning but needs new bearings for the fan's axle. It is believed that an original mural in the main lobby was covered over in the past. In order to discover whether there is a mural will require a paint conservator to remove the plaster and paint. Interior decorative elements are plaster and for the most part in good condition. However, areas of the building with heavy traffic have damaged plaster. The stage is equipped with a fire curtain and the basement has a fire suppression system, but the rest of the theater does not. The building renovation in 1979-80 included a structural upgrade for the fly loft and a new counter-weight system. A seismic upgrade occurred in 2003-04. Plaster corbels were replaced with new corbels made from dense foam following the Nisqually earthquake.



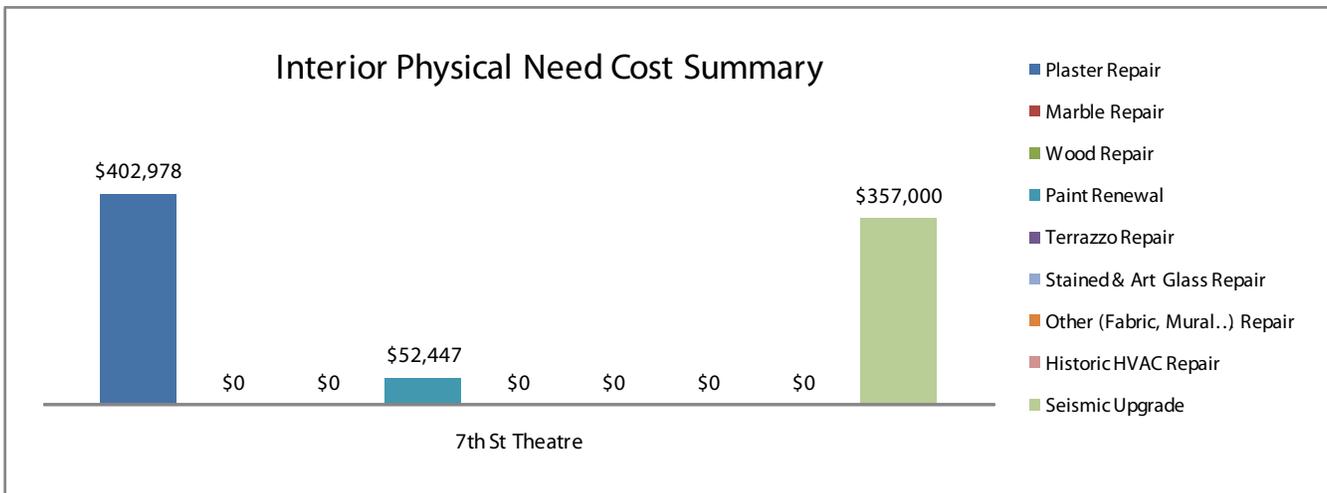
# 7TH ST. THEATRE



Field site: 44	Historic Names: 7th St. Theatre
Location: 313 Seventh St., Hoquiam, WA 98101, Grays Harbor County	Register: State, National
Built: 1928 (St. John Griffith, Taylor, Huntington, Torbit)	Seats: 997
Current Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema	Historic Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema
Ownership: Non-profit	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** The single-story 7th St. Theatre has many unique features that make it one of the gems among Washington’s theaters. It is the only surviving atmospheric theater in the state, complete with original light fixtures in the ceiling to imitate stars and faux building facades along the sidewalls. A full stage, orchestra pit, and proscenium arch suggest its original combined function for both live and cinematic arts. The original organ has recently been purchased and returned. While there are different types of seats (all original), there is no balcony. The front and back of the auditorium are divided by a wide level area only. Auditorium access is gained by curving ramps on either side of the lobby. The center of the lobby is an ornate, depressed area with restrooms and fountain. Generally, the interior decor is Mediterranean with ceramic tiles and wrought metal hardware. The structure is poured concrete. Exterior cladding is stucco and the roof is flat with parapets. The footprint is rectangular.

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and good condition. The most pressing physical concerns are the stage supports, the front facade, interior plaster, and the roof. Beneath the stage, the wood and metal support piers are deteriorating from water damage. The front facade exhibits a high degree of deterioration and needs stabilization, repair, and restoration. Three of the four relief plaster panels in the frieze are mostly gone, and the fourth has been brought inside for safe storage and repair. Exterior alcoves have moss and ferns growing from their ledges. Balconies are missing shed roofs. There are some exterior wall cracks, and water is seeping through the rear wall, but all sides except the front facade have been recently cleaned and painted. For the interior, the historic hemp rigging system needs updating. The auditorium’s plaster ceiling suffered water damage from past roof leaks and needs sections repaired. The single ply roofing is new, but water is entering under the flashing on the fly loft.



# ACT THEATRE



Field site: 73	Historic Names: Eagles Temple, Eagles Auditorium
Location: 700 Union St., Seattle, WA 98101, King County	Register: Local, National
Built: 1924 (Henry Bittman)	Seats: 590 for Bullitt Cabaret & Allen Theatre
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Auditorium
Ownership: Non-profit	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: N/A	Screen(s) Current: N/A

**Physical Highlights:** This seven-story corner building has four separate auditoriums, two of which are in historic auditoriums (Bullitt Cabaret and Allen Theatre). The entire building is a reinforced poured concrete structure on a poured concrete foundation. Exterior walls are clad in marble, terra cotta, and cut stone. A flat roof is covered with asphalt/comp-rolled material and surrounded by a parapet. Allen Theatre has a historic, now unused proscenium stage, as well as a non-historic, sunken arena stage. Allen has the original mezzanine and light fixtures but also modern HVAC and lighting. Bullitt Cabaret retains the original mezzanine, split stair, and balustrade. Seating for these two historic spaces combined is 590. There are no fly lofts. Other historic spaces within the building include the Ackerley Forum, which has terrazzo floors, marble wainscoting, and painted landscapes along the side walls.

## ACT THEATRE

**Condition Issues:** Overall, moderate integrity and excellent condition. The most pressing physical concern is the facade. The exterior has much of the original historic material intact and the brick may need repointing in the near future. The interior was heavily remodeled in 1995. The building has been seismically retrofitted, has a fire sprinkler system, and has ADA accessible restrooms. Doors and windows are original.



# ADMIRAL THEATRE (BREMERTON)

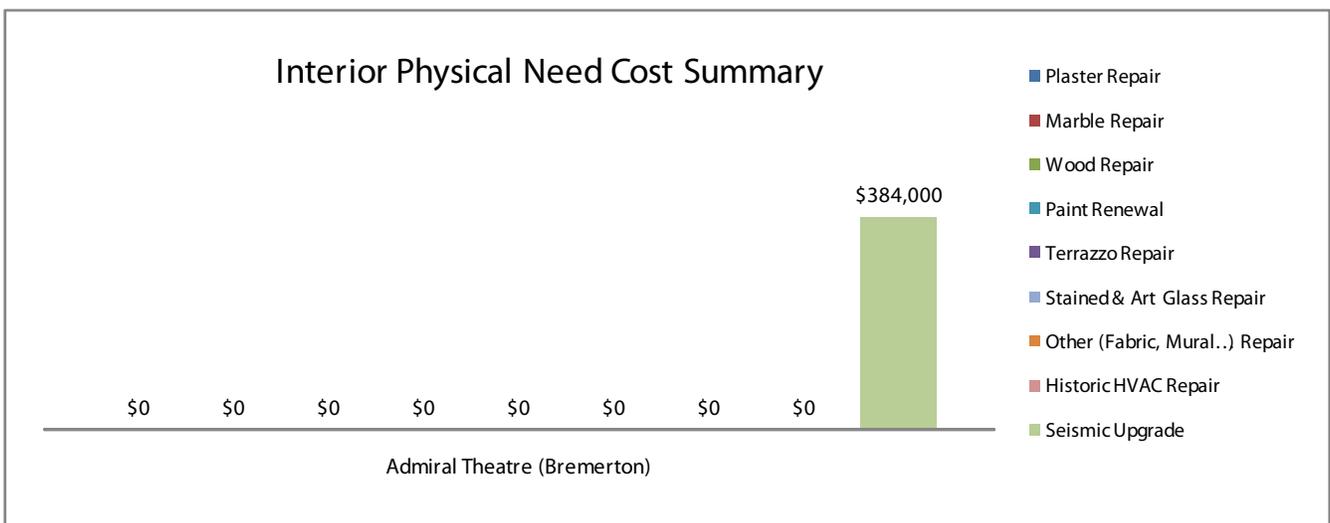


Field site: 50	Historic Names: Admiral Theatre
Location: 515 Pacific Ave., Bremerton, WA 98337, Kitsap County	Register: N/A
Built: 1941	Seats: 802
Current Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Non-profit	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** This poured concrete structure has a commercial form, with the theater and surrounding retail block reading as one building. The integrated ornament in the exterior walls is Art Deco. The foundation appears to be poured concrete. Designed as a cinema, it now hosts live shows as well as films. Triplexed in the 1980s, it is presumably renovated back to one screen. Interior access was not obtained, so the floor plan and interior elements are not known. The theater facade is marked by a non-historic triangular marquee.

# ADMIRAL THEATRE (BREMERTON)

**Condition Issues:** Not surveyed on the interior, and no exterior condition issues noted. Integrity has not been evaluated because the interior was not accessed.



# ADMIRAL THEATRE (SEATTLE)

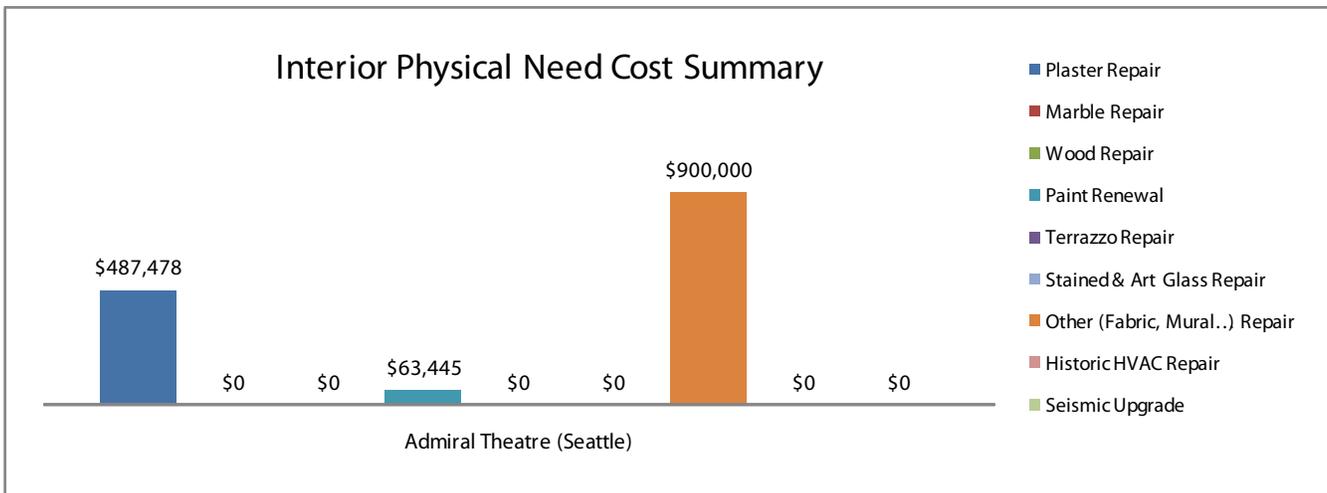
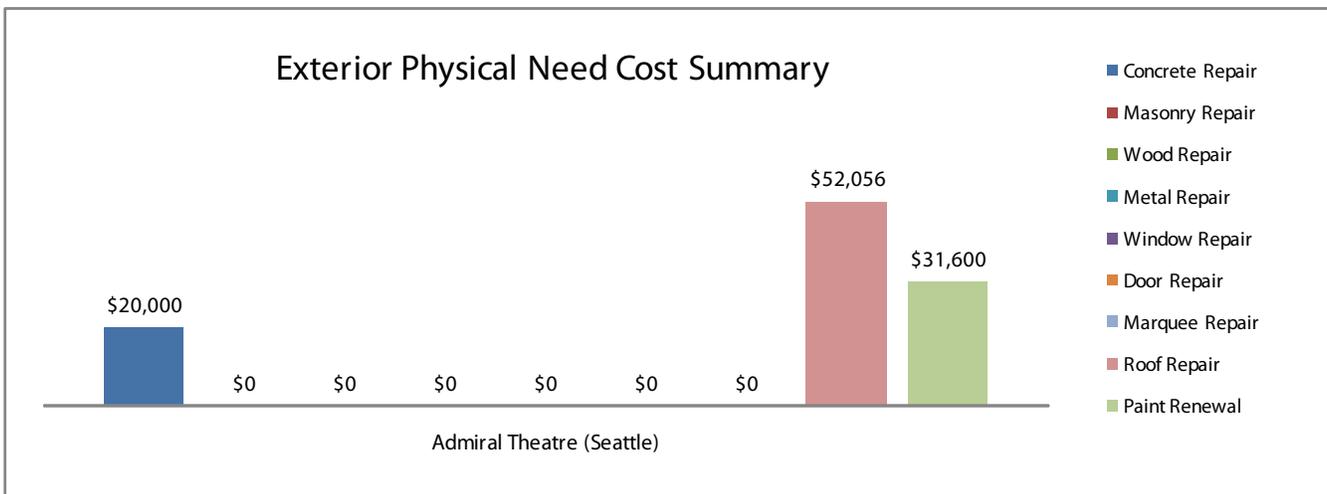


Field site: 74	Historic Names: Portola Theatre
Location: 2343 California Ave. SW, Seattle, WA 98116, King County	Register: Local, National
Built: 1919, 1942 expansion	Seats: 800
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Double

**Physical Highlights:** The Admiral Theatre was the new name for the 1942 expansion and renovation of the 1919 Portola Theatre. The Streamlined Moderne front facade echoes the nautical motifs of the interior, including the painted mural behind the concession stand. In the two auditoriums, wall fabric covers the side wall aquatic theme murals while ceiling murals have been painted over. Dolphins and other sea creatures are depicted in the terrazzo floor of the recessed entry. Structurally, the theater is a poured concrete frame with a concrete block foundation. The roof has both flat with parapet and barrel vault sections. Retail spaces and landscaping complete the theater complex along the east (front) facade to the north of the entrance. A non-historic concrete block carwash abuts the south side. Neither auditorium has a proscenium arch, fly loft, or balcony. Both auditoriums have stages. A mezzanine overlooks the lobby and contains both projection rooms.

# ADMIRAL THEATRE (SEATTLE)

**Condition Issues:** Overall, moderate integrity and good condition. The most pressing physical concern is the facade. The exterior is painted concrete. In some places, water has infiltrated between the concrete and paint, lifting paint away from the substrate. A car wash abuts the building and may be causing water problems both on the exterior and interior of the building. There are some large cracks in the south corner of the building. There are also vertical and horizontal cracks in the front facade which seem to have happened during the Nisqually earthquake. As far as potential restoration priorities, the 1973 alterations could be reversed to increase the theater's integrity. In that year, a metal stud sheet rock wall was installed, dividing the auditorium in two. The interior faces of the two exterior walls, which have undersea murals, were covered with fabric. The auditorium ceilings had a lay-in acoustical panel ceiling installed. General wear has caused minor damage to interior plaster walls and the lobby mural. Entry doors are original and in good condition. The building has not been seismically upgraded. The building does not have a fire suppression system (fire sprinklers).



# ALPINE THEATER

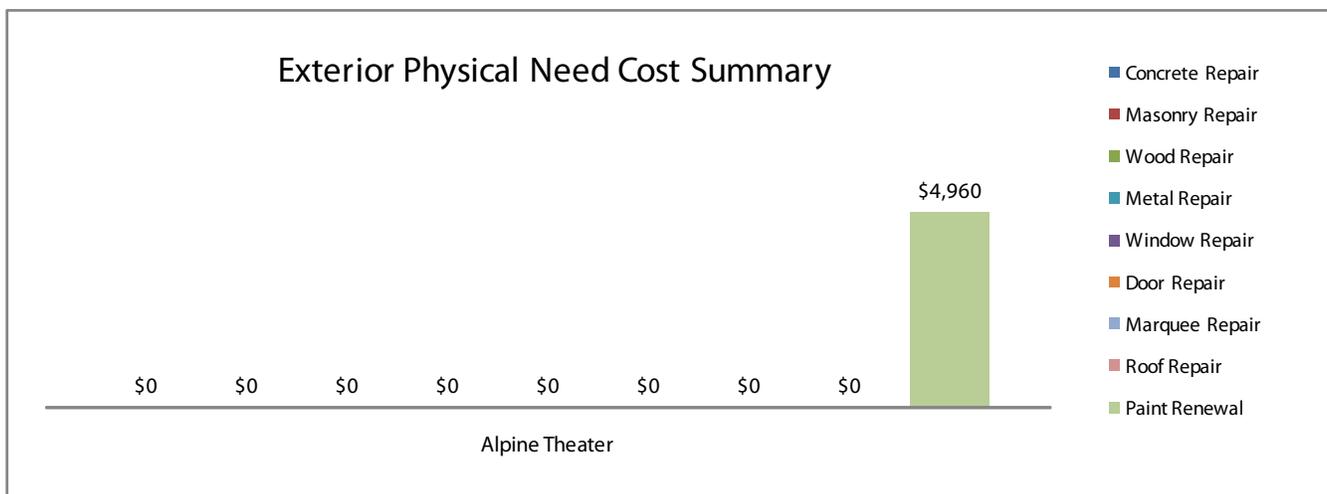


Field site: 27	Historic Names: Alpine Theater
Location: 112 N. Main St., Colville, WA 99114, Stevens County	Register: N/A
Built: 1937	Seats: 234
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** This Art Deco single-screen cinema rises over the neighboring commercial buildings in downtown Colville. Vertical shadow lines accentuate the height of the poured concrete walls. Cladding is simply finished and painted poured concrete on the front facade. Remaining sides are exposed, board-formed concrete. The rectangular footprint is oriented with the lobby towards the street and the auditorium facing the rear. A recessed entry now has an undivided bank of glass doors, with the ticket window to one side. The entry has a terrazzo floor, laid in strips of different color. Over the entry, a canopy marquee is connected to a projecting neon name sign. The building once had retail space to either side of the entry, spaces which have now been absorbed to expand the lobby. Concessions were originally located next door but now are sold within the lobby.

# ALPINE THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Not surveyed on the interior, but recent communication with the owner has provided some understanding of the interior physical concerns. A severe rain storm 3-4 years ago caused water to enter the building from under the roof flashing, resulting in damage to the ceiling plaster and stenciling. The owner would like to repair and restore damaged ceiling areas. The exterior of the building needs repainting. A 1994 renovation changed out the projection equipment, with the old going to the Auto Vue Drive-In and new equipment being installed at the Alpine. Integrity has not been evaluated because the interior was not accessed.



# AUDIAN THEATRE

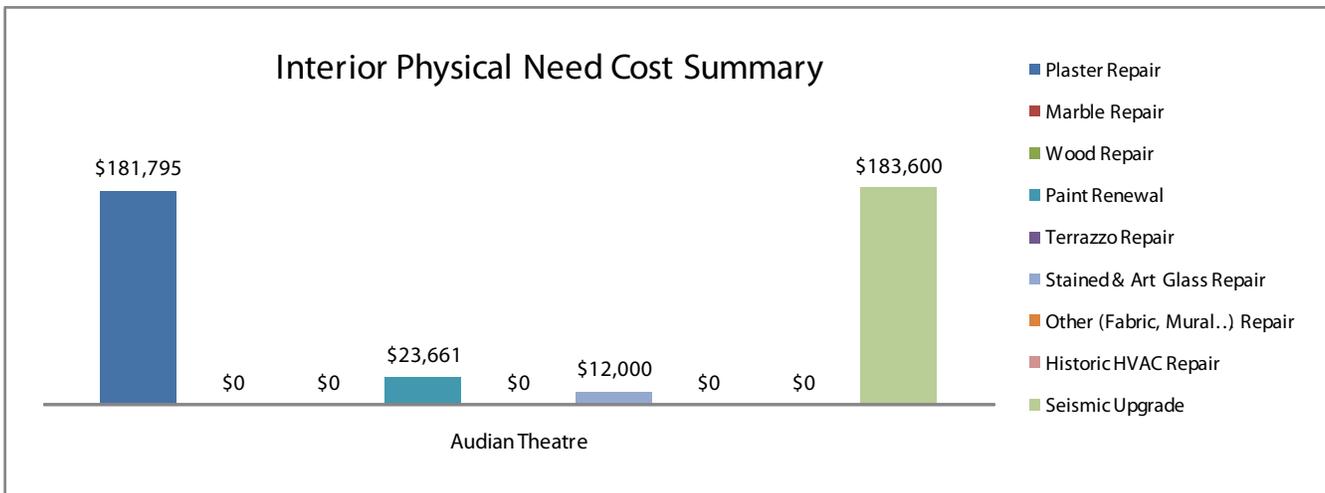


Field site: 29	Historic Names: Unknown
Location: 315 East Main St., Pullman, WA 99163	Register: N/A
Built: 1915, opened 1930	Seats: 547
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Silent Movies, Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** The Audian Theatre is located in the Jackson Block, which was built in 1915 and is currently occupied by several other businesses. The theater opened in 1930 in the location of a previous auto mechanic garage. The auditorium was repositioned in 1936 when additional Jackson Block space was taken over by the theater. The building is single-story, masonry construction with brick pilasters set on fifteen-foot centers and a poured concrete foundation. A hip roof is covered with asphalt/comp-rolled material. The original entry was subdivided at some unknown time in order to create a small retail space to one side. A canopy marquee projects out over the remaining recessed entry. Tile was installed over the lower portions of the front facade. A ticket window is located to one side of the entry. In the auditorium, 1970s seating is situated on a concrete floor and faces the screen. There is no stage, pit, or fly loft. However, the screen may now be wider and closer to the house, thus covering what may have been a small, faux stage. The balcony has no seating, just projection and restroom space.

# AUDIAN THEATRE

**Condition Issues:** Overall, moderate integrity and fair condition. The most pressing concerns are interior plaster, the electrical system, glass transom panels, and lobby floor structure. Overall, the theater maintains much of the original 1930 structure despite the 1936 remodel and subsequent changes. It is difficult to determine present layout in relation to the original. The plaster walls and ceiling show a good deal of damage. In the lobby, shingles have been installed over the original finish. Except for the projection booth, the wiring system is from 1936. The transom above the canopy is made up of four-by-four leaded glass; the comes are failing, and the glass is falling out. The floor structure is reported to be two-by-twelve's that are rotting. Tile has been installed on the front facade in a poor attempt to unify the storefronts. It is not known if the original facade is intact behind the tiles.



# AUTO VUE DRIVE-IN

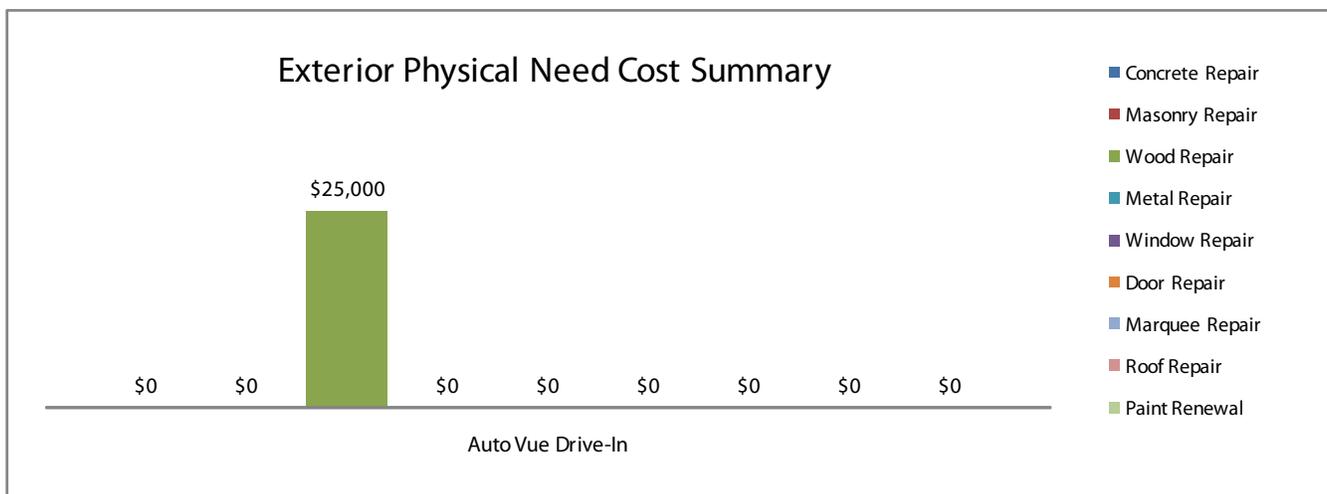


Field site: 28	Historic Names: Auto Vue Drive-In
Location: 444 Auto View Road, Colville, WA 99114, Stevens County	Register: N/A
Built: 1954	Seats: 220
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** Like many drive-in theaters, the Auto Vue consists of a driveway, a large parking field, and a clubhouse containing restrooms, projection system, and concessions. Two free-standing signs advertise the theater’s presence along Auto View Rd. The driveway entrance passes along the southwest facade of the clubhouse, including the integral ticket window. The two-story, concrete block clubhouse has no cladding except paint, but decorative wooden vigas project from all four facades. The roof parapet has red clay tiles. These Spanish Mission style elements on the clubhouse are outweighed by the entire drive-in’s classification under the Roadside style. The original wood-framed movie screen is still standing in the field northeast of the clubhouse. There are no permanent fixtures in the field apart from the screen.

# AUTO-VUE DRIVE-IN

**Condition Issues:** Not surveyed on the interior, but recent communication with the owner has provided some understanding of the interior physical concerns. Restrooms are in extreme need for rehabilitation. Movie screen was never coated, so it is in bad shape. Screen repairs were done about 10 years ago but it is time for more help. On the main building, there are varying degrees of deterioration in the wooden faux vigas. Integrity has not been evaluated because the interior was not accessed.



# BLUE MOUSE THEATER

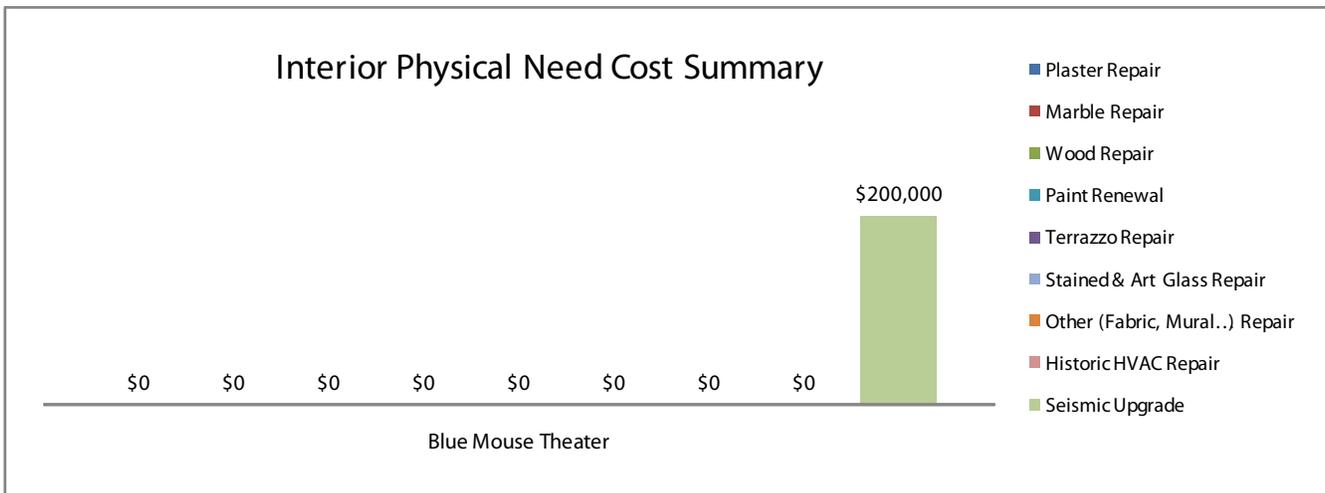
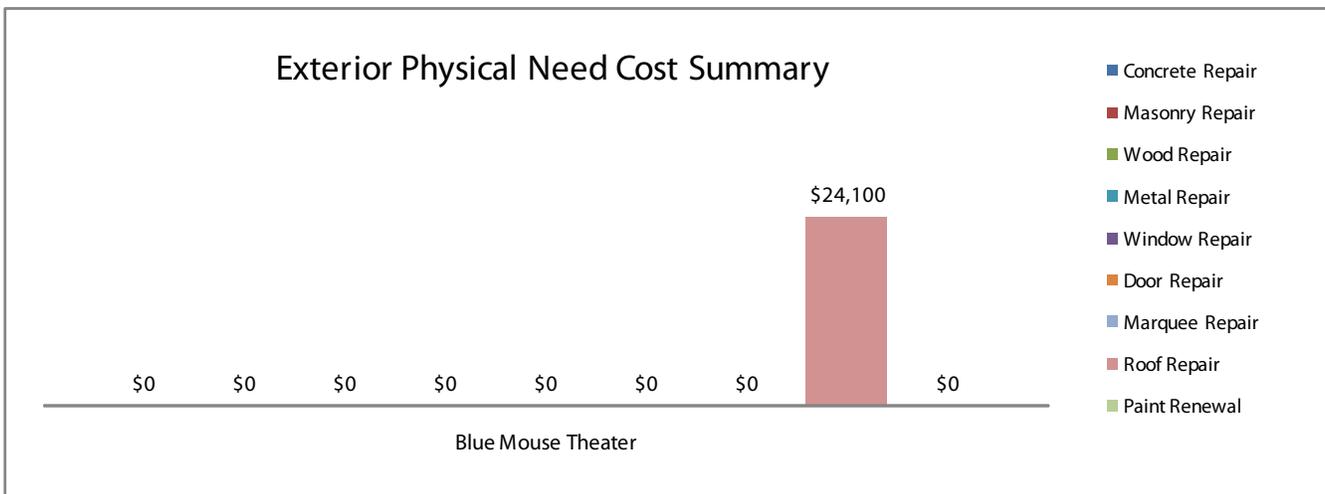


Field site: 11	Historic Names: Blue Mouse Jr. Theater, Proctor Theater, Bijou Theater
Location: 2611 North Proctor St., Tacoma, WA 98407, Pierce County	Register: N/A
Built: 1923, Fitzherbert Leather	Seats: 221
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** Located in Tacoma’s Proctor District, this single-screen, single-story cinema has exterior and interior Craftsman style. Constructed of a poured concrete foundation and brick walls, it has a rectangular footprint and a flat roof with eaves. The eaves are boxed and have triangular knee braces. Cladding includes brick, stucco, wood trim, and concrete. Along the front facade at the balcony level, the restroom windows are fixed diamond panes while the upper hall windows are eight-by-eight and fifteen-by-fifteen light casements. A canopy marquee sits over a recessed entryway. The two sets of double entry doors are divided by an attached ticket booth. On the interior, the lobby has a central concession stand between the two auditorium entrances. Stairs from the lobby give access to the upper restrooms and projection area. The auditorium has a small proscenium stage, a larger dais stage front, and garden trellises over the side exits. There is no fly loft or backstage space. Stained glass exit signs, exterior wood windows, and the ticket machine are among many original features.

# BLUE MOUSE THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and excellent condition. The most pressing physical concern is the leaking roof. The perimeter foundation is poured-in-place concrete. There are several small cracks in the foundation along the side walls, possibly caused by slight settlement. The cracks do not extend higher into the brick wall above. In places, the reinforcing steel is exposed but does not seem to be causing problems for the foundation wall. The exterior walls appear to be in good condition. A terrazzo entry off the side walk is in good condition as are the entry doors. Recently an ADA restroom has been added. There is no fire suppression system in the building. The building has not been seismically upgraded.



# CAPITOL THEATER (OLYMPIA)

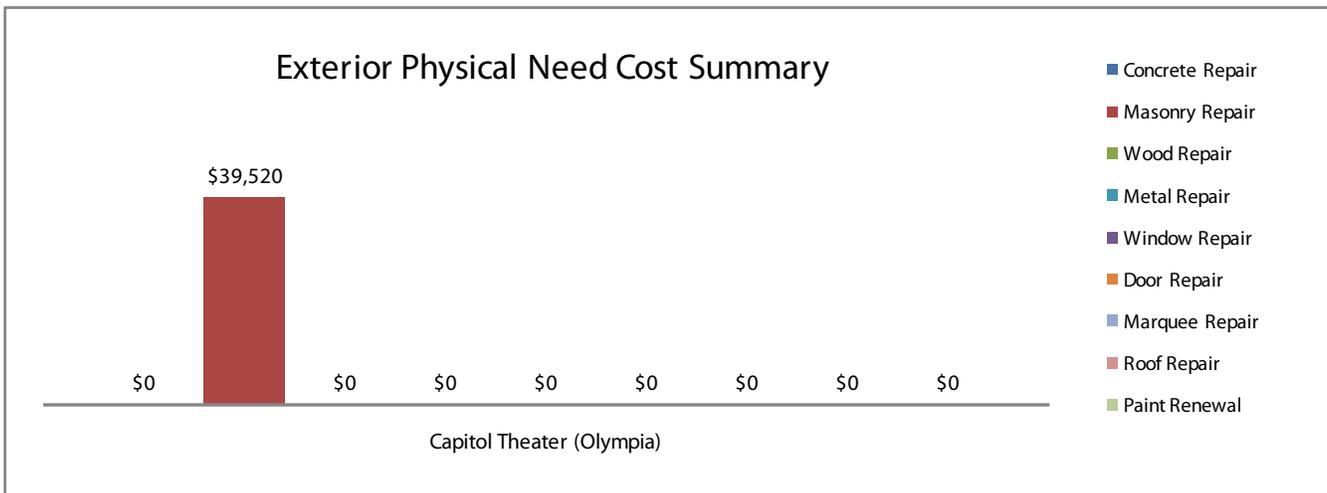


Field site: 64	Historic Names: Unknown
Location: 206 East 5th Avenue, Olympia, WA 98501, Thurston County	Register: State, National
Built: 1924 (J. Wohleb)	Seats: 772
Current Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema	Historic Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** The Capitol is a concrete structure clad with terra cotta and stucco. A flat roof with side and front parapets caps a rectangular footprint and only one full story. Roofing material is three tab asphalt shingles on the hip portions and bituminous sheet roofing on the flat. Recent facade rehabilitation efforts have revealed long obscured stained glass bull’s-eye windows. At street level, the original cladding has been covered with twelve-by-twelve inch tiles. The central, recessed, divided entry is capped by a full-length metal canopy. “Capitol Theater” is spelled out in the terra cotta frieze. The Beaux Arts – Neoclassical exterior style changes to Art Deco on the interior. Staircases on either side of the lobby lead to the balcony seats, office, and projection room. The auditorium has a full stage, a proscenium arch, a small fly loft, and an orchestra pit covered by a stage extension. Auditorium side walls are covered with acoustical material.

# CAPITOL THEATER (OLYMPIA)

**Condition Issues:** Overall, moderate integrity and good condition. The most pressing physical concern is the facade. The terra cotta needs repointing, repair and cleaning. The building has not been seismically upgraded. The balcony is not ADA accessible. The building does not have a fire suppression system (fire sprinklers).



# CAPITOL THEATRE (YAKIMA)

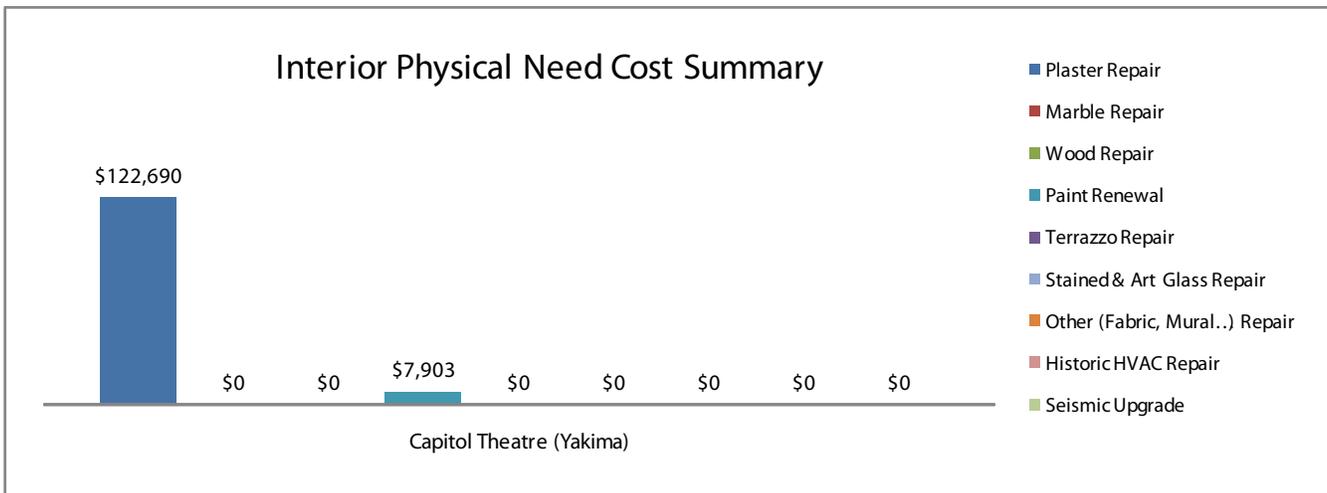


Field site: 31	Historic Names: Mercy, State
Location: 19 South Third St., Yakima, WA 98901	Register: Local, State, National
Built: 1920 (B. Marcus Priteca)	Seats: 1500
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Performance Arts
Ownership: Public	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: N/A	Screen(s) Current: N/A

**Physical Highlights:** Located in downtown Yakima, this rectangular, single-story brick structure rests on a poured concrete foundation and has two main roof forms—dome and flat with parapet. The roofing is asphalt/composition sheet material. Exterior cladding consists of brick and terra cotta. The alley side brick wall has been parged up to about thirty inches above grade. The front facade terra cotta has been painted, as have the brick side walls. New brick was toothed in along the upper portions of the front facade in order to match the original after the building burned in 1975. The upper cornice was also redone, but it is unclear what material was used to replicate the original terra cotta. Ceilings were reproduced using plaster and fiberglass, and the decor was closely reproduced from the original. Five sets of recessed double doors and a hard canopy comprise the entrance. There are a number of wood windows on the balcony level. It is listed on historic registers as being in the Italian Renaissance style. The auditorium is similar to the Tacoma Pantages; both theaters were designed by B. Marcus Priteca. A horseshoe balcony and several side boxes face a proscenium stage and full orchestra pit. The theater has a fly loft and various spaces related to live performance needs.

# CAPITOL THEATRE (YAKIMA)

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and excellent condition. The most pressing physical concern is water damage to the plaster walls and paint. The walls and ceilings need cleaning to bring back the clarity of the decorative paint and gilding. The theater was largely rebuilt following a fire in 1975. No stabilization needs were noted. Great pains were taken to replicate the original look of the original surfaces, sometimes with modern materials. Where the exterior walls were extensively damaged or destroyed during the fire, concrete block was used as a backing material. The painted brick side walls appear to be in good condition. Since the fire, the building has been fully sprinkled and is largely ADA accessible.



# CHEHALIS THEATRE

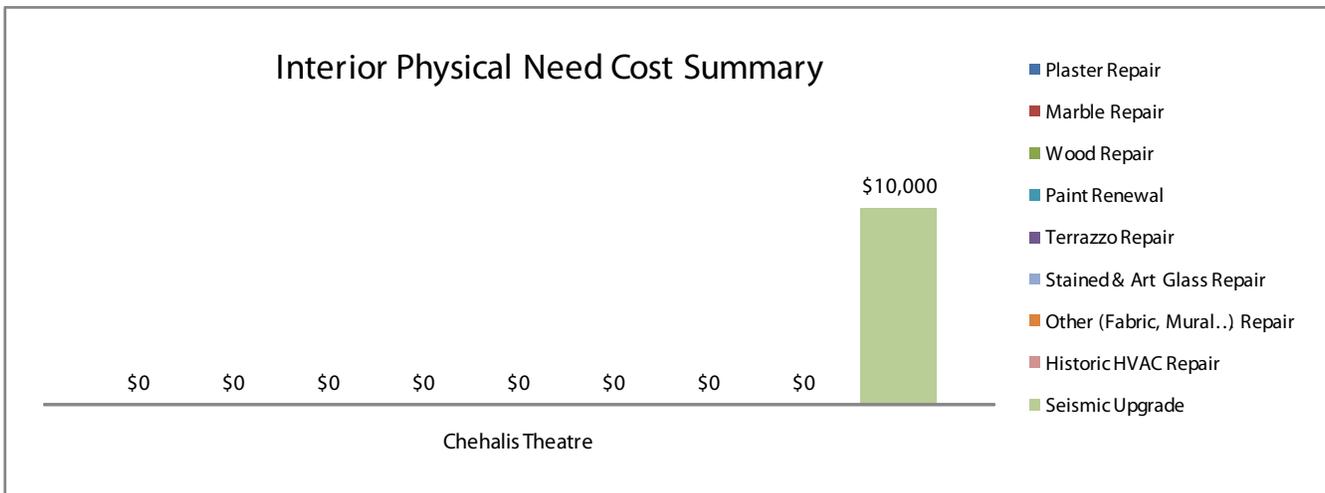
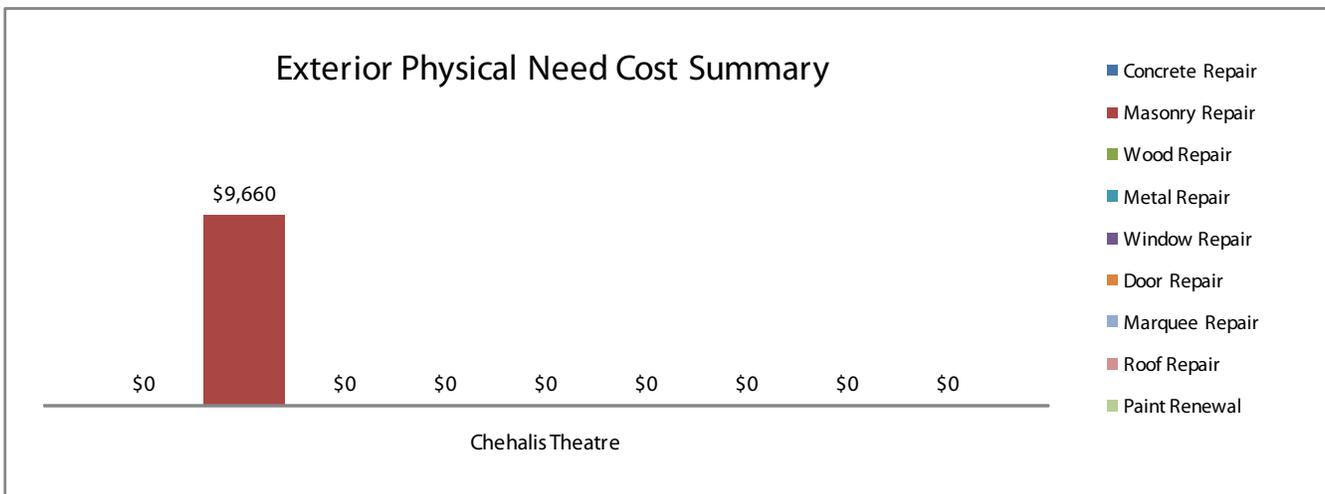


Field site: 54	Historic Names: Pix Theatre
Location: 558 N. Market Blvd., Chehalis, WA 98532, Lewis County	Register: N/A
Built: 1923, converted 1938	Seats: 307
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Other
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** Built in 1923, the “Gabel” building was originally a car dealership. The space was converted to an Art Deco movie theater in 1938. The front facade is terra cotta with stucco infill panels, where large windows were originally located. A triangular marquee projects over the recessed, divided entry. The marquee and the attached, central ticket booth appear to be original to the 1938 renovation. The rectangular footprint rises from a concrete foundation and is capped by a flat, parapeted roof. Side walls are exposed red brick. On the rear wall, brick is interspersed with poured concrete lintels. The lintels appear to have been added in order to support large openings, probably from the car dealership period. The entry is through a set of double doors into a simple lobby, where paired sets of stairs run up to the balcony. Restrooms, distinguished seating/rental event space, the projection room, and a small office are located on the balcony level of this single-story building. A miniscule, faux stage shelf and lack of fly loft, pit, or behind-stage space emphasize the purely cinematic function of this theater.

# CHEHALIS THEATRE

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and excellent condition. The most pressing physical concern is the damage to the terra cotta cladding. There is a minor amount of damage to the terra cotta, but overall it is in good condition. Portions of the terra cotta wall need repointing. The old boiler and radiators need maintenance and restoration. The building has not been seismically upgraded, and it does not have a fire suppression system (fire sprinklers). The building does not meet ADA requirements for restrooms.



# CLYDE THEATER

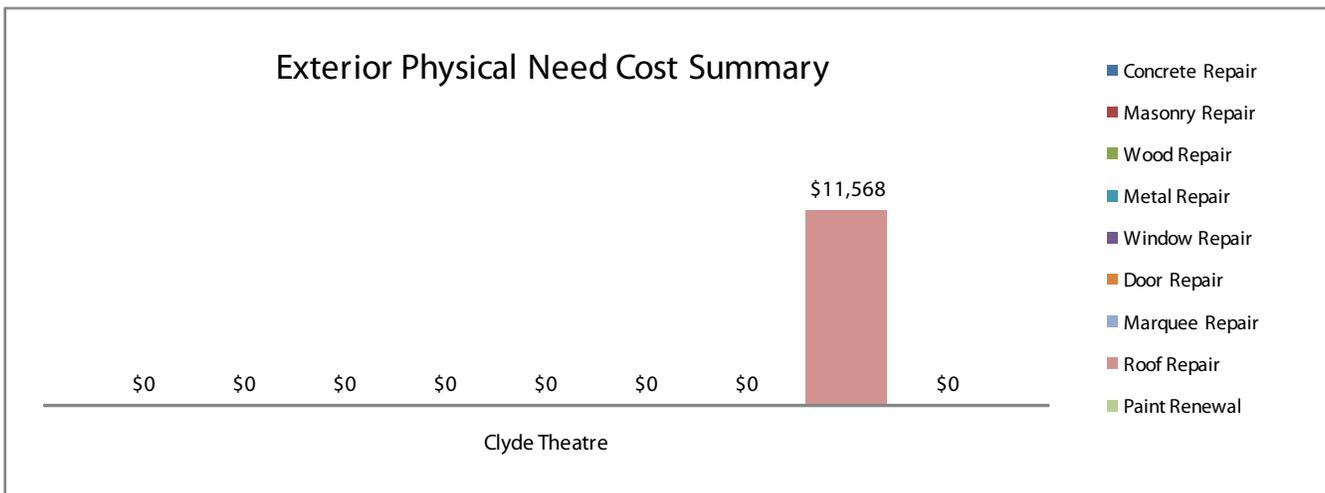


Field site: 45	Historic Names: Unknown
Location: 217 1st St., Langley, WA 98260, Island County	Register: N/A
Built: 1937	Seats: 256
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** By 1937, most theaters were built of poured-in-place concrete. The Clyde Theatre is an exception, featuring heavy timber post-and-beam framing. Rear and side walls consist of hollow clay tile infill which is parged on the exterior. A single-story single-screen movie house, this theater has a small balcony seating area to either side of the projection room. Curved sound boards give a coved ceiling effect in the auditorium. A canopy marquee presides over a recessed entryway, which is divided by a central ticket window. The small original stage has been expanded to accommodate small drama acts. A simple proscenium arch is now behind the screen. This theater makes the most of its small, rectangular footprint with a concession stand and restrooms in either corner of the lobby. With a straightforward plan and little ornamentation, it is a wonderful example of vernacular theater architecture.

# CLYDE THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, good integrity and good condition. The most pressing physical concern is the leaking roof. The roof does not drain properly and needs to be properly sloped to drain. The roof slopes five feet in one hundred feet, which is inadequate to drain it properly. The current roofing also dates from 1971, so it needs replacement anyway. The owner has been making attempts over the years to make the building handicapped accessible; however, the building's footprint is small and does not allow for increased space for restrooms. The owner installed a redundant seismic structural system in 1992. Designed by a structural engineer, the system ties the roof, walls and foundation together. Electrical and heating/ventilation systems were replaced in the 1980s.



# COLUMBIA THEATRE OF THE PERFORMING ARTS



Field site: 41	Historic Names: Unknown
Location: 1231 Vandercook Way, Longview, WA 98632, Cowlitz County	Register: Local, State, National
Built: 1925 (Purvis, Hahn & Weissenborn )	Seats: 982
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Performing Arts, Cinema
Ownership: Public	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: N/A

**Physical Highlights:** Having an irregular shaped footprint and being part of a larger building sets the Columbia apart from most of Washington’s historic theaters. The three-story, Beaux Arts style complex contains apartments and offices as well as theater related spaces, a basement and an attic. Some of the special features of this theater include a main house floor comprised of two-by-ten lumber set on edge and an enormous basement complete with original dressing rooms. A central ticket window divides the recessed, open-air entryway. The theater was built for a combination of live performance and early cinema, so there is a half-shell, plaster proscenium arch, an orchestra pit, a fly loft and a full balcony. House chandeliers have amber mica and require extreme care when lowering/cleaning. The walls are made of a combination of heavy timber post-and-beam framing and poured concrete. Steel girders comprise the roof trusses. A flat roof is covered with asphalt/composition rolled material.

## COLUMBIA THEATRE OF THE PERFORMING ARTS

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and good condition. The most pressing physical concerns are to be addressed under planned 2008 renovations, but interior plaster and decorative element repair are not budgeted. The 2008 renovation will repair the historic vertical marquee, refinish the auditorium and lobby floors, update heating and mechanical systems, and make the stage and orchestra pit ADA accessible. Also, the 1940s seats will be replaced with enlarged replicas of the originals. Condition concerns which do not fall under the planned renovation are the areas on various roof levels where water pools, with at least one spot collecting detritus and harboring vegetation growth. Some plaster damaged walls and ornament could use repair. The building has been seismically reinforced. DryVit cladding added in 1999 is intact. The canopy marquee has been replaced.



# CONCRETE THEATER

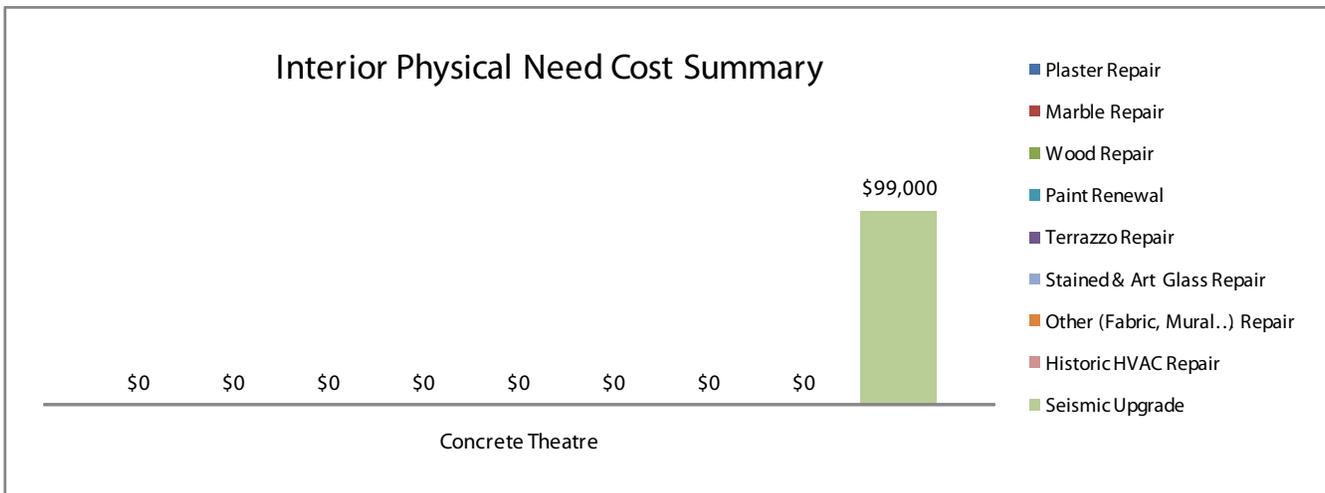
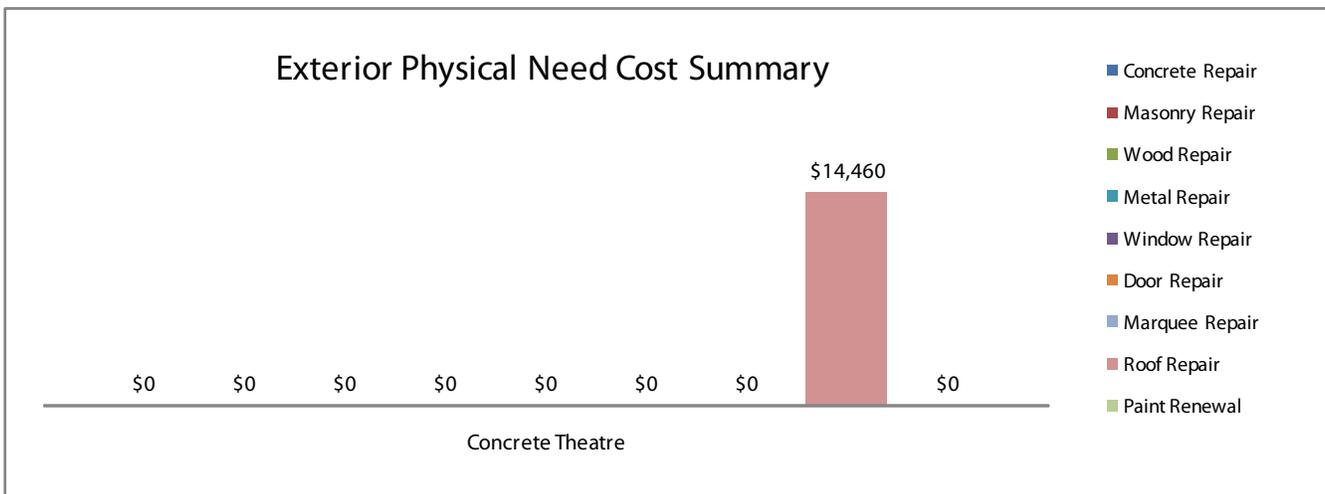


Field site: 59	Historic Names: Unknown
Location: 45920 Main Street, Concrete, WA 98237, Skagit County	Register: State
Built: 1923	Seats: 180
Current Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema	Historic Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** Befitting the location, this vernacular theater in downtown Concrete is constructed almost entirely of poured-in-place concrete. Exceptions are the wood roof, floor, and projecting canopy marquee. The marquee extends along the entire front facade. Auditorium walls are exposed concrete covered in sections with applied acoustical tile. The exterior entry facade is painted concrete with windows on the balcony level. Two separate sets of double doors flank the central ticket window. The ticket window and quarter round side walls are not original, nor are the doors. The windows above the canopy are original. In the auditorium, a tiny balcony seating area is adjacent to the projection room. On the main floor, seats on either side of the center aisle face a screen, a simple proscenium arch and a small stage. There is no fly loft or pit, but a half basement under the stage area serves as green room/dressing room. This rectangular single-screen, single-story theater shows films but also hosts talent shows, live music shows, and community meetings.

# CONCRETE THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, moderate integrity and good condition. The most pressing physical concern is the leaking roof. Also, the foundation may be leaking. The building has not been seismically upgraded, and it does not have a fire suppression system (fire sprinklers). The lobby restrooms do not meet ADA codes; however, any attempt to enlarge them would greatly impact the historic layout of the building. The theater does not meet exiting code. There are no side exits; there is only an exit from the back of the stage, and it is not equipped with panic hardware. The original wood auditorium floor has recently been refinished and is in excellent condition.



# D & R THEATER



Field site: 42	Historic Names: Old Grand Theater
Location: 205 South I St., Aberdeen, WA 98520, Grays Harbor County	Register: N/A
Built: 1924	Seats: 1000
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Silent Movies/Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: N/A
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** This theater has a tall, imposing facade although it is classified like most of its fellow historic theaters as a single-story building due to the height of its auditorium. Built in 1924 as a cinema, the exterior may have been updated as it has restrained detailing in the Streamlined Moderne style of the 1940s-50s. The entryway is recessed with a detached ticket booth. The theater is currently in the process of rehabilitation and the interior was not accessible. It has garnered local attention for the restoration of its marquee and neon lighting, but a reopening date has been pushed back to later this year.

## D & R THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Not surveyed on the interior, so integrity has not been evaluated. No physical concerns noted on the exterior.



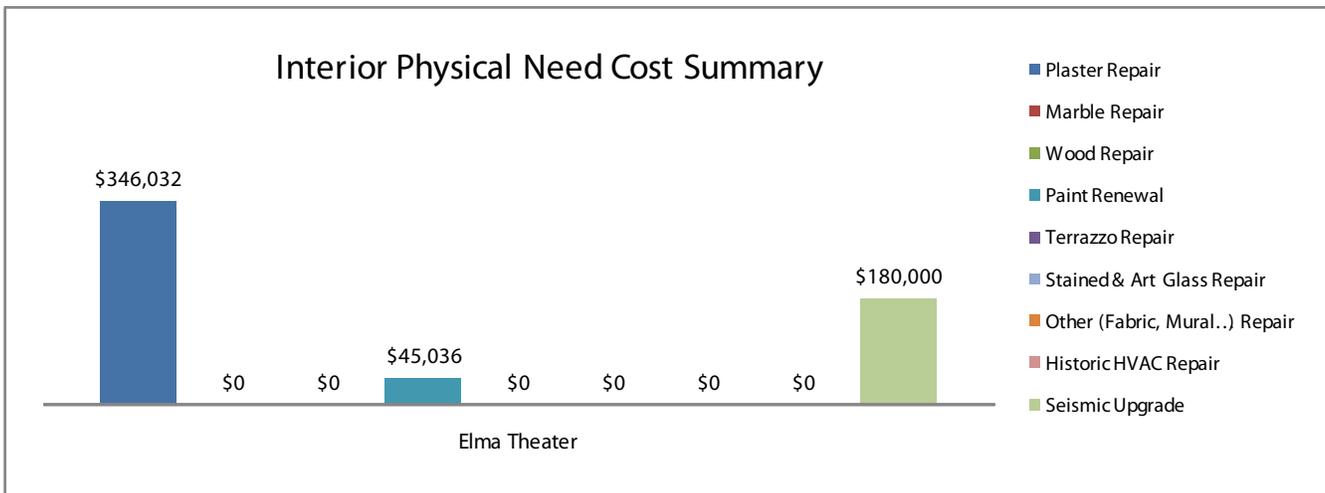
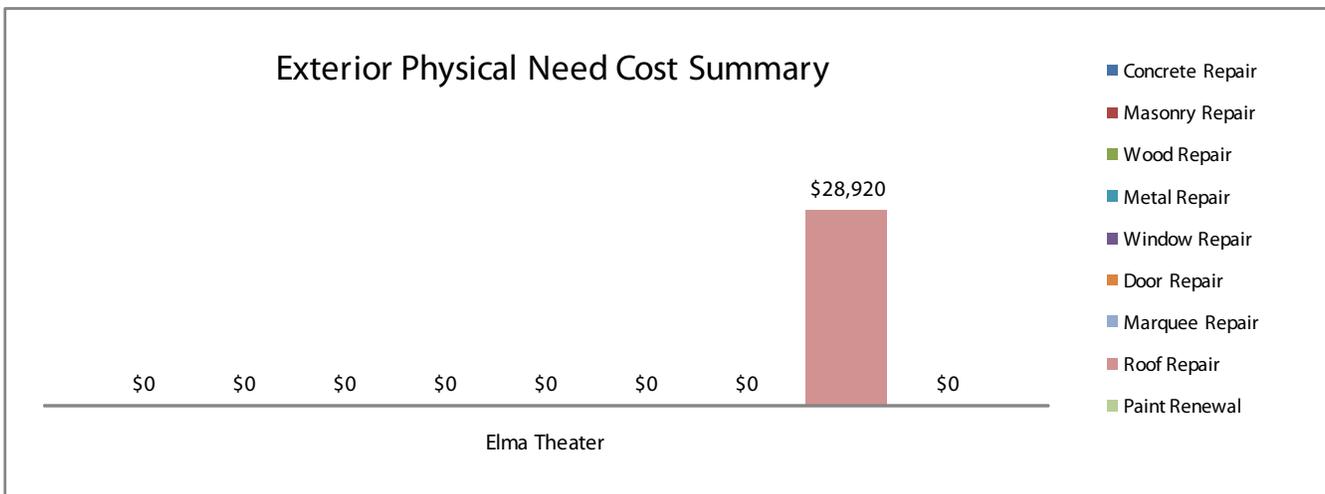
# ELMA THEATER



Field site: 43	Historic Names: Graham Theater
Location: 113 N. Fourth St., Elma, WA 98541, Grays Harbor County	Register: N/A
Built: 1927	Seats: 600
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** Formerly called the Graham Theater, the Elma is a single-screen house with a rectangular lot and no adjoining structures. Small retail shops occupy a space on either side of the entryway, fitting the layout of many theaters of this size and age. The single-story plan includes a balcony level at the front with seating, a former crying room (now office), defunct projection room (with intact carbon-arc projectors), and an apartment. The entryway had a transom and was recessed, whereas it is now flush with the front of the building. The original proscenium stage has been expanded and covers the orchestra pit. With poured concrete walls and foundation, it has a flat roof with parapets along all four sides. Spanish Mission style influences include the covered-up transoms and the ornamental tile roofing on the front parapet.

**Condition Issues:** Overall, moderate integrity and poor condition. The most pressing physical concerns are the roof, interior plaster, interior paint and decorative stenciling, and electrical and mechanical systems. However, this theater has many restoration and updating needs apart from the stabilization priorities. A closer inspection is necessary, but there appears to be several layers of roofing material over the wood trusses, joists and decking. In addition, the roof has been patched many times, both with sheet material and liquid. There is water pooling, the surface is bubbling and cracking, and there are large areas around the parapet flashing where water is entering the walls, resulting in severe and ongoing damage to the plaster ceiling in the auditorium. Large sections of exposed lath are visible where plaster has fallen and beautiful painted ornamentation is being lost. The theater was closed by the local building officials just prior to the survey for a number of code violations. Presently, the building is being heated with wood pellet stoves; the existing mechanical system is not working. This is inherently unsafe and inadequate. The electrical system is a patched together affair and is responsible for several of the safety citations by the code officials. Existing plumbing is inadequate and in poor condition. Vertical cracks are obvious in the exterior poured concrete walls. Lighting is insufficient. Restrooms should and could be made to meet the ADA requirements. The building has not been seismically upgraded and does not have a fire suppression system (sprinklers). Original glass transom blocks are covered up on the exterior above the theater and the two retail space entries. The lobby has been highly altered, but most changes may be reversible.



# EVERETT THEATRE

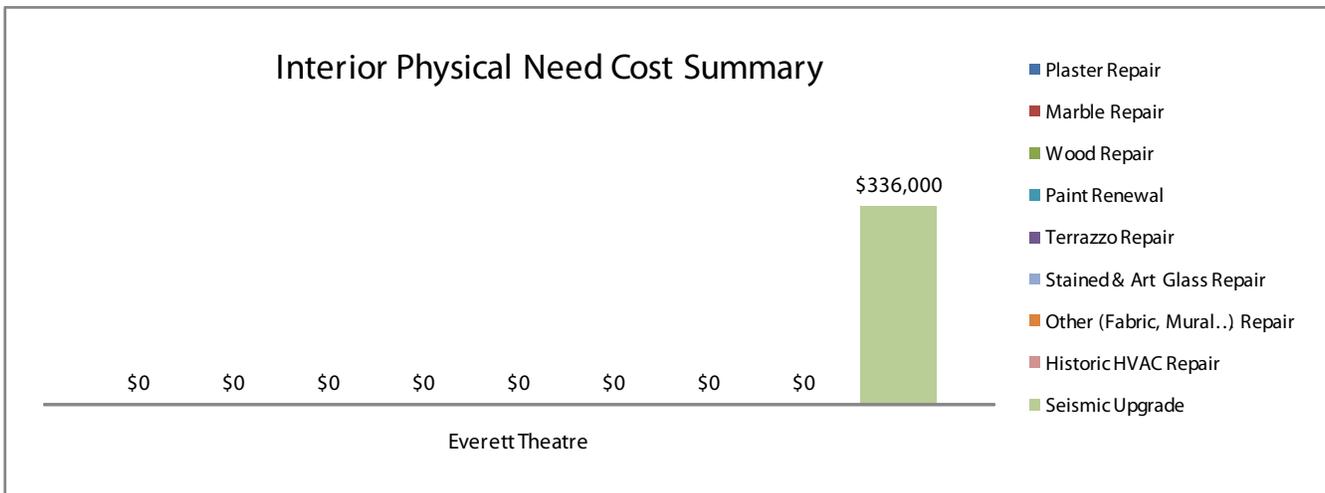
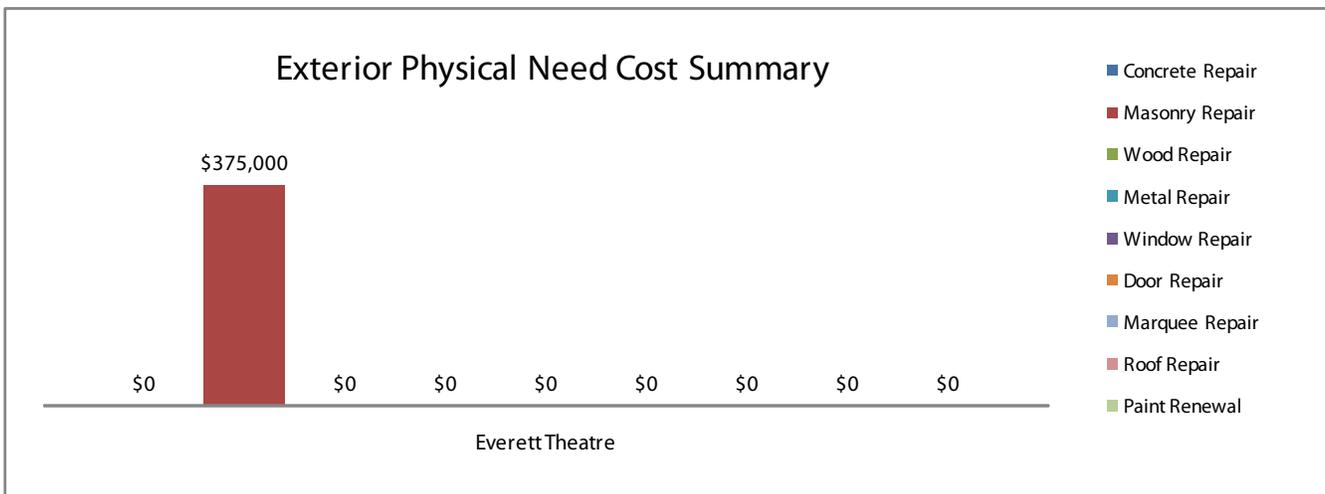


Field site: 63	Historic Names: New Everett Theatre, Everett Opera House
Location: 2911 Colby Ave., Everett, WA 98201, Snohomish County	Register: State
Built: 1901 (Bebb & Mendel, Priteca )	Seats: 834
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Performance Arts
Ownership: Non-Profit	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** This theater was built in 1901 and suffered a fire in 1921. The rough-cut stone foundation outlines a rectangular footprint and carries the brick walls. This single-story theater has a deceptively tall facade and a flat, parapeted roof. On the front facade, tile and glazed brick cover the wall below the metal canopy. The canopy extends along the entire wall and wraps each corner, as do the tile and glazed-brick cladding. Above the canopy, the facade has terra cotta accents amid regular brick. Centered in the facade is a flush entry consisting of three sets of double doors. Wood-framed poster boxes are located on either side of the doors. Leaded glass original windows are located on the balcony level of the facade. In some areas along the side walls, old windows and doorways have been filled in with brick. New openings have also been cut in and concrete lintels added. The lobby and mezzanine have been recently remodeled. The auditorium is fairly plain apart from the ornamented capitals atop the pilasters and an oculus in the ceiling. Seats on the main floor are original, but balcony seats are replacements. There is a thrust stage, proscenium arch, horseshoe balcony, orchestra pit, fly loft, and curtain.

# EVERETT THEATRE

**Condition Issues:** Overall, moderate integrity and excellent condition. The most pressing physical concern is the side and back walls need cleaning and repointing. The brick and terra cotta on the front of the building have recently been restored, repointed, and cleaned. However, the sides and back walls have not been cleaned or repointed; these walls have several layers of peeling paint over the brick. The mortar joints may be failing, allowing water infiltration. There appears to have been no seismic upgrade to the building during the recent restoration, but brick ties have been added to the back wall sometime in the past. The theater has three different heating systems. The exterior walls have been modified over the years, and there is evidence of in-filled windows and doors. There is a fire escape attached to the north side of the building. The building meets ADA codes and has a fire suppression (sprinkler) system. In 2001, electrical systems were updated.



# FOX THEATRE (CENTRALIA)

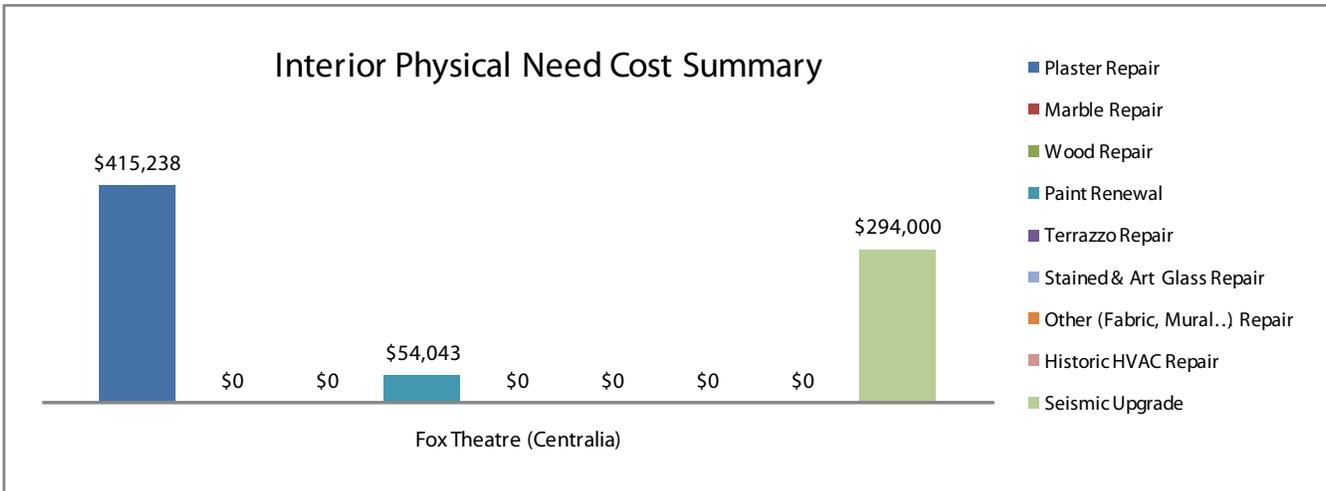
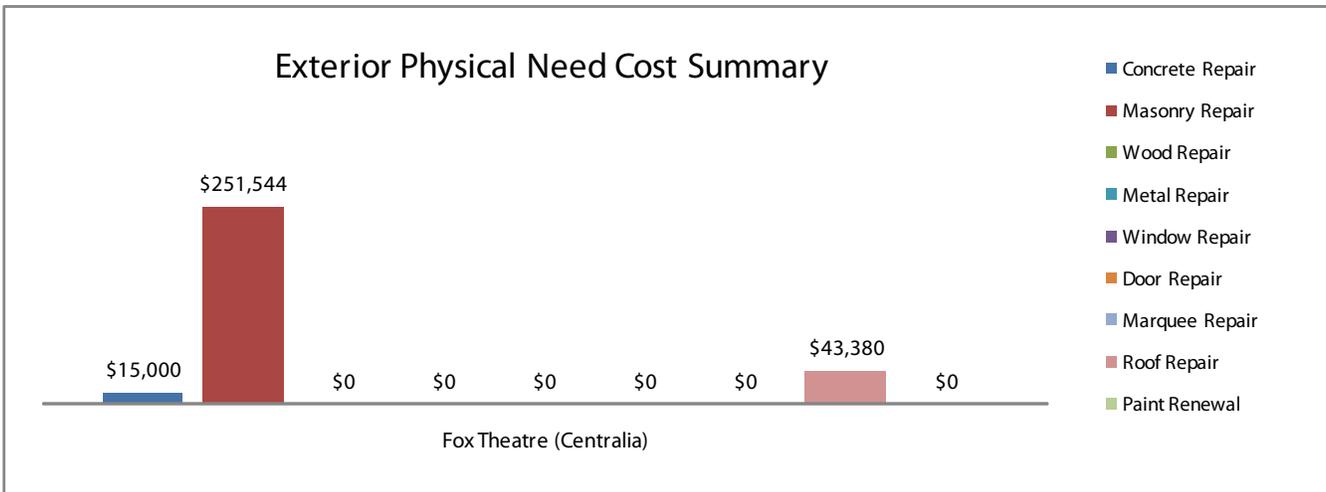


Field site: 53	Historic Names: Fox Theater
Location: 119 S. Tower Ave., Centralia, WA 98531, Lewis County	Register: National
Built: 1930 (F. Wynkoop)	Seats: N/A
Current Function(s): None	Historic Function(s): Performing Arts, Cinema
Ownership: Public	Operator: N/A
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** A contributing structure in Centralia’s downtown historic district, the Fox has a single-story, rectangular massing. This Art Deco theater is a composite structure with a flat, parapeted roof. Exterior cladding on the front (east) and south side of the building is brick. The back wall is exposed poured-in-place concrete. The exposed portion of the west side, above the adjacent building, is hollow clay tile. The foundation is poured-in-place concrete as is the underlying floor structure. A series of horizontal steel beams span between concrete pilasters and support the brick infill. These beams start about ten feet above the finished floor and are spaced every ten feet up the wall. The concrete pilasters may surround steel columns, but this could not be verified during the survey. Currently, the theater is not in use, but it originally had a combination of vaudeville and cinema programming. Thus, it has a proscenium arch, stage, orchestra pit, fly loft, and balcony seating. The balcony was sealed off and made into two small movie theaters, but the enclosing walls have now been removed. A triangular marquee projects over an altered entry and expanded lobby. A replacement pipe organ has been installed.

# FOX THEATRE (CENTRALIA)

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and poor condition. The most pressing concerns are the leaking roof, the brick cladding, and the interior plaster. The theater has been closed for a number of years and has fallen into disrepair. Water infiltration has damaged the interior plaster walls and ceilings. Now owned by the City of Centralia, there are plans to reroof the Fox by the end of 2008. On the south side, the brick cladding needs to be reattached to the structure. All exterior brick needs to be repointed and cleaned. The interior plaster walls and ceilings need to be stabilized, repaired, cleaned, and painted. Also, some other system of preventing water infiltration into the fly loft wall needs to be explored other than the present single-ply membrane roofing draped over it. The reinforcing steel in the concrete back wall has begun to corrode and jack concrete. Also, old steel fasteners that were left in the concrete walls have corroded and are jacking sections of concrete. The restrooms do not meet ADA requirements. The theater needs a new mechanical and electrical system. The building has not been seismically upgraded and does not have a fire suppression system (fire sprinklers).



# FOX THEATER (SPOKANE)



Field site: 24	Historic Names: Martin Woldson at the Fox
Location: 1001 W. Sprague Ave., Spokane, WA 99201, Spokane County	Register: Local, State, National
Built: 1931 (R. C. Reamer)	Seats: 1625
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Performing Arts, Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** Occupying a large portion of a city block, the Fox Theater stands tall amid the single-story retail spaces attached to it. Built as one unit, the theater and retail spaces all have poured concrete walls with incorporated Art Deco ornament. A movie palace of the silent film era, the Fox was designed by R. C. Reamer along with the 5th Ave (Seattle) and Mt Baker (Bellingham) theaters. Banks of doors on opposite walls require two lobbies yet provide two main entrances into an ornate hall. Midway along the hall and to one side, a grand staircase leads up to the mezzanine and balcony. Opposite the staircase, there are two auditorium main floor entrances. Since it was designed for silent film and stage acts, there is a proscenium arch and dressing room space. The original proscenium stage was expanded to a thrust stage with the recent renovation. Over the proscenium arch is a sunrise-pattern light fixture. A stylized starburst light fixture is flush with the mezzanine/hall ceiling. Stylized animals and geometric floral motifs are seen throughout the interior, as well as on the exterior. Many of the former retail spaces were incorporated into the lobby expansion during the 2007 renovation. A portion of the main auditorium floor at the house rear was also renovated into event space. Depending on stage configuration, seating capacity ranges from 1600 to 1700.

## FOX THEATER (SPOKANE)

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and excellent condition. There are no pressing physical issues identified. The Fox has recently undergone an extensive renovation and reopened in the fall of 2007. The theater is ADA compliant.



# G THEATER



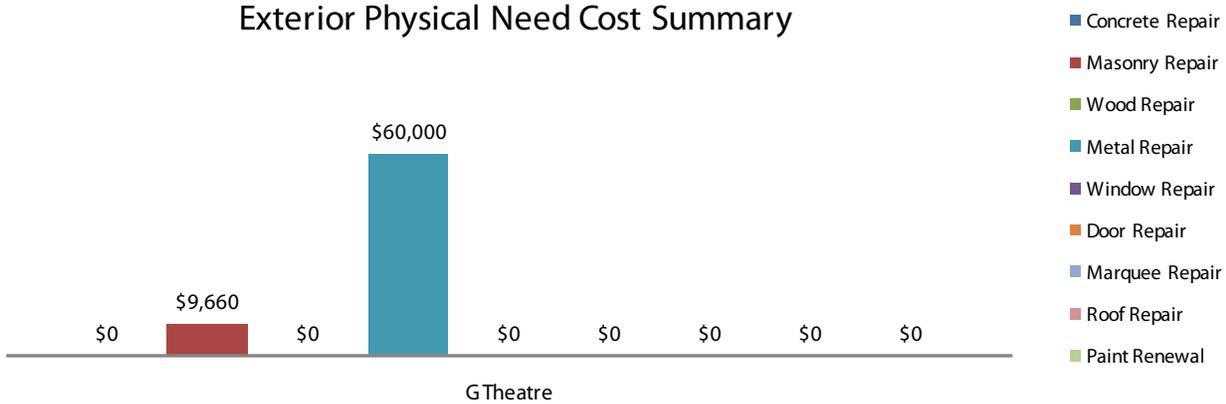
Field site: 55	Historic Names: Mossy G Theater
Location: 106 East State St., Mossyrock, WA 98564, Lewis County	Register: N/A
Built: 1936	Seats: 276
Current Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** The G, or Mossy G, is a single-story, single-screen theater in one of the smallest communities surveyed. The building has a poured concrete foundation and structure. Built-up bituminous material covers a parapeted flat roof. The rectangular theater space is located in a commercial block, with all sections having similar brick facades though built at different times. In an attempt to further unify them, a wood “balcony” was constructed over the canopies. The marquee projects out from the second floor above the “balcony.” Brick patterned pressed metal panels cover the upper sides of the building. In the auditorium, there is an apron stage, which appears to have been expanded over time. On the interior, there is a projection room as well as a small seating area on the true balcony level. Side walls have a plywood/homosote wainscot with fabric panels above. This theater functions mostly for showing movies, but the stage occasionally hosts a school production. There is no fly loft or pit.

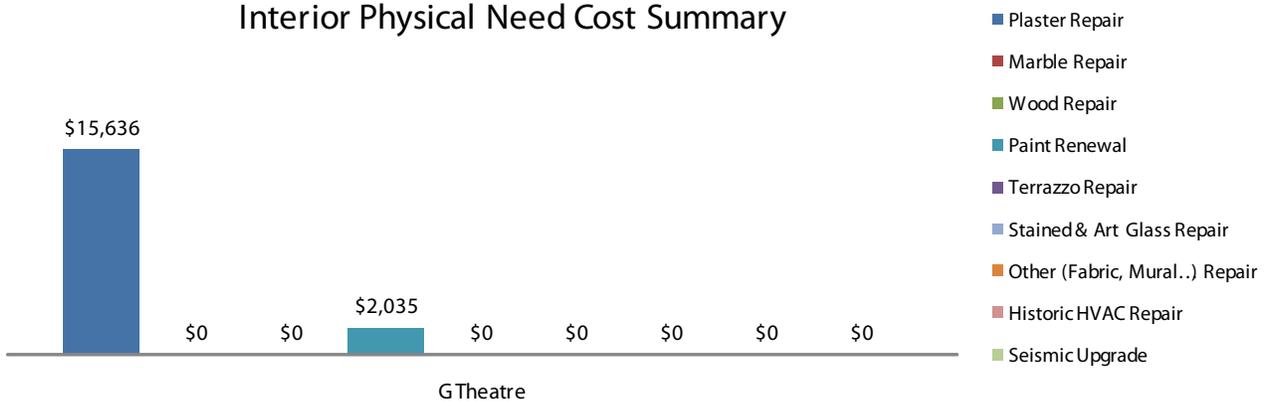
# G THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, moderate integrity and good condition. The most pressing concerns are the marquee, the facade, interior plaster, building systems, and seating. Specifically, the marquee is in poor condition and needs stabilization. The internal structure is corroded and many of the exterior metal panels are beyond repair. For general building preservation, the brick facade needs repointing and cleaning. A small amount of interior plaster is water damaged and requires repair. The electrical system is inadequate in the auditorium. Seats are in fair to poor condition. Restoration efforts should address the metal canopy, which has been obscured by a wood railing applied over it. Vinyl windows have replaced the original ones. The building has not been seismically upgraded and does not have a fire suppression system (fire sprinklers).

### Exterior Physical Need Cost Summary



### Interior Physical Need Cost Summary



# GARLAND THEATRE



Field site: 25	Historic Names: Garland Theatre
Location: 924 West Garland Ave., Spokane, WA 99205, Spokane County	Register: N/A
Built: 1945 (Funk, Molander & Johnson)	Seats: 630
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** The irregular footprint of the Garland occupies a corner lot, with a large open parking lot to the rear. The building includes the theater as well as other commercial space. Interior access was not obtained, but the structure appears to be poured concrete with brick veneer and terra cotta and glazed tile detailing. There are various rooflines and building segments, so it is not known if the building is one story or more. The main entrance is a slightly recessed bank of glass doors on the south side. The turquoise and beige terra cotta and glazed tile form geometric, as well as plant-based, designs. A rear exit has metal doors, poured concrete steps, and a projecting canopy. The main ornament on the rear facades are the horizontal grooves formed by recessed brick courses. There is just one auditorium, but seating capacity is estimated at 630. Given the arrangement of the front facade around the storefront windows, this building has been classified under the Commercial style. However, it also has Art Deco elements.

## GARLAND THEATRE

**Condition Issues:** Not surveyed on the interior. There is some water damage to the underside of the entry canopy. The material appears to be stucco or simply exterior plaster. However, without the owner's permission, a close examination was not performed. Exterior cladding appears to be in good condition. Integrity has not been evaluated because the interior was not accessed.



# GRAND THEATRE, TAPROOT THEATRE



Field site: 76	Historic Names: Greenwood Grand
Location: 204 North 85th St., Seattle, WA 98103, King County	Register: N/A
Built: 1918	Seats: 226
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Non-Profit	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: None

**Physical Highlights:** This single-story, former movie house was reopened after decades of vacancy to be a performing art venue. The wood-framed structure has a new concrete foundation and full basement within the rectangular footprint. On the front facade, there is a parapet, a recessed entry with ticket window on one side, and a canopy marquee. The cladding is modern materials, such as metal siding and ceramic tile. Centered in the lobby is a stairwell to the balcony. The auditorium now has an arena stage with a three-sided balcony. There is no longer a movie screen. Offices and stage shops were created in the basement and behind stage.

## GRAND THEATRE, TAPROOT THEATRE

**Condition Issues:** Overall, low integrity and excellent condition. The most pressing physical concerns have been addressed. This building has been heavily remodeled inside and out. Vinyl windows were installed in the exterior openings. The interior was completely remodeled in 1996, and little of the original interior is left. New rolled asphalt/composition material was installed on the gable roof in 1999, and a seismic retrofit was completed in 1995.



# GUILD 45TH THEATRE I



Field site: 77	Historic Names: State, Met, Roxy
Location: 2115 N. 45th Street, Seattle, WA 98103, King County	Register: N/A
Built: 1920	Seats: 490
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Performance Arts
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Unknown	Screen(s) Current: Unknown

**Physical Highlights:** Originally a performance venue, the Guild 45th is now a movie house. This rectangular, single-story building appears to be of poured concrete, but interior access was not possible. From the exterior ornament, this theater has Streamlined Moderne characteristics, including horizontal accent lines and smooth stucco on the walls. The front (north) facade is symmetrical with a shaped parapet, a projecting triangular marquee, and two sets of central, double doors flush with the wall. The doors are aluminum panels in aluminum frames. The marquee has movable letters and neon tubing. There are only two windows visible, and those are aluminum-framed, single fixed panes with rounded corners. They are located on either side of the entrance. The non-historic Guild 45th II sits nearby to the west. Stores and restaurants are on either side and across the street from both theaters.

## GUILD 45TH THEATRE I

**Condition Issues:** Not surveyed on the interior, and no exterior condition issues noted. Integrity has not been evaluated because the interior was not accessed.



# KELSO THEATER



Field site: 40	Historic Names: Unknown
Location: 214 S. Pacific Ave., Kelso, WA 98626, Cowlitz County	Register: N/A
Built: 1923 (Hilborn, W.D.)	Seats: 639
Current Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema	Historic Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** This Art Deco cinema has a balcony and stage, indicating a possible original use for both film and live stage acts. The screen appears to have been brought forward, but one-act plays are still done occasionally on the remaining stage space. The facade gives the impression of being taller than its single, full story, but this is mostly due to the high ceiling in the auditorium. Attached to one side is a shorter restaurant. Like the Kiggins Theater (1935/36) of Vancouver and the Fox Theater (1931) of Spokane, the geometric floral ornament is integrated externally into the poured concrete walls. A new marquee and vertical sign hang over a recessed entry. The overall footprint is rectangular. There is currently no orchestra pit. This single-screener has found a unique market niche by offering wine tastings and other culinary delights to augment the movie-going experience.

## KELSO THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Not surveyed on the interior, and no exterior condition issues noted. According to a local newspaper article, a rehabilitation of the interior occurred in 1997 after the badly deteriorated theater was purchased by five local women (Daily News, 3 March 1997). Integrity has not been evaluated because the interior was not accessed.



# KENYON HALL

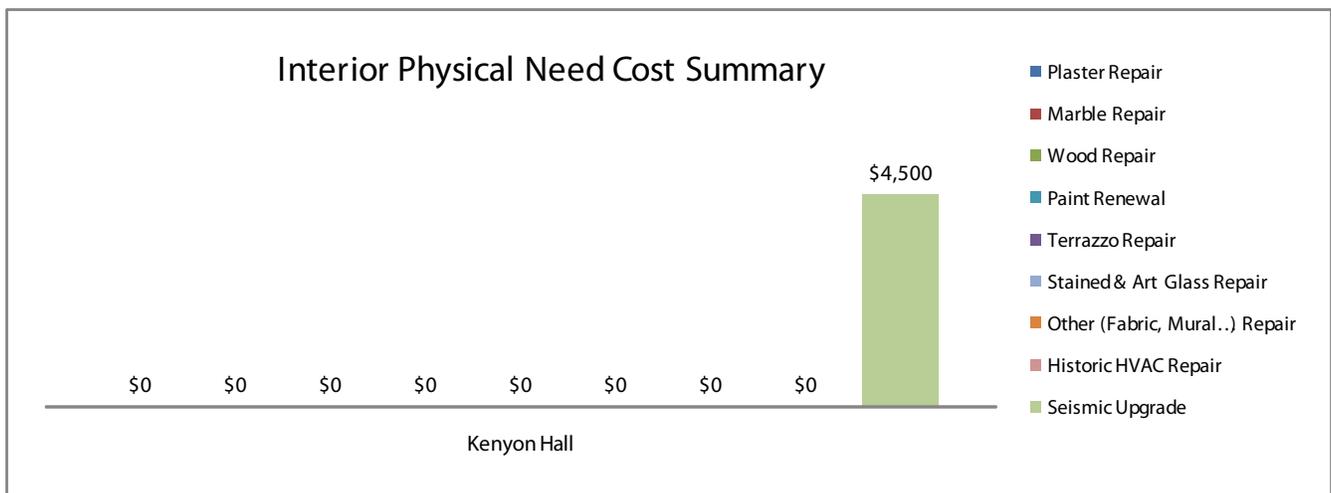


Field site: 78	Historic Names: Hokum Hall
Location: 7904 35th Avenue SW, Seattle, WA 98126, King County	Register: N/A
Built: 1916	Seats: Varies
Current Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema	Historic Function(s): Other
Ownership: Non-profit	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: N/A	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** A single-story, wood-framed vernacular structure, Kenyon Hall was originally built as a social hall with a dance floor and stage. Now a cinema and performing art house, it still has an open floor plan and a stage. Movable seating is set out on the original dance floor as needed. A Wurlitzer organ has been installed to one side of the stage, with the pipes and chimes housed in various places throughout the building. To enter the hall, one ascends several steps to the attached, covered porch and passes through double doors. A hallway leads straight through to the auditorium, with restrooms on the right side and a small kitchen on the left. The balcony has no seating, simply an office and dressing room space along with the light/sound booth. Access is by stairs from the main hall. Interior spaces are simple and without applied ornament. There is no proscenium arch, fly loft, or pit. On the exterior, the walls are shingled, and the front gable roof is covered with asphalt/composition shingles. The foundation consists of concrete block. The front facade is symmetrical, and the overall footprint rectangular.

# KENYON HALL

**Condition Issues:** Overall, low integrity and excellent condition. There are no pressing physical concerns. It is in good condition and functioning quite well as a small neighborhood performance venue. The building has not been seismically upgraded and does not have a fire suppression system (fire sprinklers).



# KIGGINS THEATRE

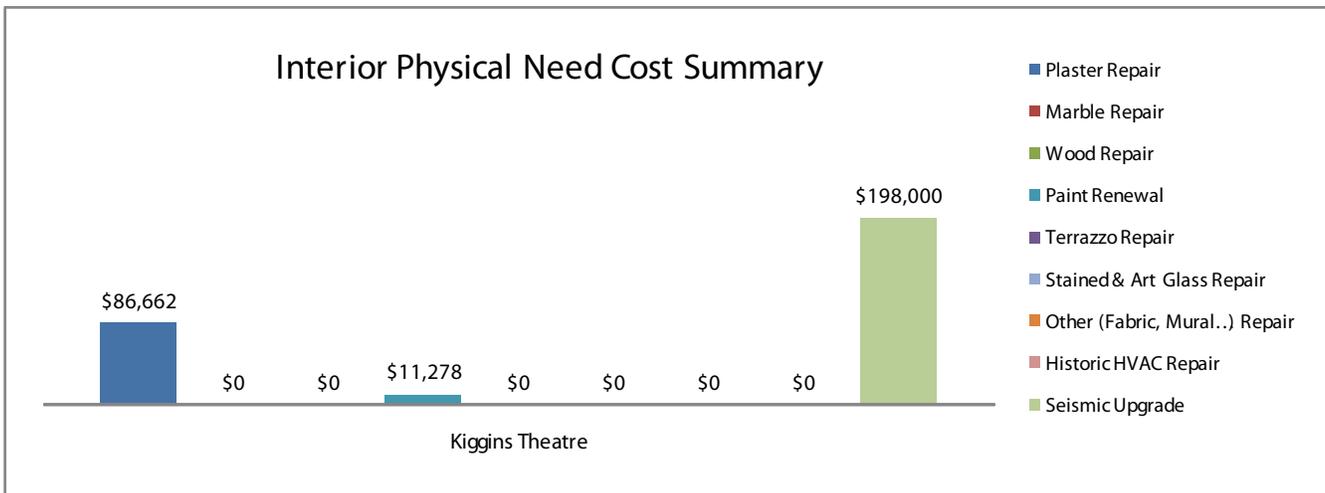
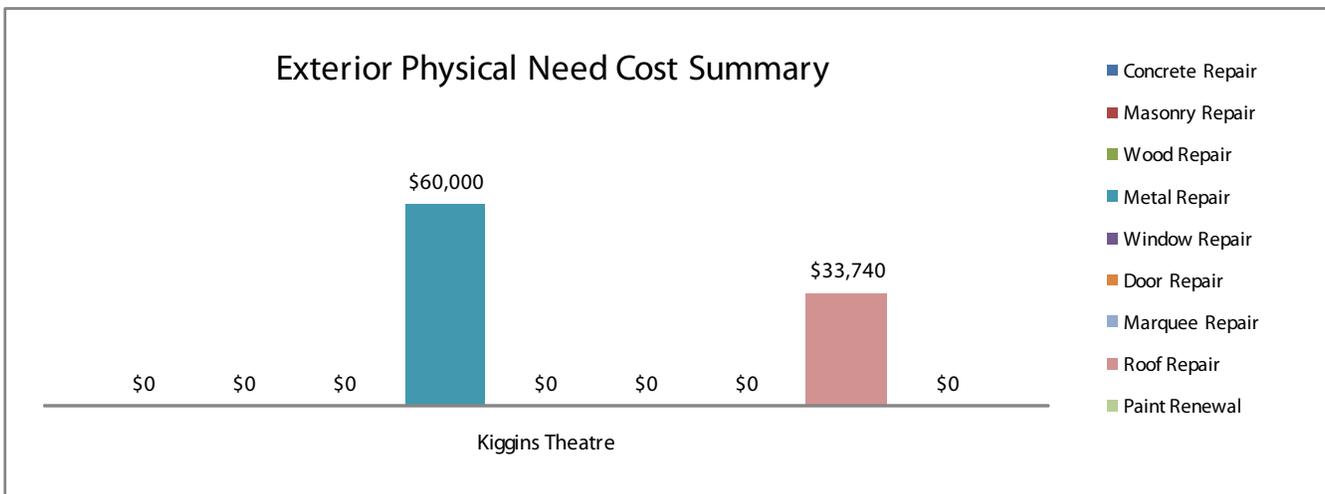


Field site: 39	Historic Names: Unknown
Location: 1011 Main Street, Vancouver, WA 98660, Clark County	Register: N/A
Built: 1936 (Day Hilborn)	Seats: 600
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** The Kiggins is a fine example of Art Deco ornament integrated into a poured concrete structure. It is classified as a single-story building because the second floor is limited to the balcony/projection room area, but the theater portion is taller than the single-story retail spaces surrounding it; all the spaces together form the Kiggins Block. A barrel vault roof is supported by a series of wood trusses. There is a vertical, as well as a triangular, marquee over the recessed entryway, which has a terrazzo floor and detached ticket booth. A continuous bank of doors leads into the lobby, where the 1950s concession stand sits front and center. The floor plan denotes this as a medium-sized theater, with balcony access gained by an open staircase and the auditorium oriented perpendicular to the entry. Built as a cinema, the stage is small but functional; the proscenium arch is now hidden behind the movie screen.

# KIGGINS THEATRE

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and good condition. The pressing issues are the marquee, interior plaster, bathrooms, seating, and the front facade. The marquee needs extensive repair. Interior plaster walls and ceiling show a fair amount of water damage throughout. Upstairs restrooms need a change of wall covering (fake fur currently) in the vestibules and repair of the broken wall plaster. Restroom capacity is insufficient for large audiences. Auditorium seats show a range of conditions, from fair to completely broken. On the facade, four-by-four inch tiles have been added up to the marquee level. A drinking fountain in the front part of the lobby is missing but a floor shadow indicates its original location. Electrical systems were updated in February 2008. Floor plan, light fixtures, interior signage, doors and windows are intact with high integrity. The building seems structurally sound with no major issues. The roof is only ten years old.



# LEE THEATRE



Field site: 17	Historic Names: Unknown
Location: 347 Basin Street NW, Ephrata, WA 98823, Grant County	Register: N/A
Built: 1950	Seats: 500
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Triple

**Physical Highlights:** This stand-alone theater has a poured concrete foundation and structural walls of both poured (plywood formed) and block concrete. Echoing the Modern style, exterior walls are either exposed concrete or stucco clad. There is also sheet metal veneer on the front (north) facade in large, alternating color sections. The hard canopy, which protects the entryway, also extends out to the tower marquee, thus connecting what would otherwise be a free-standing element. The theater has three auditoriums and shows first-run films. Within the theater building, there is a pizza eatery. There are vinyl windows on the north side and anodized aluminum storefront windows along the front. The undivided entrance consists of three doors, which are flush with the facade.

## LEE THEATRE

**Condition Issues:** Not surveyed on the interior, and no exterior condition issues noted. Integrity has not been evaluated because the interior was not accessed.



# LIBERTY THEATER (ELLENSBURG)



Field site: 19	Historic Names: Unknown
Location: 111 E. Fifth St., Ellensburg, WA 98926, Kittitas County	Register: Local
Built: 1937	Seats: Unknown
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Triple

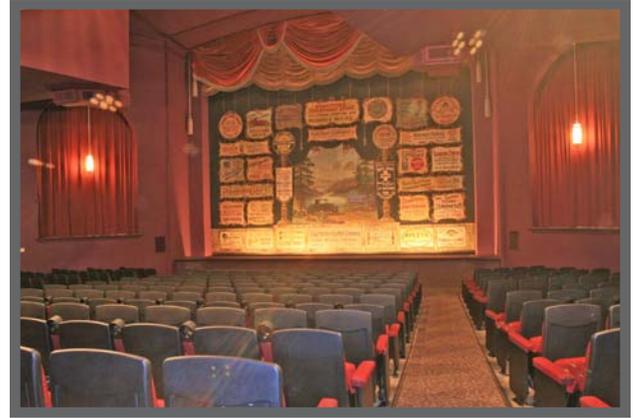
**Physical Highlights:** This Streamlined Moderne style theater has three auditoriums and has always operated as a cinema. Constructed of poured concrete (walls and foundation), it has a rectangular footprint. The roof form is unknown. It is a stand-alone building near Ellensburg’s historic downtown district but of considerably more modern architectural influence. The exterior walls are painted concrete with horizontal grooves, no windows, and large, unadorned spans. A vertical marquee rises from the hard canopy over the entryway. The facade is asymmetrical, with the entrance doors to one side. Above the entrance and to the west of the vertical marquee is a large, recessed, corrugated section of the facade.

## LIBERTY THEATER (ELLENSBURG)

**Condition Issues:** Not surveyed on the interior. Exterior condition issues include some cracking in the concrete walls and spalling on the edge of the upper concrete overhang. Two vertical cracks in the exterior walls appear to transfer from one side of the theater to the other. Integrity has not been evaluated because the interior was not accessed.



# LIBERTY THEATRE (WENATCHEE)



Field site: 4	Historic Names: Fox Theatre
Location: 1 South Mission Street, Wenatchee, WA 98801, Chelan Co.	Register: N/A
Built: 1920 (E. W. Houghton)	Seats: 650
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Performing Arts, Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Triple

**Physical Highlights:** The Liberty Theatre occupies a corner lot in downtown Wenatchee. Brick walls are supported by a poured concrete foundation. The single, full story is topped by a flat roof and parapet. In 1978, the exterior was modified when the lobby entry was relocated from the northwest corner to the west (front) facade. At the same time, the auditorium was divided into a triplex by enclosing and dividing the balcony. The main auditorium floor was redone and new seats added. There is little historic material left, but portions of the lobby are intact, as well as the proscenium arch, stage, and original advertising curtain in the main auditorium. The marquee is a modern addition and covers three filled in arches above the new entry. Some of the decorative brick extends to the side of the building. There is a fly loft but no pit. There are several windows with aluminum frames in the lower west facade. Also, the balcony level of the front facade has the remains of four bull's-eye windows set in recessed brick panels. This movie theater was designed for both vaudeville and film. A large theater advertisement is painted on the back of the fly loft.

## LIBERTY THEATRE (WENATCHEE)

**Condition Issues:** Overall, moderate integrity and excellent condition. There are no pressing physical concerns. Major alterations occurred in 1978, when the auditorium was triplexed and the entry relocated. On the balcony level of the front facade, one bull's-eye window is broken and two are filled in with what appears to be plywood. There is no fire suppression (sprinkler) system. The first floor is ADA accessible, including the restrooms. The roof was redone in 1986. Exterior brick was cleaned and repointed in 2005.



# LINCOLN THEATRE

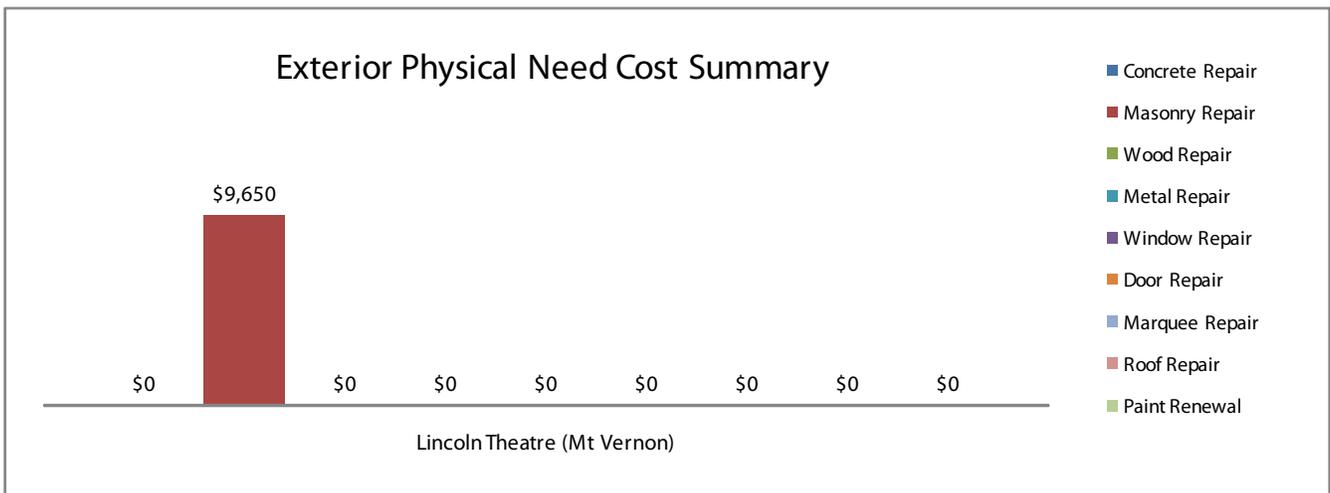


Field site: 60	Historic Names: Lincoln Theatre
Location: 712 S. 1st Street, Mt. Vernon, WA 98273, Skagit County	Register: State, National
Built: 1926 (William Aitken)	Seats: 500
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema
Ownership: Public	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** The Lincoln Theatre closed in 1984 only to be renovated, restored, and reopened in 1987. There is a poured concrete foundation and brick structural walls. The walls are braced by interior pilasters, which appear to be constructed of brick or concrete, depending on location. Large wooden trusses support a nearly flat roof. The front facade is an ornate combination of brick and terra cotta. A glass and metal canopy extends the length of the front. A detached, reconstructed ticket booth is centered on the two sets of double doors within the recessed entryway. The auditorium flooring is fir. Original stenciling adorns the plaster side walls in the auditorium. Lighting fixtures and the coved ceiling appear to be original. Seats were replaced about five years ago but the end panels for each row were kept from the previous seating. The theater retains its original organ and a small fly loft. The proscenium stage can be extended over the orchestra pit. Without a balcony, the projection room is accessed by a fixed ladder at the back of the auditorium. This combination house still shows both live and film entertainment.

# LINCOLN THEATRE

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and excellent condition. The most pressing physical concern is the exterior brick that needs repointing and cleaning. Abutting the Lincoln Theatre is a one-story structure built in the same manner, with the same materials, and possibly at the same time as the theater. This neighboring structure is in poor condition, and its deterioration could threaten the Lincoln. The Lincoln has not been seismically upgraded and does not have a fire suppression system (fire sprinklers), just a fire hose.



# LYNWOOD THEATER

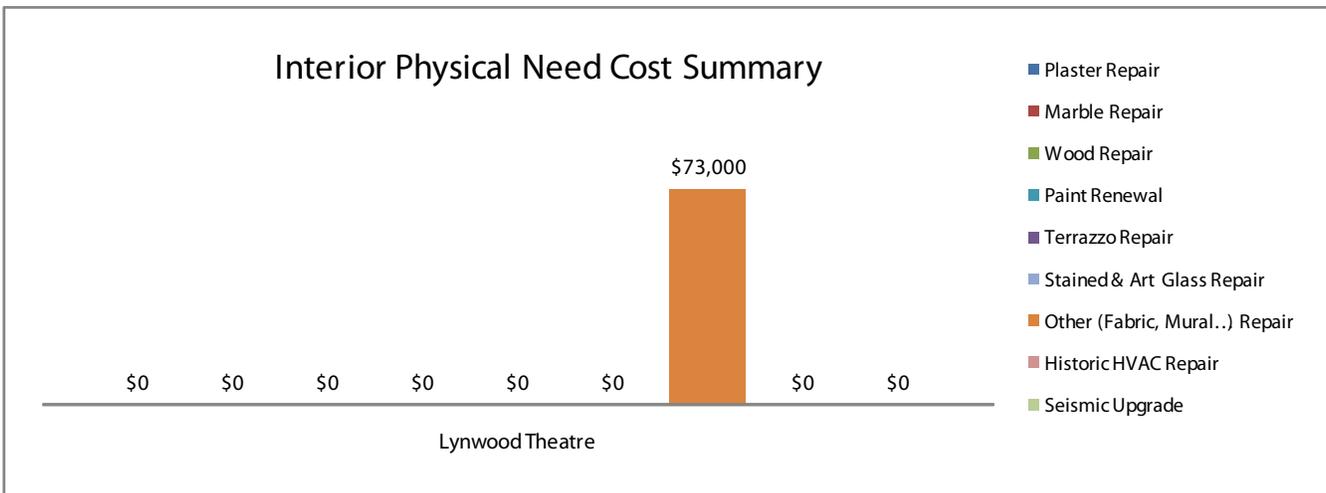
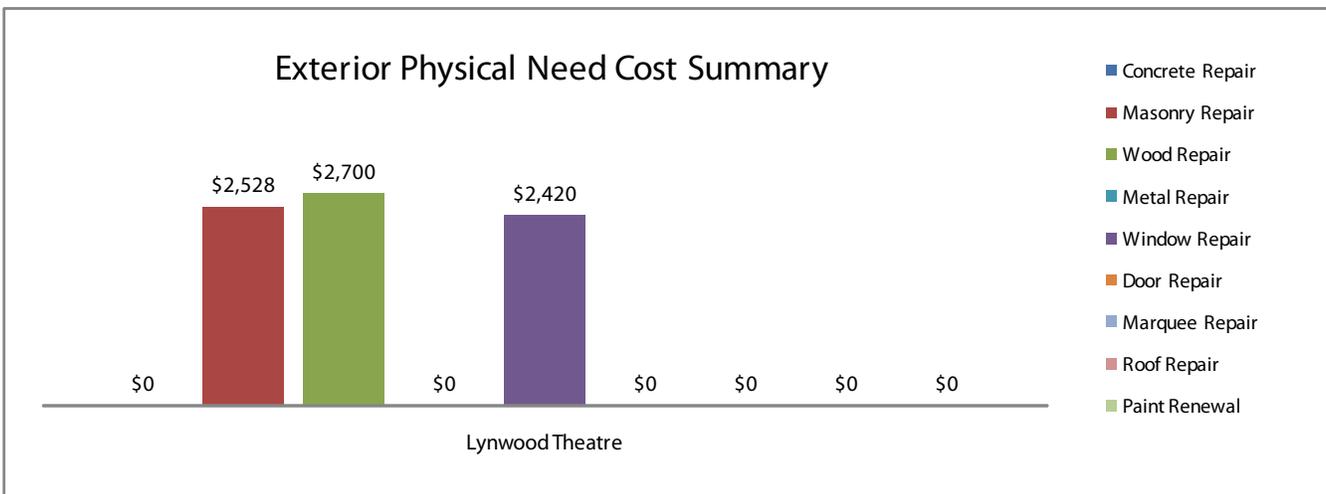


Field site: 49	Historic Names: Unknown
Location: 4569 Lynwood Center Road, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110	Register: N/A
Built: 1936	Seats: 260
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

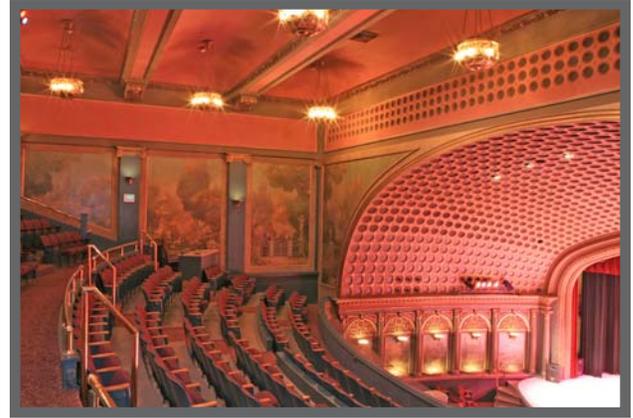
**Physical Highlights:** Part of the Lynwood Center commercial complex, the Lynwood Theatre is a single-story brick structure with a poured concrete foundation. Following the Tudor style, the theater facade has a dominant front gable, wood half-timbering, and both raked brick and stucco cladding. A metal and neon triangular marquee marks the entrance. Entry is gained through an open archway, past a non-operating ticket window, and up a long ramped hallway into the lobby. Concessions and the office are to the left along with the auditorium entrance. The auditorium is oriented at 90 degrees to the hall and lobby. On the interior, the painted zigzag motif of the lobby is just part of the Art Deco whole. The auditorium has a movie screen, no balcony for the projection area, no fly loft, and a faux elliptical stage, which is just large enough for a person to stand on and address the audience. The roof over the auditorium is flat with a parapet. Inside, the auditorium walls are covered with their original fabric.

# LYNWOOD THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and excellent condition. The most pressing physical concerns are the windows, facade and interior finishes. Specifically, these are all preservation level efforts. The projection room level wood windows need attention, the brick facade needs cleaning, the exterior stucco and wood trim need painting, and the interior wall fabric needs cleaning and repair from past water damage. The front doors are slightly weathered and need to be refinished. The theater and the abutting buildings have not been seismically upgraded and a fire suppression system has not been installed in the theater. The marquee is new, but it is a good replica of the original.



# METROPOLITAN PERFORMING ARTS CENTER (MET)



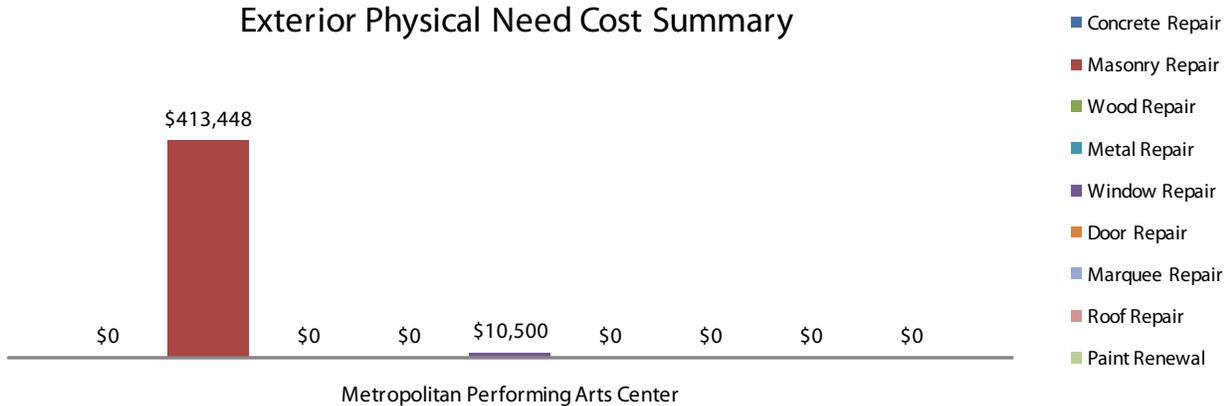
Field site: 26	Historic Names: Clemmer Theater, Audion State, Met
Location: 901 W. Sprague Ave., Spokane, WA 99204, Spokane County	Register: Local, State, National
Built: 1915 (E. W. Houghton)	Seats: 700-800
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: N/A	Screen(s) Current: N/A

**Physical Highlights:** This theater is constructed of brick with a concrete foundation and clad with a combination of glazed brick and terra cotta. The roof structure consists of riveted steel trusses overlaid with a flat concrete roof deck. Over the auditorium, concrete barrel vaults spring from the bottom cord of one truss to the other. This Neoclassical style performance hall underwent a renovation in 1988, including an expansion of the lobby, but most of the building has original finishes. Projecting beyond the stage, a coffered concave shell acts like a megaphone. Except for a screen, each coffer is open to allow sounds from the stage to travel, bounce off an angled plaster ceiling above, and thus project into the auditorium. The coffered ceiling rests on a plaster cornice supported by five arches set on Corinthian columns. Each arch is inset with elaborate plaster scroll work and a mural below. This is just a portion of the ornate decoration in the auditorium and lobby. There is a proscenium stage, which has a removable apron over the orchestra pit. The seats are original.

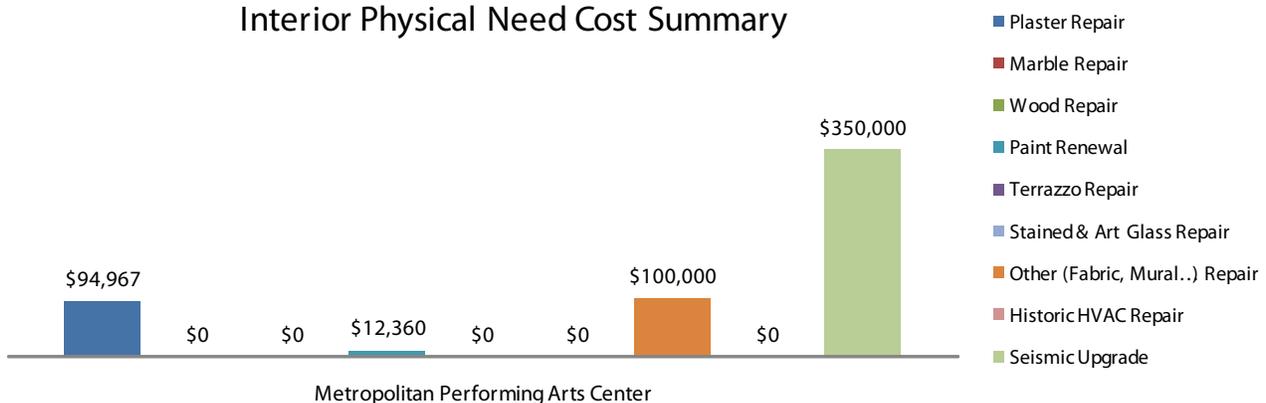
# METROPOLITAN PERFORMING ARTS CENTER (MET)

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and good condition. The most pressing physical concerns include the roof, facades, and interior plaster. The roof needs replacing; it is leaking and causing damage to the interior surfaces. Both the brick and terra cotta need some repair. Rust stains indicate that the terra cotta metal hangers are corroding and need repair. All the wood windows need to be removed, repaired, glazed, painted, weather stripped, and reinstalled. Portions of wall plaster are damaged and in need of repair and painting. Wall murals in the auditorium are water-damaged and require restoration. The building has a fire sprinkler system for the stage and dressing rooms, but not the auditorium or lobby. Furthermore, it has not been seismically upgraded. The storm water overflow sometimes allows water to infiltrate the building. The building is clad with a combination of glazed brick and terra cotta. Both the brick and terra cotta are in good condition but need some repair and repointing. The lobby was remodeled to give it more space, but the majority of the building has historic finishes. The first floor is ADA accessible, including the restrooms, but the balcony is not.

### Exterior Physical Need Cost Summary



### Interior Physical Need Cost Summary



# MOORE THEATRE

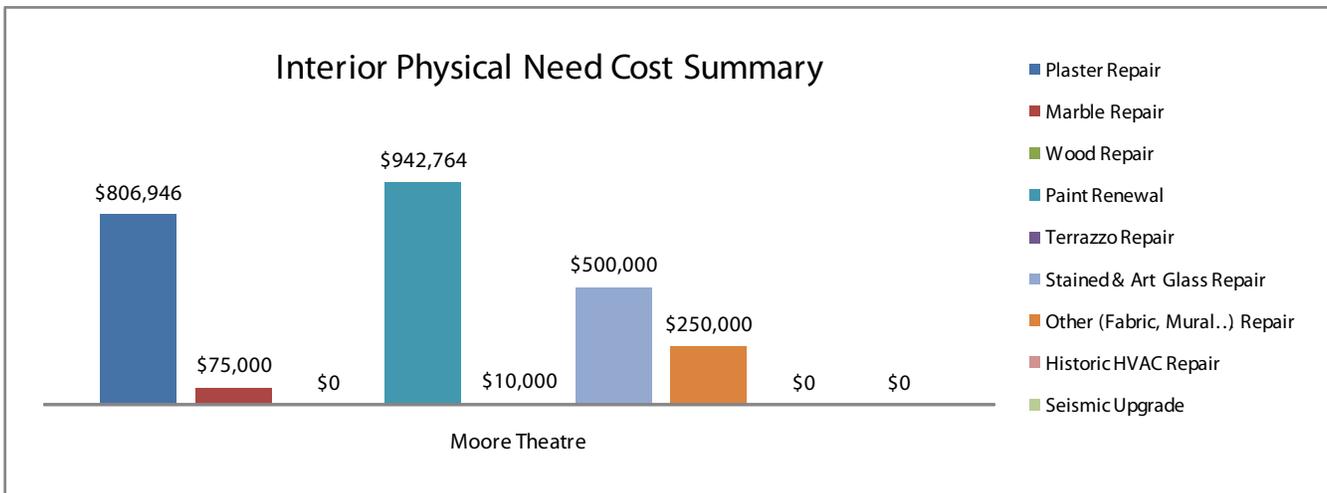
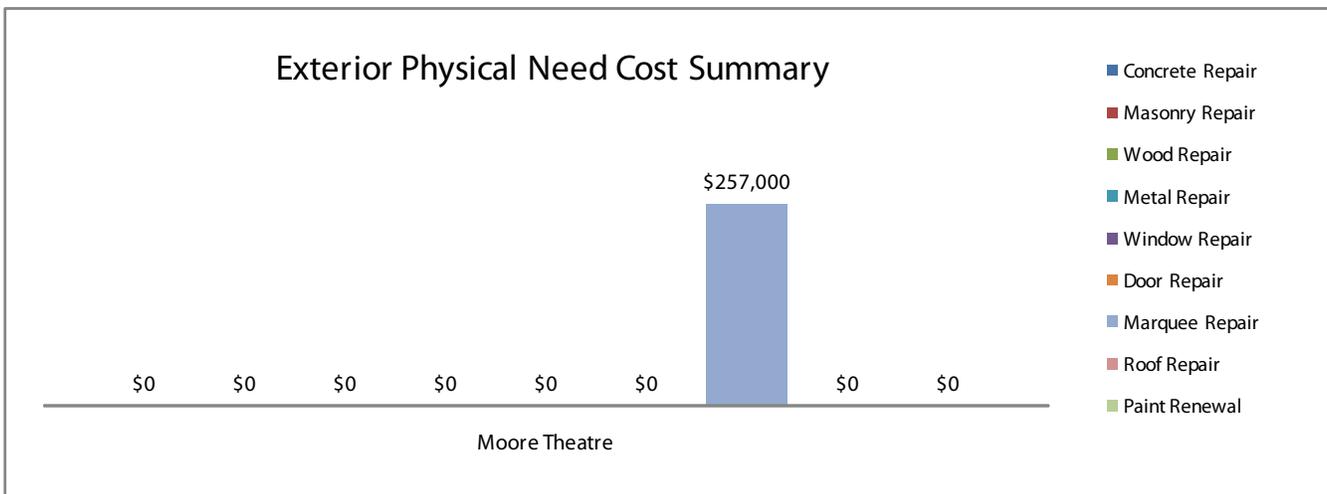


Field site: 79	Historic Names: Old Orpheum, President, Moore Egyptian
Location: 1932 Second Avenue, Seattle, WA 98121, King County	Register: Local, State, National
Built: 1907 (E.W. Houghton)	Seats: 1825
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Performance Arts
Ownership: Private	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: N/A	Screen(s) Current: N/A

**Physical Highlights:** Housed within the seven-story Moore Hotel building, the Moore Theatre is the oldest grand performing arts theater in Seattle. It is a brick structure rising from a poured concrete foundation. Terra cotta and white-glazed brick cover the front (southwest) and main (northwest) sides. A side door leads to the stairwell for the second balcony while the recessed main entry opens into a lobby and then grand hall. The terrazzo floor balances the onyx and marble wainscoting. Originally built as a vaudeville hall, there are two balconies and a full stage. The auditorium is missing the various side boxes it once had. Statues, stained glass, and plaster latticework ornament the hall and auditorium in the Beaux Arts style. Lights punctuate the plaster auditorium ceiling and proscenium arch. From backstage, the fly loft rises 78’ and operates on a hemp rope system. The orchestra pit is intact, and dressing/office space is located below and behind stage. The first balcony can be reached by original ramps from the lobby.

# MOORE THEATRE

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and fair condition. The most pressing physical concerns are damaged plaster, marble, and stained glass. All the interior surfaces need cleaning, repair, and restoration. The interior needs to be painted. The theater has a wet sprinkler system in the halls but not in the auditorium. Because it is located within a larger building, the theater shares many of its systems and services, which are outdated. Also, the theater does not control the condition of the exterior facade, which needs restoration. The building has not been seismically upgraded. The lobby, main house floor and first balcony are ADA accessible.



# MT. BAKER THEATRE

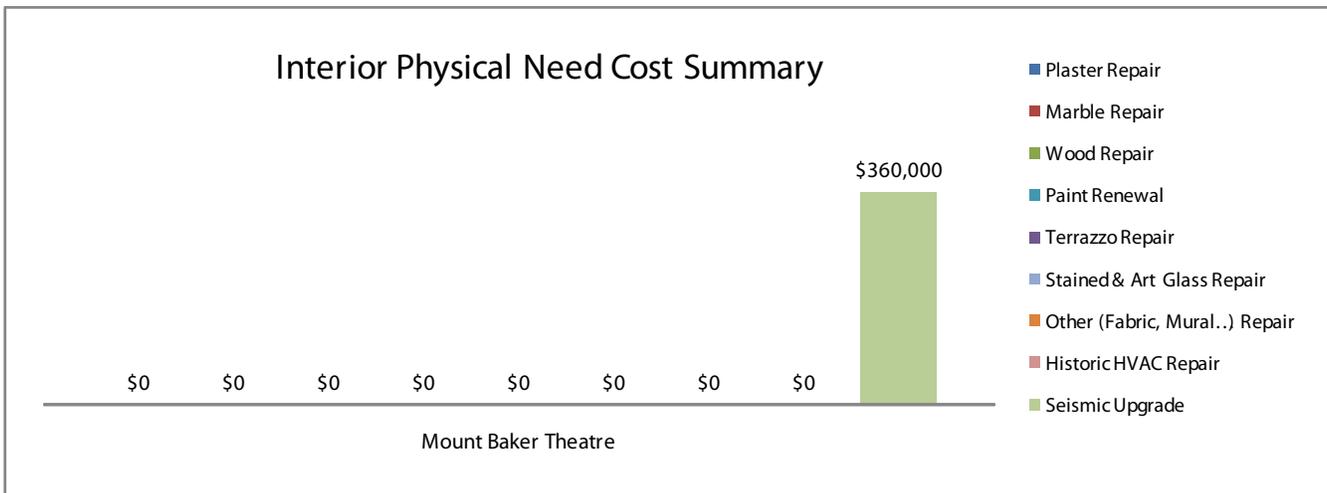
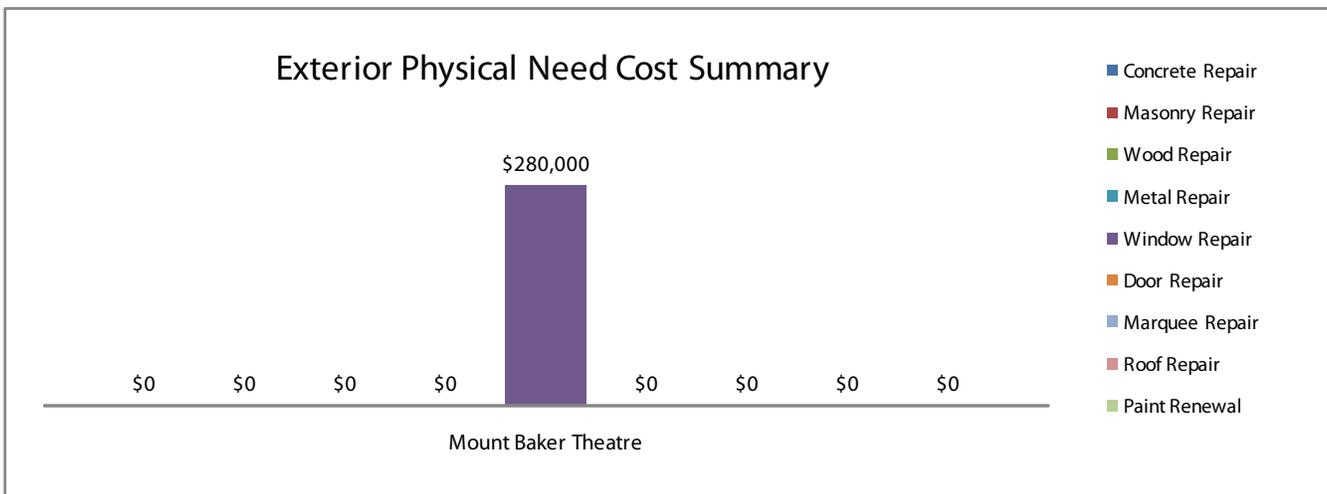


Field site: 58	Historic Names: Fox Theatre
Location: 104 N. Commercial St., Bellingham, WA 98225, Whatcom Co.	Register: Local, State, National
Built: 1927 (R. C. Reamer)	Seats: 1509
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema
Ownership: Public	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

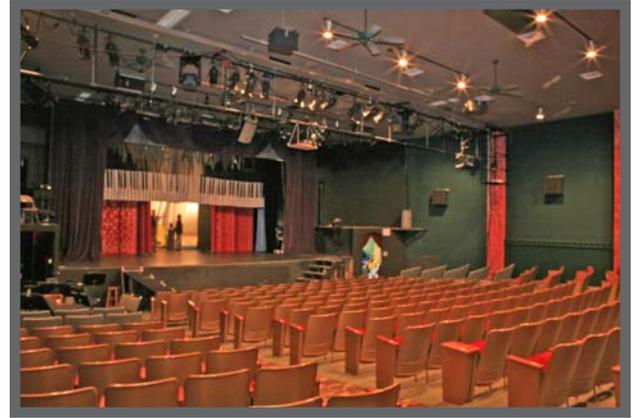
**Physical Highlights:** The Mount Baker Theatre is now comprised of one large building surrounded by smaller structures that were originally shops and offices; all are constructed with poured-in-place concrete with wood-framed roofs. The exterior walls are clad with stucco and cut stone. The building has several roof levels. The four main levels are the auditorium, fly loft, a one-and-a-half-story portion flanking two sides of the auditorium, and a lower one-story portion. In addition, the building sports a minaret. The metal canopy marquee has been faux painted to match the marble base in the entryway. The detached ticket booth is a wood and marble structure centered in the deeply recessed, open-air entryway. Centered in the auditorium ceiling is an elaborately decorated oculus punctuated with a large chandelier. The elaborate Moorish design by R.C. Reamer has been maintained with all its gilded tracery, brackets, and stenciled arches. The lighting fixtures are uniquely ornate; they have been hung below gilded ceiling medallions. A proscenium arch, projection room, full balcony, pit, fly loft, and apron stage proclaim the original and current combination of theater functions.

# MT. BAKER THEATRE

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and excellent condition. The most pressing physical concerns are the weathered wood windows and the storefronts adjoining the theater. The windows need preservation, while the storefronts need restoration. The electrical and mechanical systems throughout the building are a combination of old and new. There is no fire suppression system in the portion of the building that includes the lobby, auditorium, and fly loft, but there is in the surrounding storefronts. The building has not been seismically upgraded. There is ADA access to the first floor and restrooms but not the balcony.



# NARROWS THEATER



Field site: 10	Historic Names: Highlands Community Ctr., Tacoma Musical Playhouse
Location: 7116 Sixth Ave., Tacoma, WA 98406, Pierce County	Register: N/A
Built: 1948	Seats: 375
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Non-Profit	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** The former Narrows Theater on 6th Avenue is now home to the Tacoma Musical Playhouse, serving as one of the former cinemas that have been converted into live performance venues. The historic theater space has been enlarged into neighboring buildings in order to increase the lobby, restroom, and storage capacities. Since it was originally a movie house, there is no pit and no proscenium arch. The stage has been expanded. The heavily renovated lobby is now more comfortable for large audiences to congregate. A neon and incandescent lit marquee of unknown age is intact and operational. The building is constructed with a concrete perimeter foundation and concrete masonry block (CMU) walls. The cladding is a combination of brick, metal siding, and stucco. The brick cladding (painted) is on the front facade, the metal is on the front and side, and the stucco finish is on the back wall. This single-story structure is capped by a barrel vault roof and bowstring trusses. An asphalt composition sheet material covers the roof.

## NARROWS THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, low integrity and excellent condition. There are no pressing physical concerns. The marquee is intact and functioning, but the age is unknown. This theater was converted from a single-screen cinema into a performing arts theater. As such, many modifications have been made and there is little historic material remaining. The building is well-maintained. Heating and air conditioning systems were updated in 2005. All the building material is in good condition. The roofing is old, but it is not leaking. This may be because of the barrel shape of the roof.



# NEPTUNE THEATRE



Field site: 80	Historic Names: Unknown
Location: 1303 NE 45th St., Seattle, WA 98105, King County	Register: N/A
Built: 1921 (Ryan, Henderson)	Seats: 968
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** The Neptune is contained within a three-story commercial building with shops filling the remainder of the ground floor. Exterior walls are clad in brick, and the structural system may be brick as well. Interior access was not possible. The overall footprint is rectangular. A triangular marquee projects over the recessed, divided entrance area. This area has a terrazzo floor, tiled walls, four sets of double doors, and a central ticket booth. Windows in the building appear to be non-historic, with sliders below fixed panes. Transoms above the aluminum-framed storefront windows have been enclosed.

## NEPTUNE THEATRE

**Condition Issues:** Not surveyed on the interior, and no exterior condition issues noted. Integrity has not been evaluated because the interior was not accessed.



# NEW RITZ THEATRE



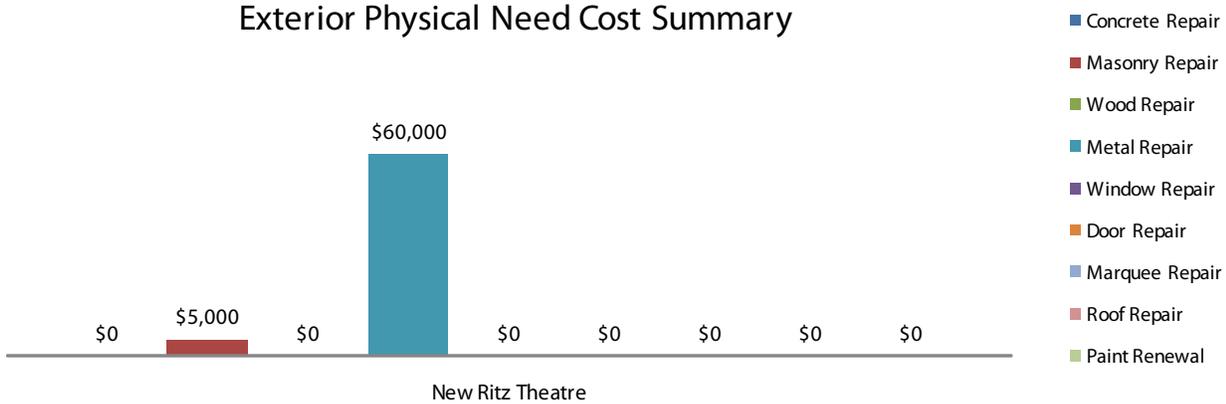
Field site: 15	Historic Names: Ritzville Theater
Location: 107 East Main St., Ritzville, WA 99169, Adams County	Register: Local, National
Built: 1937	Seats: 342
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** The single most defining exterior feature of the New Ritz is the vertical marquee. Compared to the size of the theater, it is proportionally the largest marquee seen during this survey. There is also a canopy along the entire front facade of the theater. Structurally, poured-in-place concrete walls and foundation support a parapeted flat roof. Concrete is used for the auditorium floor, while wood makes up the roof framing, stage floor, and stage structure. The exterior cladding is exposed concrete or stucco. Plaster walls in the auditorium are punctuated by four evenly spaced pilasters, each with a streamlined capitool. Many Art Deco accents are intact, including original exit signs. The walls are covered with fabric. The seats are original, with larger, more comfortable loge seats at the back behind a half-wall. A former apartment and still-functioning projection room make up the balcony level. The window appears original. The stage is just big enough for an occasional high school production. There is no fly loft or pit.

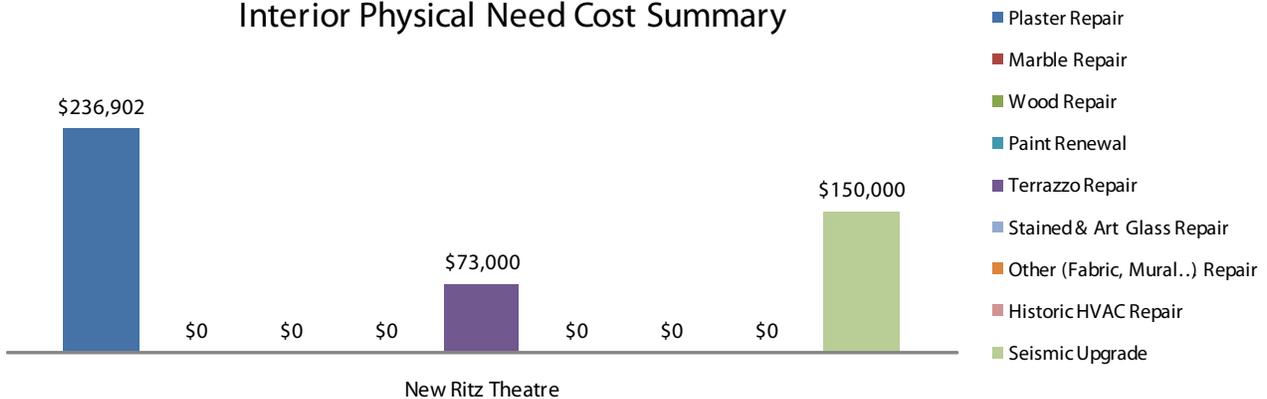
# NEW RITZ THEATRE

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and good condition. The most pressing physical concern is the plaster ceiling, which was damaged by water that penetrated from the roof. This damage was done before new roofing was installed eight years ago. The source of the water infiltration into the basement is unknown. The original wall fabric in the auditorium needs restoration. The marquee is damaged, and the canopy is in disrepair. Plywood has been installed to the underside of the canopy. The tile at the entry is damaged and pieces are missing. The building has not been seismically upgraded, nor has a fire suppression system (fire sprinklers) been installed. Exterior cladding appears to be in good condition. Heating is provided by a natural gas-fired furnace, and there is no air conditioning. There is a squirrel cage fan in the attic used as an air handling system that appears to be original.

### Exterior Physical Need Cost Summary



### Interior Physical Need Cost Summary



# NIFTY THEATRE

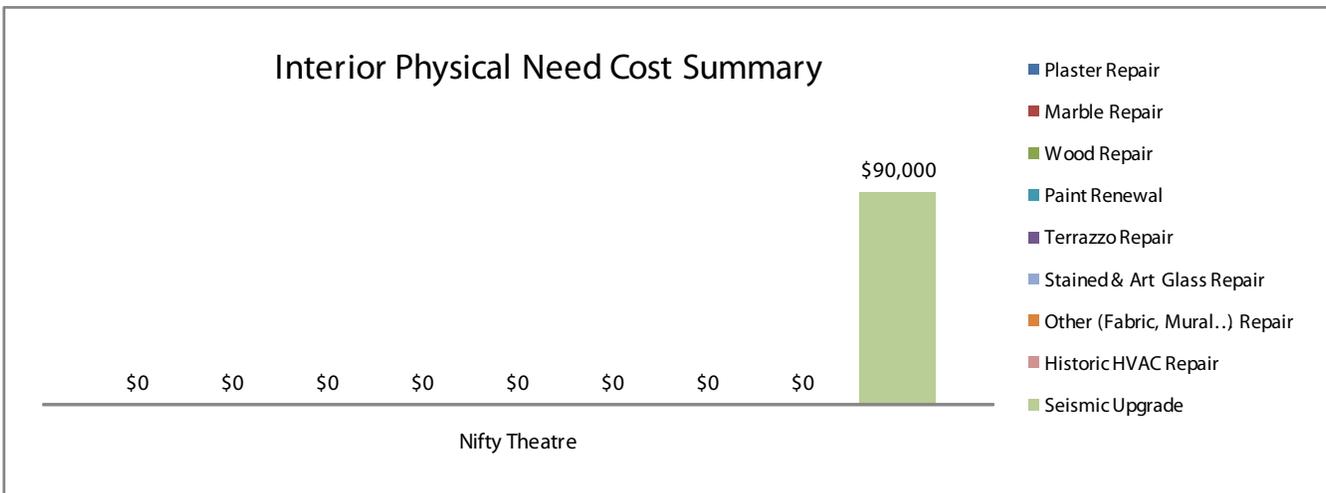
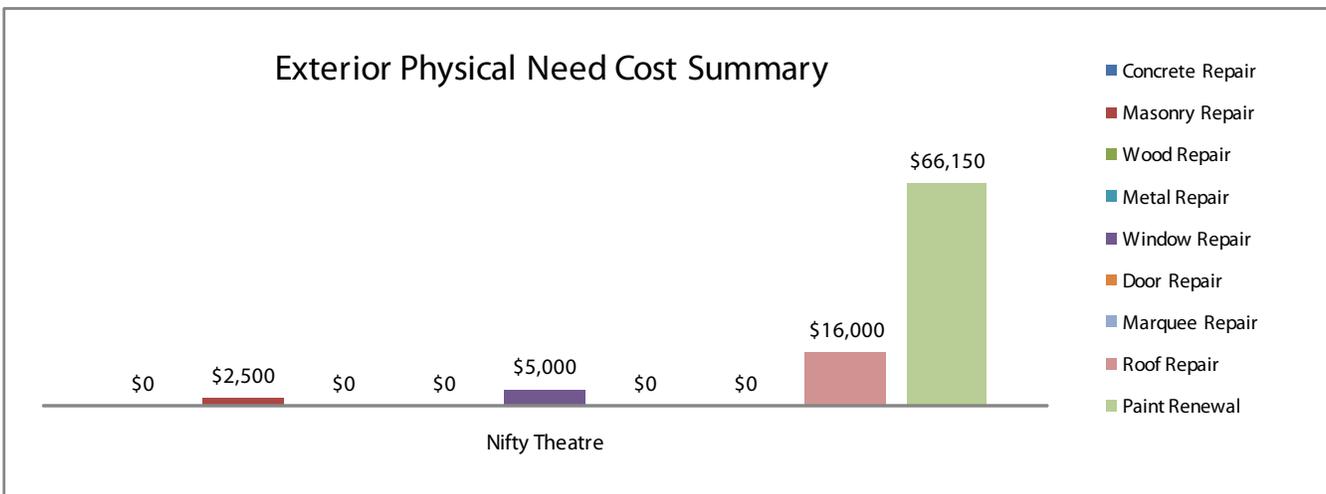


Field site: 8	Historic Names: Nifty
Location: 202 E Locust St., Waterville, WA 98858, Douglas County	Register: State, National
Built: 1919	Seats: 290
Current Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema	Historic Function(s): Performing Arts, Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** With its Spanish Mission style influences, the Nifty is a one-story, balloon frame structure with a gable roof and elongated, rectangular footprint. The foundation is a combination of poured concrete, brick, and concrete block. Cladding is wooden drop-siding, and the roof is corrugated metal. While there is a hard canopy and the painted theater name over the central north entrance, the movable letter marquee is on the west side. Inside the front doors, a short flight of steps leads up past a ticket window on the left to the wooden bank of doors, which separates the lobby from the entrance. Heavy curtains divide the lobby on either side from the auditorium. Two aisles lead straight towards the stage and the covered orchestra pit at the far end of the auditorium. There is no balcony except for the projection area. Along the ceiling cove are painted exotic landscapes. Dressing room space is minimal, but there is an apartment and extra storage space in the basement. The proscenium arch is simple and unadorned.

# NIFTY THEATRE

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and good condition. The most pressing physical needs are the roof, the exterior facades, and the windows. Before anything else, a new roof is needed. The drop-siding needs painting. The front facade stucco is cracked and broken in places, requiring repair in the near future. The wood windows need to be restored. A small portion of the interior plaster is damaged and requires repair. The building is balloon framed and, according to the owner, was burned during construction. Portions of the stage framing and exterior walls are charred. Despite the charred framing, the structure appears to be in good condition. There is no fire blocking in the walls. The restroom appears to be original and not ADA accessible. To install an ADA accessible restroom would alter the interior, specifically to the detriment of the historic fabric. The front entry is not ADA accessible. Installing an ADA ramp would greatly alter the historic character of the front facade. The building has had no seismic upgrade nor does it have a fire suppression system (fire sprinklers).



# NORTH BEND THEATER



Field site: 70	Historic Names: North Bend Theater
Location: 125 Bendigo Blvd. N., North Bend, WA 98045, King County	Register: Local
Built: 1942	Seats: 301
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

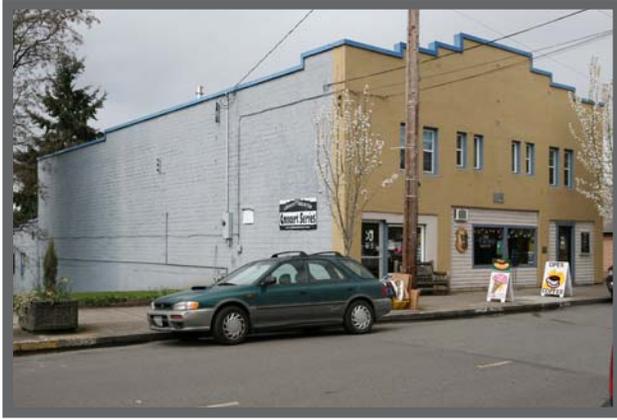
**Physical Highlights:** Designed in the Streamlined Moderne style, this single-story theater is a poured-in-place concrete shell with a wood-framed roof and concrete floor. Hidden behind the parapets is a gable roof. The rectangular footprint is oriented to the street, with no adjacent buildings. On the front and wrapping around to the sides, stucco clads the exterior, which has been left as painted concrete everywhere else. The metal canopy and vertical marquee above the altered entry are new, though good copies of the originals. Evenly spaced across the facade are fixed windows on the balcony level. The theater was renovated in 1999, but much of the historic material remains, including the seats. The popcorn machine in the lobby is also original and functioning. Balcony seating is divided by the projection room, and one side of the balcony is a crying room. Built as a movie house, there is no fly loft or pit. A shelf below the screen gives the impression of a stage.

## NORTH BEND THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and excellent condition. The most pressing physical concern is water infiltration into the basement. The North Bend Theater was renovated in 1999, with minor changes to the primary theater spaces (lobby, projection room and auditorium). Despite the renovation, the building has not been seismically upgraded and a fire suppression system (fire sprinklers) has not been installed. The restrooms do not meet ADA code requirements, and to do so would have a negative impact on the interior historic fabric.



# OLD LIBERTY THEATER



Field site: 38	Historic Names: Liberty
Location: 113 Main Street, Ridgefield, WA 98642, Clark County	Register: N/A
Built: 1946	Seats: 354
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Performance Arts
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** A two-story building with a rectangular footprint, the Old Liberty appears to have a wall structure of concrete block covered in stucco. The foundation is poured concrete. Located along a historic commercial street in Ridgefield, the theater appears to be highly altered on the exterior. There are eight vinyl windows visible from the exterior. Shingles cover large portions of the front wall. The interior was not accessed. From the exterior, the roof type could not be determined because there is a parapet. The building is in the Commercial style, with the theater entrance on the right side of the front facade. To the left, there is a pub. All entrances are filled in and flush with the facade. There is no marquee, but hooks indicate where a vertical marquee may have hung.

## OLD LIBERTY THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Not surveyed on the interior, and no exterior condition issues noted. Integrity has not been evaluated because the interior was not accessed.



# OLYMPIC THEATRE



Field site: 61	Historic Names: Unknown
Location: 107 N. Olympic Ave., Arlington, WA 98223, Snohomish Co.	Register: N/A
Built: 1915	Seats: 300
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** This poured concrete structure has brick and stucco cladding. The footprint is rectangular. The single-story, single-screen cinema rises slightly above the adjoining commercial spaces to either side. The front (north) facade is similar to the Renton Civic Theatre and the Tekoa Empire Theater. At street level, there is a door to the left of the recessed, divided theater entrance. At the balcony level, a porthole window sits to the left of a rectangular block of windows. A non-historic, movable letter marquee projects from this area. There is also a plain canopy marquee along the entire front facade. With no exterior ornament and a location in Arlington’s downtown commercial district, this building can be classified under the Commercial style. Interior access was not obtained.

## OLYMPIC THEATRE

**Condition Issues:** Not surveyed on the interior, and no exterior condition issues noted. Integrity has not been evaluated because the interior was not accessed.



# OMAK CINEMA

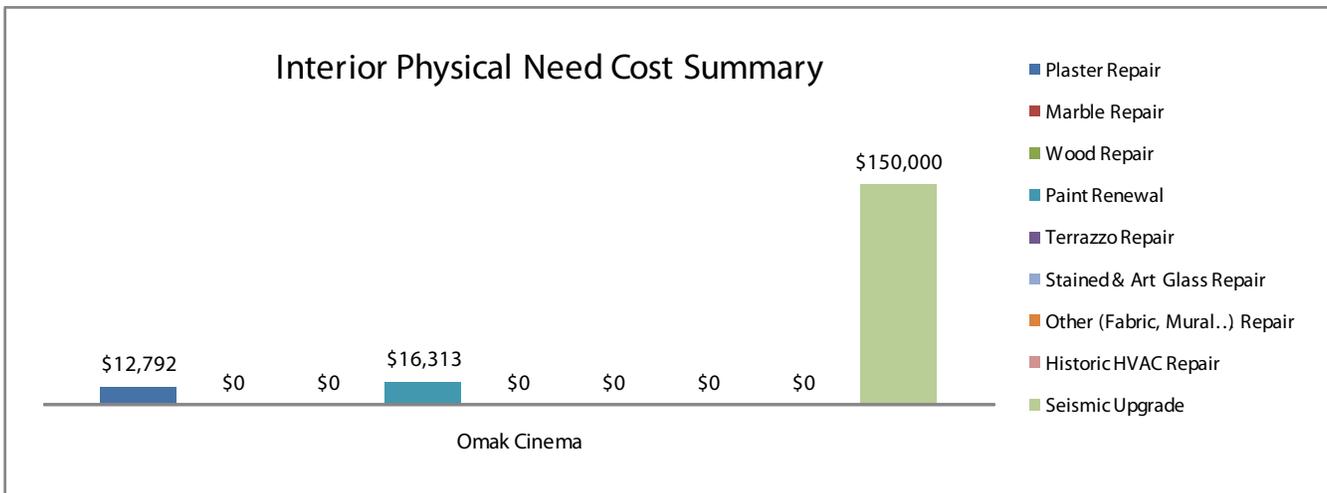


Field site: 21	Historic Names: Omak Cinema
Location: 108 N. Main St., Omak, WA 98841, Okanogan County	Register: N/A
Built: 1937	Seats: 315
Current Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** Located on the main street in Omak, this Art Deco gem is adjoined by other single-story commercial spaces. A concrete block foundation supports the brick and concrete block walls to comprise a rectangular, single-screen cinema. Like many single-screeners, the floor plan includes a recessed, divided entrance covered by a projecting canopy marquee. A stucco finish is applied over the concrete block walls above the canopy, while below is clad in the original red and black ceramic tile, including the central ticket booth. The lobby has a concession stand front and center, with restrooms on either side of the compressed space. To either side of the concession stand is an entrance to the auditorium. The screen has been replaced with a wider version and brought forward. A stage has been added for small drama performances. Painted Art Deco starburst and floral motifs adorn the auditorium ceiling. There is no balcony apart from the projection area and storage space. The basement is unfinished. Total seating capacity is 315, although it used to seat 600 before the stage was added and the concession stand relocated from a front corner of the lobby.

# OMAK CINEMA

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and excellent condition. There are no pressing physical concerns, but the auditorium ceiling stencil work needs cleaning and restoration. The building has not been seismically upgraded. The roof is two years old and in good condition. The original exterior wood windows and tile cladding are both in good condition. The marquee may not be original, but it appears to be in good condition.



# PANTAGES THEATER

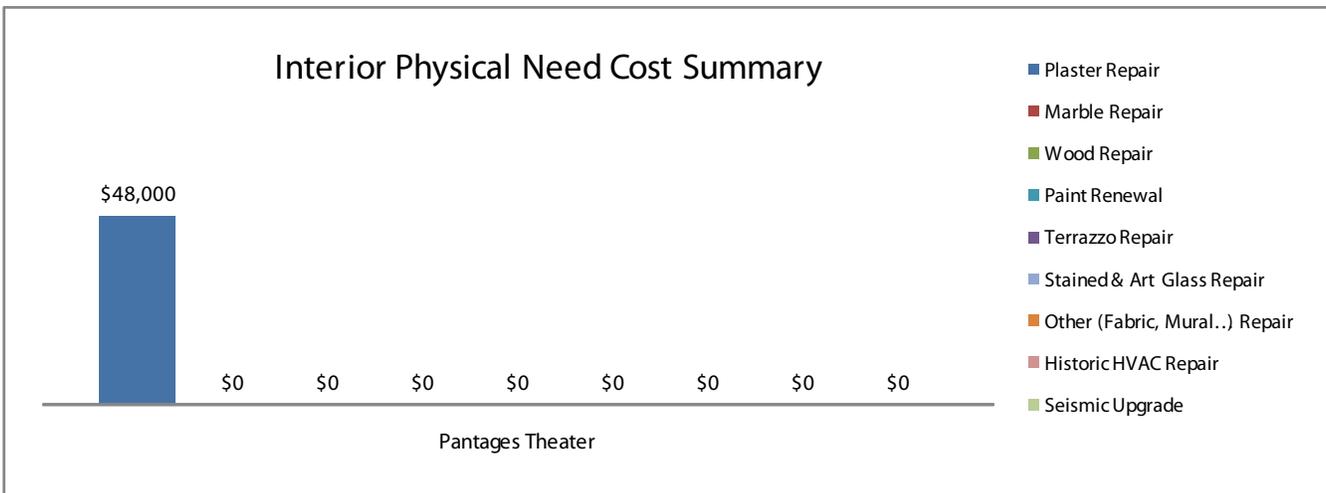
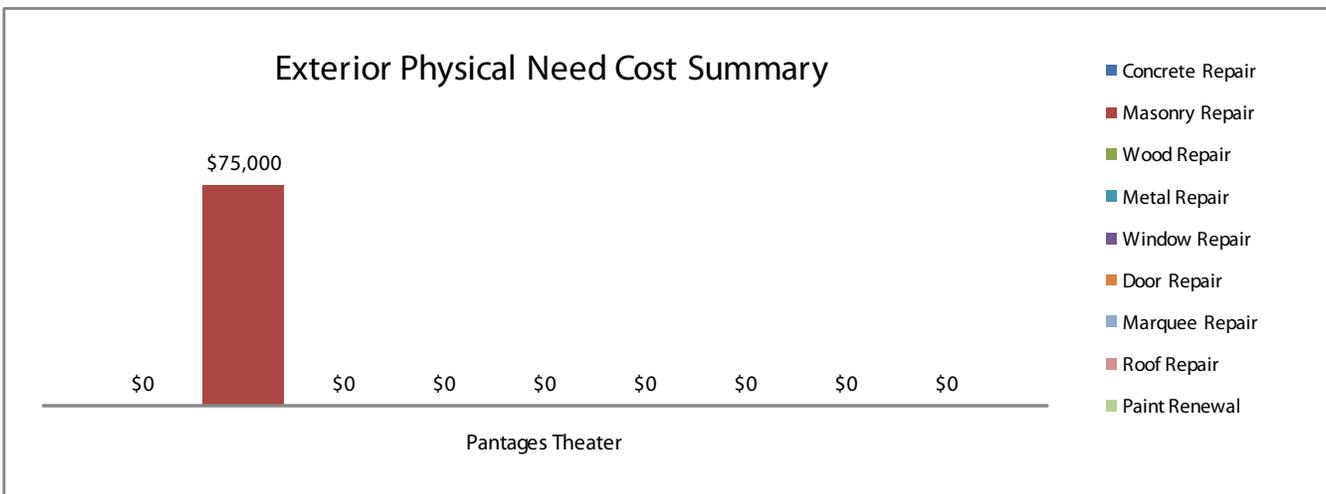


Field site: 12	Historic Names: Pantages, Roxy, RKO Orpheum, Jones Building
Location: 901 Broadway, Tacoma, WA 98402, Pierce County	Register: Local, State, National
Built: 1918 (B. Marcus Priteca)	Seats: 1169
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema
Ownership: Public	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: Unknown	Screen(s) Current: N/A

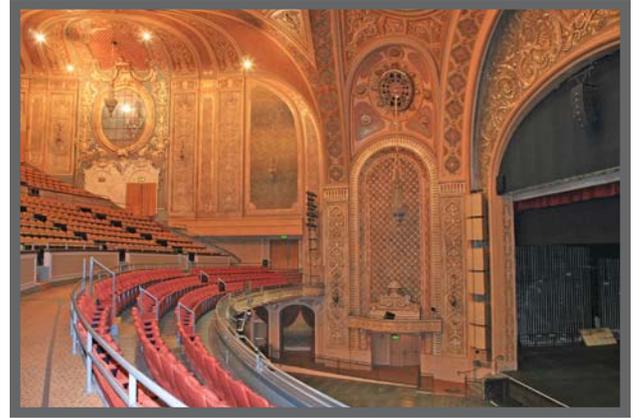
**Physical Highlights:** The Pantages Theater is part of a six-story, rectangular office building. Constructed of poured concrete walls and foundation, it is topped with a parapeted flat roof. Cladding is pale brick and white terra cotta. A non-historic single-story extension from the main (Broadway) facade altered the entry but expanded the lobby space. There is a marquee on top of this addition as well as a vertical marquee. Built as a movie palace in the Beaux Arts – Neoclassical style, both exterior and interior walls are adorned with plaster or terra cotta swags, garlands, shields, and elaborately detailed panels. Like many of B. Marcus Priteca’s theaters, the auditorium has a coved ceiling, a full balcony, and side boxes. There is a fly loft, and a removable apron stage covers the orchestra pit.

# PANTAGES THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and excellent condition. The most pressing physical concern is portions of the terra cotta cladding are damaged and need repair. A small portion of the interior plaster needs repair. The interior walls and ceilings need cleaning as does the stained glass. The theater lobby was renovated and enlarged recently. The exterior cladding (fiber glass panels) was installed, matching the existing terra cotta panels. The interior walls, ceiling, and columns were also clad in the same fiberglass panels. During this renovation, a fire suppression system was installed in the hall and lobby; smoke detectors were also installed in the auditorium. The building was seismically retrofitted in the 1981 renovation. The building's steam heating system is ineffective and needs overhaul.



# PARAMOUNT THEATER

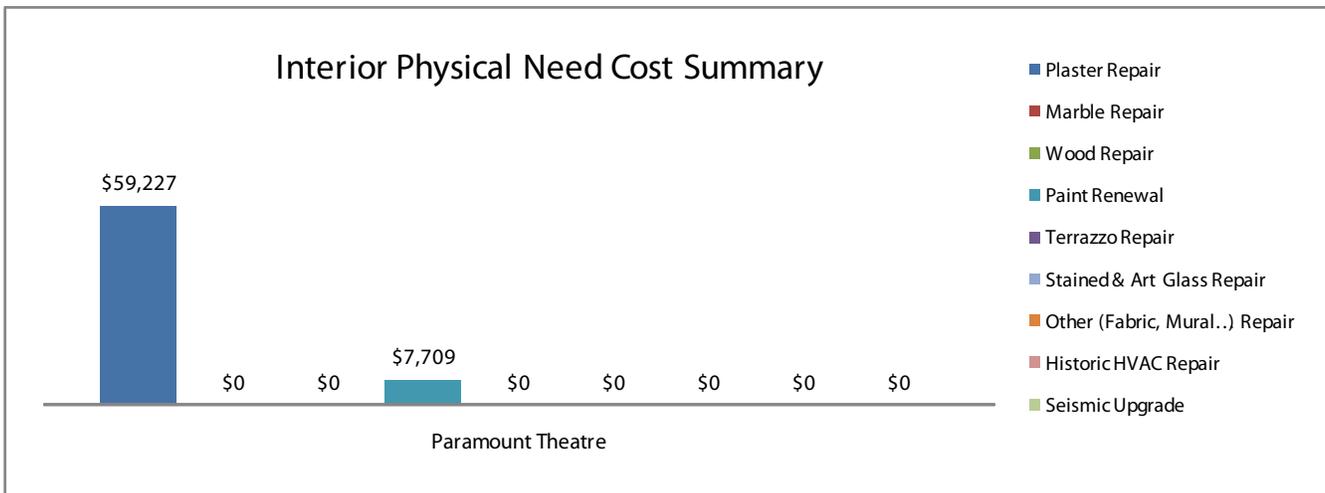


Field site: 81	Historic Names: Seattle Theater
Location: 911 Pine St., Seattle, WA 98101, King County	Register: Local, State, National
Built: 1928 (Priteca, Rapp & Rapp)	Seats: 3049
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema
Ownership: Non-Profit	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: Unknown	Screen(s) Current: N/A

**Physical Highlights:** The Paramount’s rectangular footprint is oriented at an angle, with the front (Pine St.) entrance to the northwest and the main (9th Ave) side occupying the longer edge to the southwest. The theater is part of an eight-story commercial building. There is a vertical marquee as well as a triangular marquee. This brick structure rises from a poured concrete foundation and has a gable roof form covered in asphalt/comp-rolled material. Cladding includes brick and cast stone. At the entrance, a long bank of glass doors on either side of the ticket booth sits flush with the exterior wall, while an inner bank of doors may be the original. A lobby with a split staircase precedes the grand hall, through which the auditorium is accessed. The interior architecture follows the Italian Renaissance style. Originally designed as a silent movie palace, the full stage is still used for stage acts but has been altered to operate on a lift. Fixed seating on the main floor has been removed in favor of movable seating, but the balcony seats remain fixed.

# PARAMOUNT THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and excellent condition. The most pressing physical concern is the damaged interior plaster. The Paramount was restored and remodeled recently. The main floor seating was remodeled about ten years ago. The light fixtures were cleaned during the renovation. The exterior of the building was cleaned and the brick repointed about ten or twelve years ago. The roof was replaced about one year ago. The building has a fire suppression system backstage but not in the auditorium or lobby.



# PRINCESS THEATER

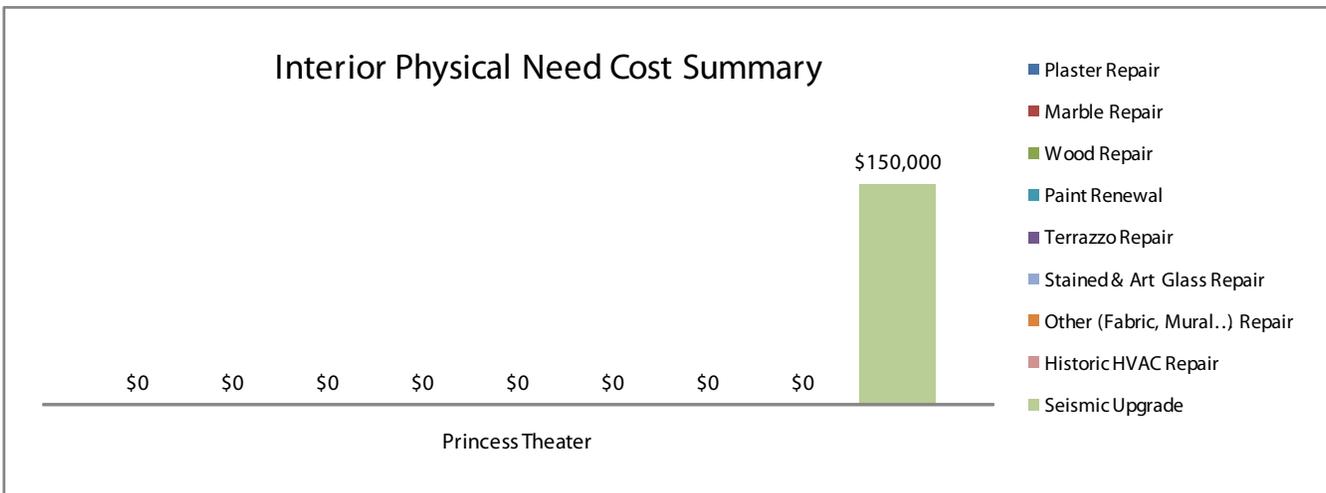
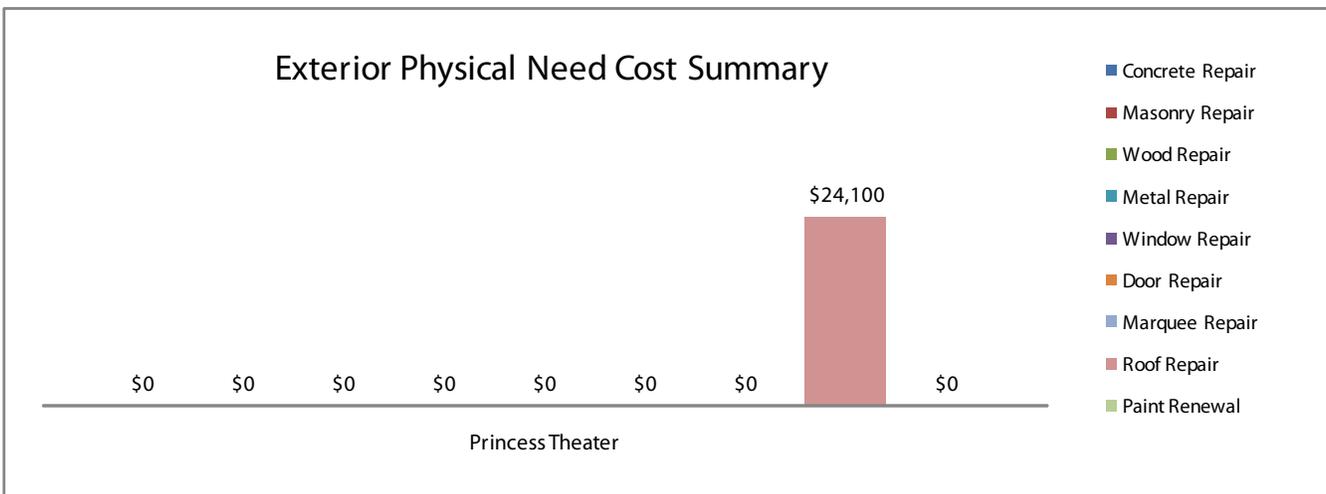


Field site: 1	Historic Names: Princess
Location: 1226 Meade Ave., Prosser, WA 99350, Benton County	Register: N/A
Built: 1919	Seats: 299
Current Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema	Historic Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** The building core dates to 1919. Historic photographs show it had a Spanish Colonial style facade. The present day Art Deco facade dates from a late 1940s remodel, completed after a fire destroyed part of the building. This single-story theater has a rectangular footprint and an asphalt/composhingled gable roof. The exterior cladding is brick, poured concrete, and stucco. The most recent renovation in 2006 - 2007 heavily remodeled the interior. The lobby has been reconfigured, and the restrooms have been moved into an adjoining building. The building stood empty for thirty years prior to the latest renovation. During those decades, the auditorium's ceiling and walls were extensively damaged. Today, the ceiling is exposed roof trusses, and the walls are sheet rock and wood studs over concrete. The floor is concrete, with a built-up plywood flooring in order to level the aisles. There are several light sconces that appear to date from the 1940s. Additionally, there is a canopy, as well as a vertical marquee, from the 1940s. Originally a venue for vaudeville (perhaps with some early films), the Princess now is able to show movies and have small productions on the new thrust stage.

# PRINCESS THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, low integrity and excellent condition. The most pressing physical concern is the roof, which needs repair or complete replacement. The building was heavily remodeled in 2006 - 07. Interior doors were added, and the exterior doors are not original. The walls have been fastened to the concrete exterior walls. There is a large crack in the exterior concrete of the wall of the building; the crack runs the full height. Several large steel plates have been fastened on each side of the crack. Oval holes for the plate fasteners allow the plates to move with the wall. There are the remains of roof or floor joist pockets in the exterior of the concrete wall.



# RAYMOND THEATRE



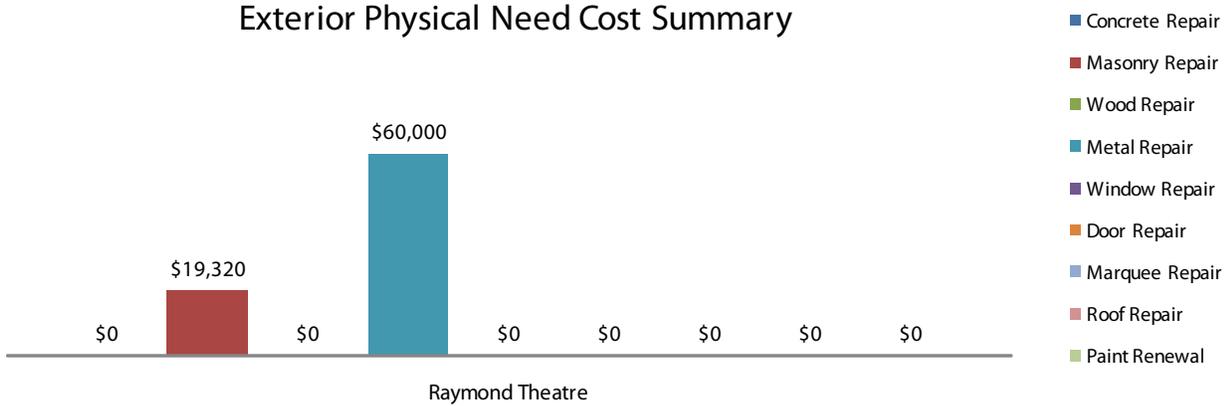
Field site: 56	Historic Names: Unknown
Location: 323 1/2 3rd St., Raymond, WA 98577, Pacific County	Register: State, National
Built: 1928 (Grant, Sheer)	Seats: 450
Current Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Public	Operator: Public
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** The building is a concrete structure with a terra cotta front facade. The flat roof is bordered by a parapet on all sides. Access to the foundation was not possible, but records indicate it is a post-and-pier system. Both the exterior and interior were designed in the Beaux-Arts style. The ticket booth, canopy, and four sets of double doors are centered in the facade. Two sets of double doors flank the ticket booth. The canopy appears original, but the vertical marquee is new. The auditorium is modestly decorated with plaster blind arches along the walls and stenciled ceiling coves. The lighting fixtures are original. A thrust stage has been added. There is balcony seating but no fly loft. This theater still functions as both a performance and cinema venue. An organ is present on stage.

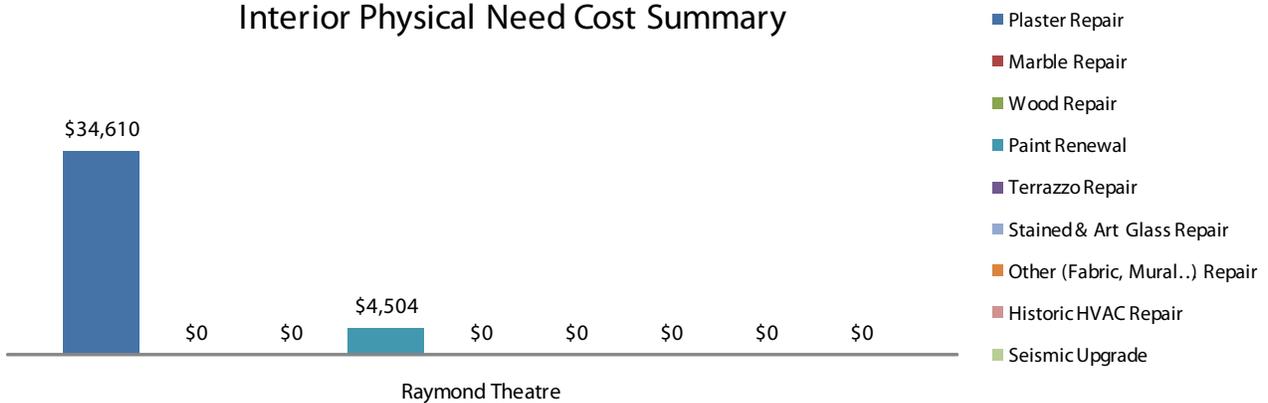
# RAYMOND THEATRE

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and good condition. The most pressing physical concerns are damage to the terra cotta, water damage to the brick back wall, and the canopy's corroding structural steel beams. There are also areas of water damage to the interior plaster walls and ceilings. The Raymond Theatre was renovated several years ago. At that time, it was seismically upgraded, but the building is not equipped with a fire suppression system (fire sprinklers). The building may be experiencing settlement, as evidenced by cracks on the east corner of the front wall.

### Exterior Physical Need Cost Summary



### Interior Physical Need Cost Summary



# RENTON CIVIC THEATER

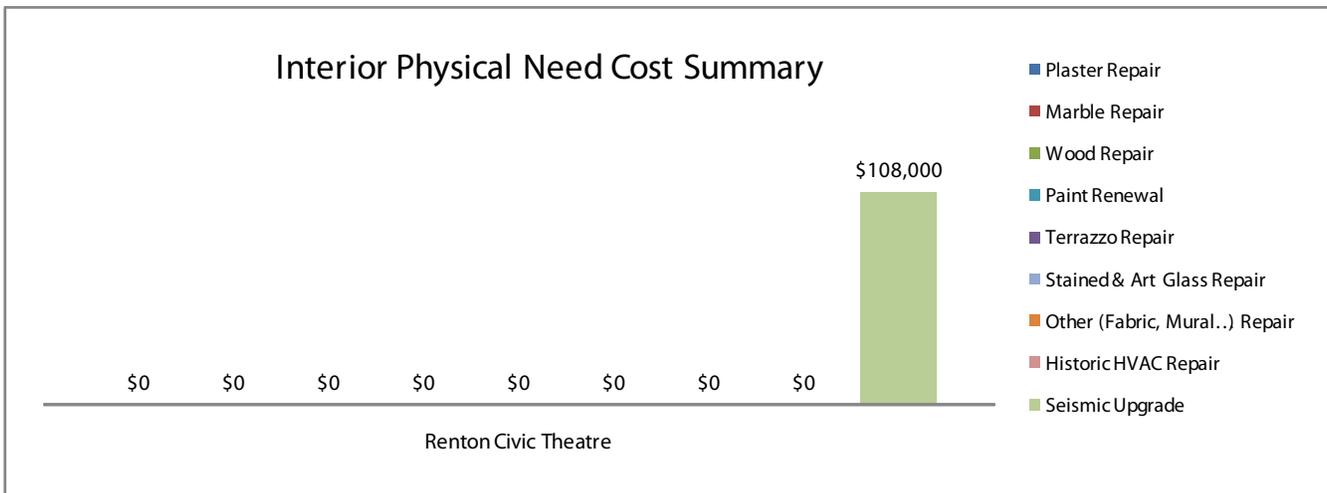


Field site: 71	Historic Names: Unknown
Location: 507 Third St., Renton, WA 98057, King County	Register: N/A
Built: 1925	Seats: 300
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Non-profit	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: Unknown	Screen(s) Current: N/A

**Physical Highlights:** A poured-in-place concrete foundation supports walls of the same material. The wood-framed roof is flat with parapets. Exterior cladding consists of exposed concrete and ceramic tile. The asymmetrical front facade includes a band of rectangular windows on the balcony level, tied together by a triangular marquee. To the east, a bull's-eye window sits above a single door and storefront window. This former retail space now serves the theater directly. The theater entrance consists of two double doors separated by a short section of wall and an attached ticket booth set off to one side. The double doors have geometric painted decoration both inside and out. The ceilings of the lobby and auditorium also have painted Art Deco motifs. In the auditorium, unique bracket light fixtures connect the side walls and ceiling. Between decorative panels are vertical sections of fabric over the plaster walls. The seats may not be original, but the panel-ends on each row appear to be from the period of construction. This former movie house has been converted to a performance venue with the expansion of the stage and lobby.

# RENTON CIVIC THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, moderate integrity and excellent condition. There are no pressing physical concerns. The building does not have a fire suppression system. The theater has ADA accessible restrooms and auditorium seats. The canopy and marquee are in good condition. The air conditioner is thought to be original, but the heating system is new. The wall sconces and the stenciling on the ceiling are original and intact.



# RIALTO THEATER

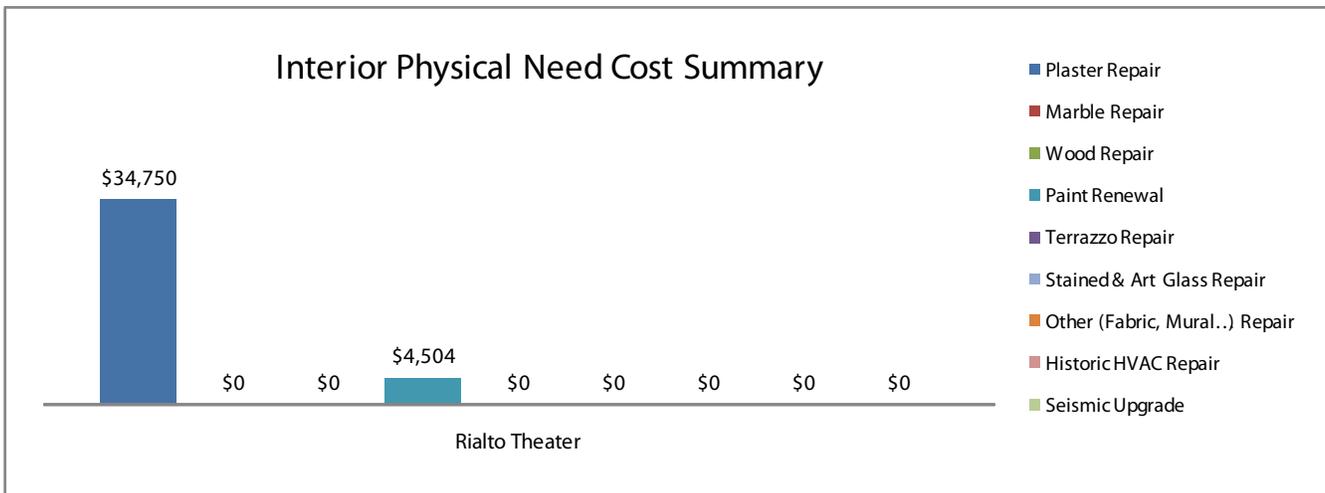
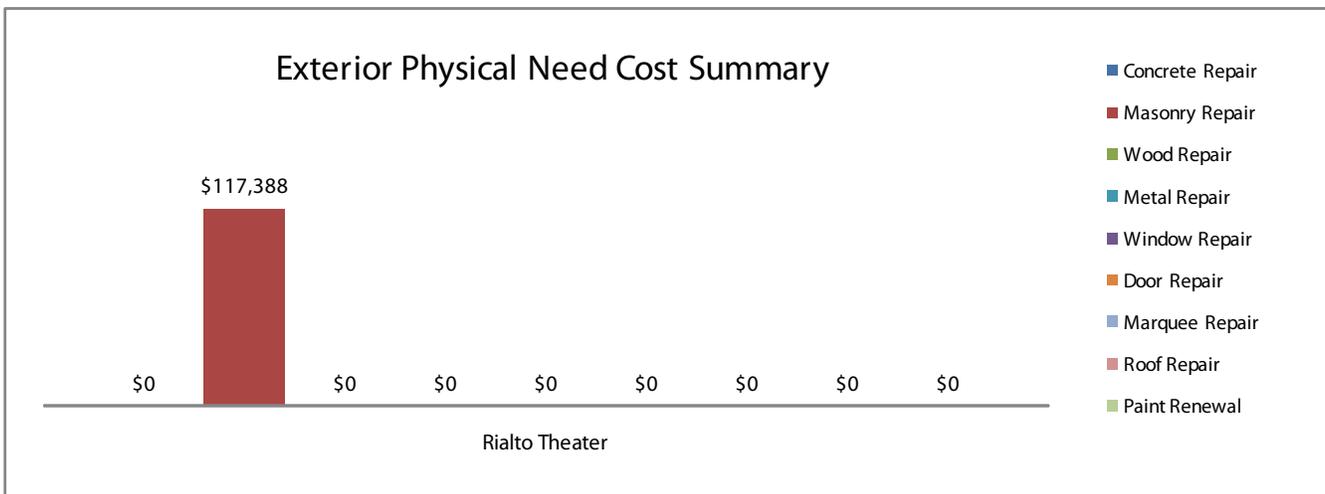


Field site: 13	Historic Names: Rialto, Fox Rialto
Location: 310 S. 9th St., Tacoma, WA 98402, Pierce County	Register: Local, State, National
Built: 1918 (Roland Borhek)	Seats: 742
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Public	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: Unknown	Screen(s) Current: N/A

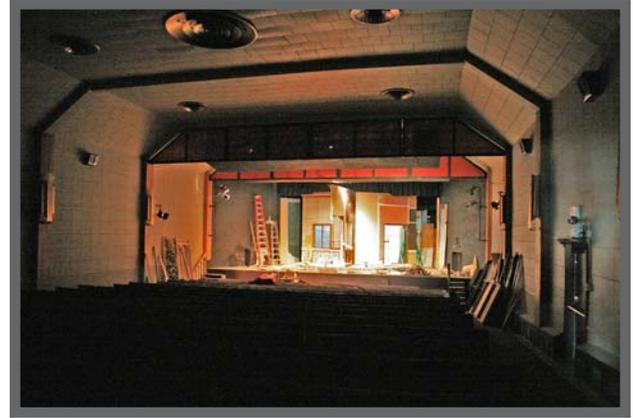
**Physical Highlights:** Built of a poured concrete foundation and brick walls, the Rialto is clad with terra cotta and stucco. The hanging marquee is a close replica of the original. Despite appearing to be taller, most of the rectangular footprint is occupied by the single-story auditorium. With its unusual corner entrance, this theater's floor plan is unique. From the recessed and rounded entryway, one passes into the lobby. Above the lobby are a green room and other theater-related spaces. The length of the building is made up of the auditorium, with the stage at the far end (uphill). Opened in the same year as the Pantages, it was also designed in the Beaux Arts style but solely as a cinema. The original proscenium stage has been expanded to be a thrust stage for live performances. There is no fly loft or orchestra pit. Total seating capacity is 742 between the main floor and the balcony. The roof structure consists of six steel trusses.

# RIALTO THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and good condition. The most pressing physical concerns are the damaged terra cotta and stucco exterior finishes. Historic lighting fixtures need renovation and repair, and the second floor rotunda walls and ceiling need to be repaired and painted. The terra cotta along the parapet needs to be restored and the missing decorative lights installed. The city has the terra cotta replacement parts but not the money to install them. In addition, the few leaks into the building are thought to be coming from the exterior parapet lights. For future preservation efforts, the interior needs to be cleaned. There is no air conditioning or heating in the lobby. A 1991 renovation structurally reinforced the building with a steel and concrete frame inside the historic envelope. The building is ADA compliant. The auditorium is fully sprinkled.



# RICHLAND THEATER



Field site: 2	Historic Names: Unknown
Location: 608 The Parkway, Richland, WA 99352, Benton County	Register: Local, State
Built: 1944	Seats: 257
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Non-profit	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** Built during World War II, the Richland Theatre was constructed as a movie house by the Army Corps of Engineers under the direction of the Manhattan Project. Today, the Richland Players use it for a community performance venue. The building is a simple, wood-frame structure on a concrete foundation. The envelope is completed with a bowstring truss roof and wood siding. The footprint is rectangular under a barrel vault roof form. Although there is a small, enclosed balcony (no seating) above the lobby, it is only a single-story building overall. During the 2007 renovation, a projecting entry was added under the triangular marquee. The lobby was also altered during the renovation, including the addition of a drop acoustical ceiling. There is no fly loft or orchestra pit. A thrust stage has been added.

## RICHLAND THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, low integrity and good condition. The most pressing physical concern is the damage to the exterior wood siding. The lobby was heavily remodeled in 2007. The entry has been extended out and new anodized aluminum store front doors were added. The exterior still retains some of its original features, such as the siding, upper windows and trim. There are several former octagonal openings along the sides of the building which have been filled in. Little original interior fabric remains. The building does not have a fire suppression system (fire sprinklers), and it has not been seismically upgraded.



# ROSE THEATER



Field site: 47	Historic Names: Unknown
Location: 235 Taylor St., Port Townsend, WA 98368, Jefferson County	Register: N/A
Built: 1907	Seats: 330
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Performing Arts, Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** The Rose is a single-story, composite structure. Some walls consist of wood post-and-beam framing with brick cladding, whereas other walls appear to be strictly brick. The original theater has been expanded and rehabilitated, now with a new, second auditorium in a former adjoining building. The foundation is poured concrete. The north (front) facade is covered with pressed metal. Above the metal canopy are a small neon marquee and three windows tied together with a continuous upper cornice and lower sill. Below the canopy, the ticket booth is set to one side of the double-door entry. The historic auditorium floor has been re-raked to provide better site lines. The walls are lined with fabric over gypsum board on one side and decorated with original painted murals and fabric on the other. The ceiling is sheathed with pressed metal that comes down in a cove to meet the walls. There is a tiny balcony (one seating row deep) and small platform stage. The lighting fixtures are not original, but the seat end-panels may be.

## ROSE THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, moderate integrity and excellent condition. There are no pressing physical concerns at this time. The roof is eight to ten years old. Building systems were updated in 1992 and 1995. The theater is ADA compliant but has no fire suppression (fire sprinklers) system.



# ROXY THEATRE

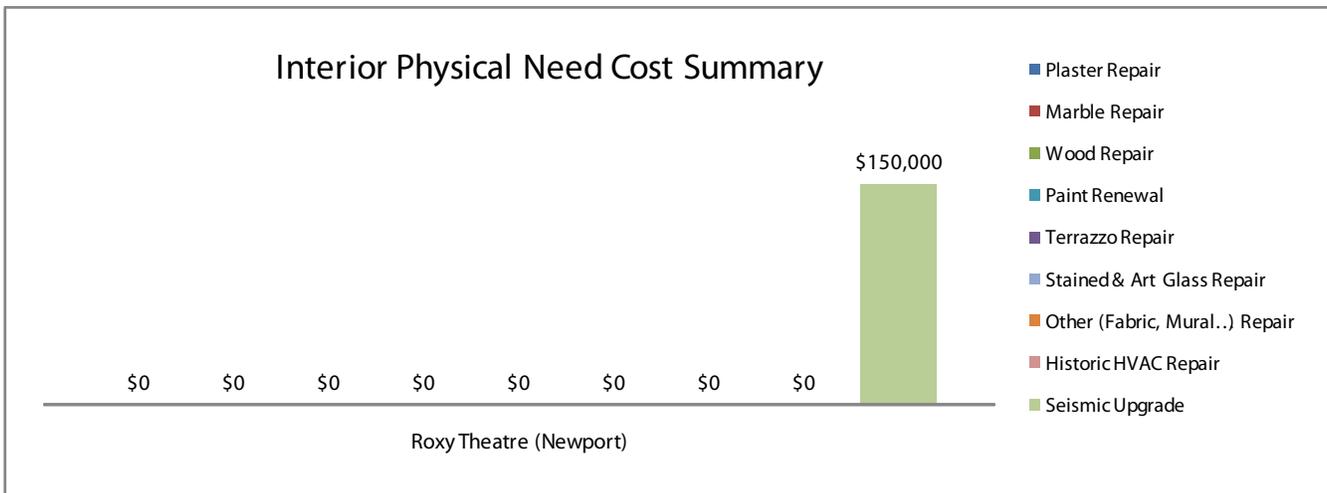


Field site: 23	Historic Names: Roxy
Location: 122 S. Washington Ave., Newport, WA 99156, Pend Oreille Co.	Register: N/A
Built: 1951	Seats: 420
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** The Roxy is rather unique for the materials used and their application in its construction. It is one of few buildings in this survey constructed using Concrete Masonry Units (CMU). Over the exterior surface of the CMU, a heavily textured stucco finish was applied. The entry below the canopy is sheathed with a stone veneer. The front facade is shared with two storefronts that flank the entry. Two double doors are inset from the face of the building, and the ticket booth is set to one side. The lobby and auditorium are unaltered. In both the lobby and auditorium, a corrugated wainscot is made up of cement fiber panels. Above it, in the lobby, is painted gypsum board while, in the auditorium, the upper portion of the walls and the ceiling are covered with wood fiber/cement tiles. Curved ramps lead up from the lobby to the auditorium. The auditorium is decorated with three large murals along each side wall. The seats appear to be original. The Roxy has always been a movie house.

# ROXY THEATRE

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and excellent condition. There are no pressing physical concerns. However, the exterior stucco could use a cleaning. The building has not been seismically upgraded and does not have a fire suppression system (fire sprinklers). It is not ADA compliant for restrooms or auditorium seating.



# RUBY THEATER

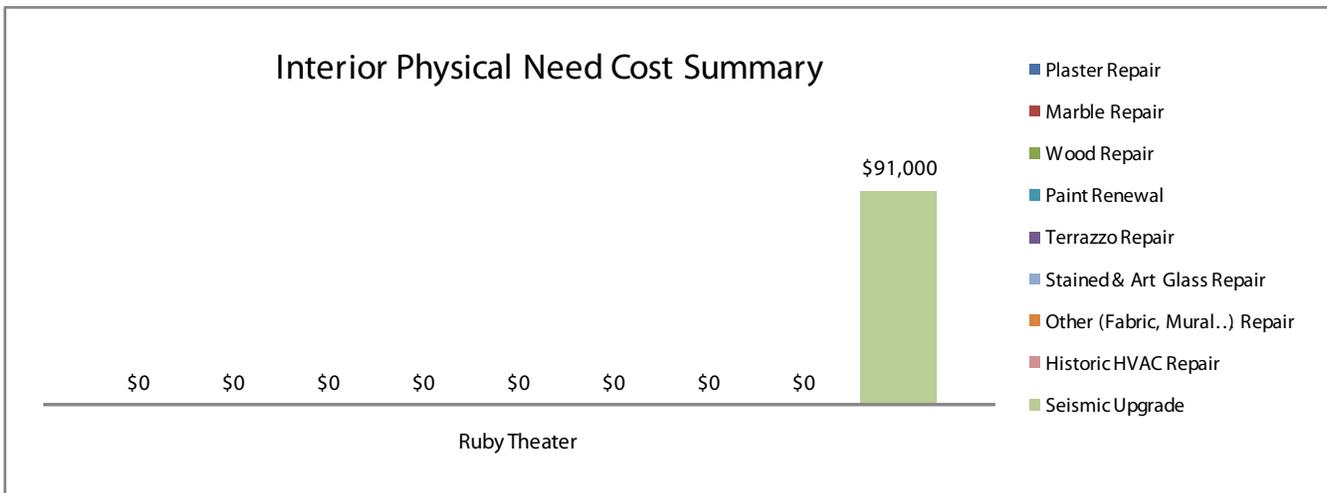


Field site: 3	Historic Names: Ruby
Location: 135 E. Woodin Ave., Chelan, WA 98816, Chelan County	Register: State, National
Built: 1913	Seats: 174
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** The Ruby has only been closed twice—once in 1919 because of the great flu epidemic and again in the 1960s when it was between owners. A remodel occurred in 1925, and the front facade was changed in 1947/1948 when it was extended out. The poured concrete structure rests on a poured foundation. A masonry parapet fronts the flat roof, which is covered with Dupont foam and spray-on roofing. The facade finish is stucco, and the canopy that extends its full width has a stucco ceiling with exposed incandescent lights. The lower lobby windows are vinyl, and the display and side ticket windows are wood-framed. On the balcony level, the two center windows are wood sash; what were two side windows have been in-filled and awnings have been placed over them. The lobby floor has been recently tiled. There is pressed tin on the auditorium ceiling and the underside of the balcony. The balcony is a unique horseshoe shape, with the outer edges supported by rods from the ceiling. The wooden thrust stage is large enough for small live acts; however, the theater was and is a film venue.

# RUBY THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and excellent condition. There are no pressing physical concerns. The balcony and restrooms are not ADA accessible. To make them accessible would greatly impact the interior of the building, requiring the removal of a good deal of historic material. No seismic upgrade has been done to the building, and it does not have a fire suppression system (fire sprinklers).



# STATE THEATER

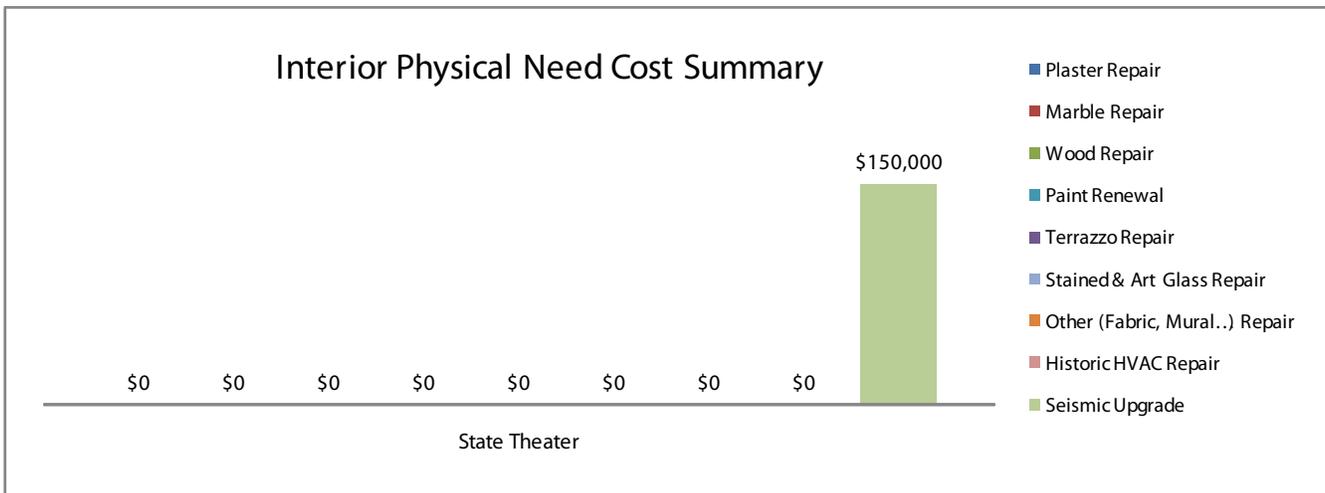


Field site: 65	Historic Names: Unknown
Location: 202 Fourth Ave. E., Olympia, WA 98501, Thurston County	Register: State, National
Built: 1949 (Wohleb & Wohlets)	Seats: 212
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Non-profit	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: N/A

**Physical Highlights:** The foundation and wall structure are poured concrete with concrete embossed details. A flat-on-hip roof caps the single-story, rectangular structure. The concrete roof deck is covered with asphalt/comp-rolled material. A projecting triangular marquee sits over the recessed entry. Centered and detached in the entry area is the historic ticket booth. The entry facade has been modified with travertine tiles and a marble base. A bank of glass doors separates the outside from the wide lobby. To one side of the central concessions stand is a sunken lounge space with restrooms. As part of the conversion of this theater from a cinema to a performing arts venue, a new thrust stage has been built in front and obscures the movie screen. Balcony seating has been removed in order to make room for prop and technical space. There is a small fly loft.

# STATE THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, moderate integrity and good condition. The most pressing physical concern is the roof. It is leaking despite being only fifteen years old. Several of the leaks appeared when the new HVAC system was installed in the summer of 2007. The entry doors are original, but they are weathered and need restoration. Sprinklers were added to the building in 1998, and the electrical system was upgraded in the same year. The building has not been seismically upgraded, but it was originally designed and constructed to withstand seismic activity. The building is ADA accessible, including the restrooms.



# SUNSET THEATRE

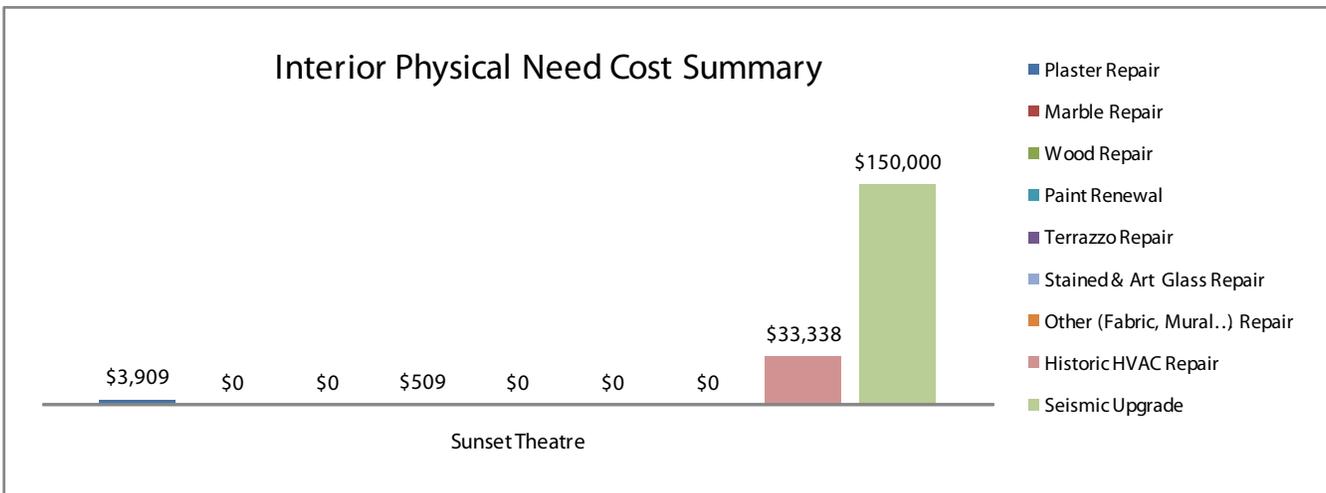
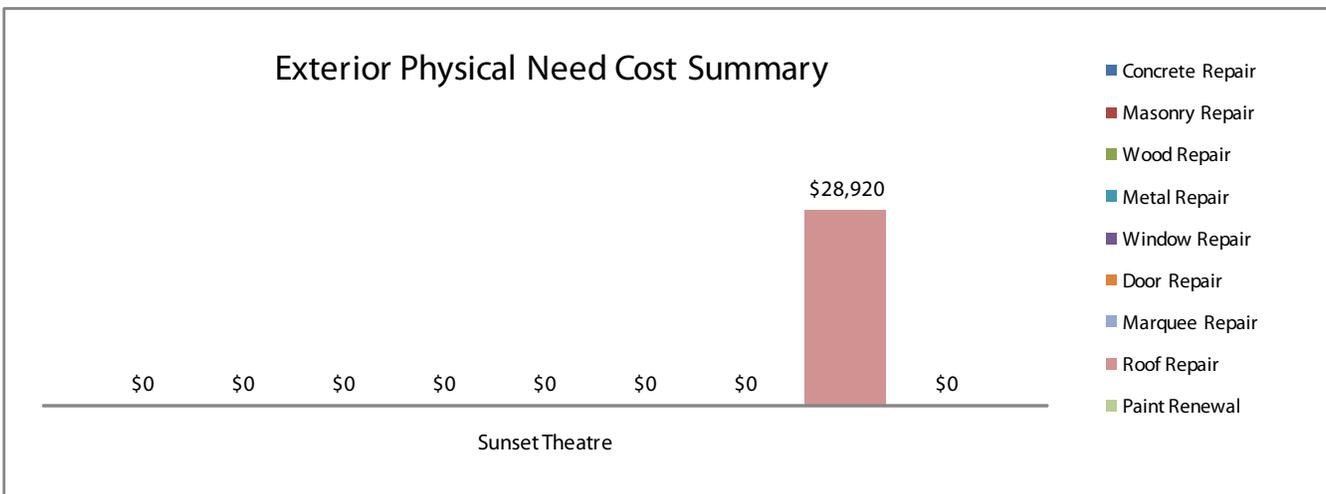


Field site: 16	Historic Names: Aubert Theatre
Location: 102 N. Columbia, Connell, WA 99326, Franklin County	Register: N/A
Built: 1952	Seats: 372
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** A single-story, concrete block structure with a poured concrete foundation, the Sunset occupies a prominent corner lot in Connell. The exterior walls have concrete block pilasters spaced regularly along the walls. The footprint is rectangular. Asphalt/comp-rolled roofing covers a barrel vault roof form. Along the side street facade, a painted mural covers the exposed concrete block wall. The front facade has cut stone and stucco as cladding. The front also has a recessed entry, neon marquee, and movable letter sign. Three steel, fixed pane windows sit over the glass bank of entrance doors, but there is also a wooden door to one side for the upstairs apartment. The lobby has a concession stand front and center with restrooms, office space, and retail space along the sides. Designed as a cinema in the early 1950s, the Sunset has a faux elliptical stage, no balcony seating, and no behind-screen space. The interior walls of the auditorium are plaster over the concrete block. This, in turn, has recently been covered with fabric to reduce sound reverberation. The seats are original.

# SUNSET THEATRE

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and excellent condition. There are no pressing physical concerns. The building has not been seismically upgraded, and there is no fire suppression system (fire sprinklers). The exterior steel casement windows are original, and the aluminum entry doors also appear to be original. The exterior canopy looks original and appears to be in good condition.



# TEKOA EMPIRE THEATER

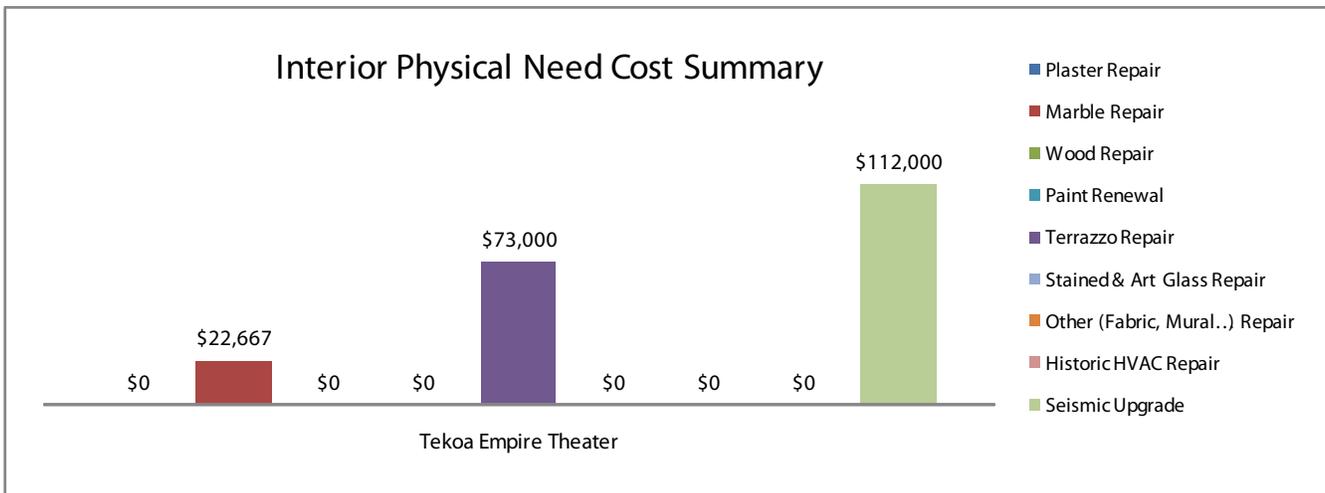


Field site: 30	Historic Names: Empire Theater
Location: 126 S. Crosby St., Tekoa, WA 99033, Whitman County	Register: N/A
Built: 1940	Seats: 280
Current Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Non-profit	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** The rectangular structure of the Empire is a combination of materials. The foundation walls for the two sides and back, the front facade, one side wall, and the back wall are concrete. The front wall foundation is stone, and one side wall is brick. The brick side wall is a common wall with the abutting building. The flat roof structure is constructed of wood-framed trusses. On the front facade, there is a replica neon triangular marquee over the recessed, divided entry. The two sets of wooden double-entry doors are stenciled with geometric designs. To the left of the entrance is a single commercial space. At balcony level, there is a circular window containing a square casement above the commercial space and a long ribbon of awning and fixed pane windows above the theater entrance. The exterior style is rather plain, but the theater’s interior has definite Art Deco aspects. On either side of the lobby are stairs descending to the basement restrooms. This single-story, single-screen movie house also hosts live performances of a limited scope—there is no fly loft, pit, or behind-stage space. The small original stage has been expanded forward into the house.

# TEKOA EMPIRE THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and good condition. The most pressing physical concerns include several items. The entry doors appear to be original, but they are water-stained at the bottom and need to be removed and completely restored. The old squirrel cage fan is in need of a new electric motor, axle bearings, and cleaning. The wood floors need to be refinished. The original historic wall fabric needs to be repaired and cleaned. Carpeting is torn and needs replacement. The building has not been seismically upgraded and is not equipped with a fire suppression system (fire sprinklers). The theater is not ADA compliant for the auditorium seating or restrooms. The electrical systems have been recently upgraded. The roofing material was replaced in 2007.



# TEMPLE THEATER



Field site: 14	Historic Names: Heilig, Hamrick's Temple
Location: 47 St. Helens Ave., Tacoma, WA 98402, Pierce County	Register: Local
Built: 1927	Seats: 1620
Current Function(s): Performance Arts, Cinema	Historic Function(s): Other
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** Housed within the five-story Landmark Convention Center, the Temple Theatre is now used for occasional films and live events. The entire building occupies a rectangular lot in downtown Tacoma. A poured concrete foundation supports poured concrete walls with brick and cut stone cladding. Most windows are intact; there are paired casements on the upper floors and storefront windows on the ground floor. The theater entrance is located at the southwest corner and includes a flush bank of glass doors and a projecting triangular marquee. The exterior is executed in the Greek Revival style with colossal pilasters, a tall frieze, symmetrical composition, and a suggested temple atop the main building entrance. Interior access was not obtained.

## TEMPLE THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Not surveyed on the interior. Exterior condition issues include the cracked sandstone on either side of the west entry for the main building (not the corner theater entrance). On the rear (east) facade, there are some cracks that run up a good portion of the wall as well as some shorter cracks. Seismic activity is likely responsible for some of the cracks. Integrity has not been evaluated because the interior was not accessed.



# UPTOWN THEATER



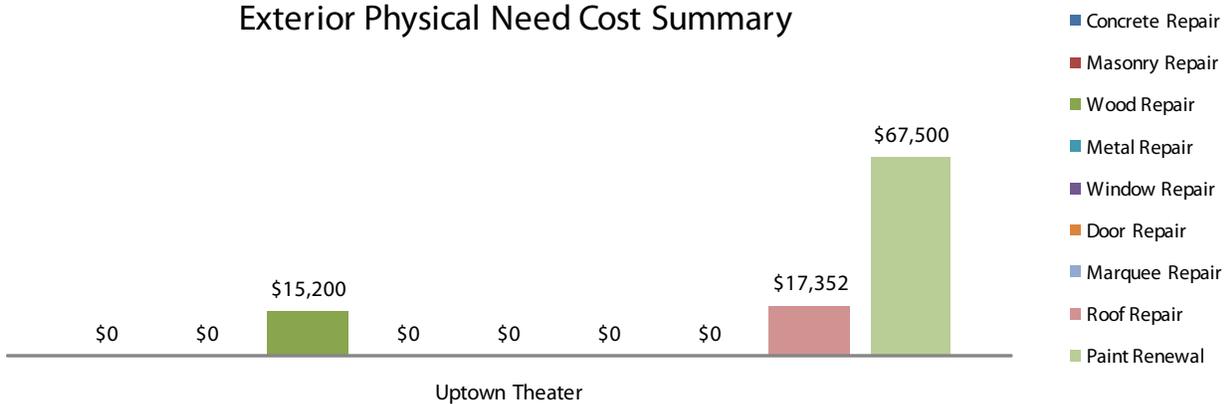
Field site: 46	Historic Names: Odd Fellows Lodge
Location: 1120 Lawrence St., Port Townsend, WA 98368, Jefferson Co.	Register: N/A
Built: 1897	Seats: 350
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Other
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: None	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** This building was originally erected as an Odd Fellows Lodge in 1897. The massing is simple: a three-story, rectangular, wood-framed structure set on a brick foundation. The gable roof has a parapet at the front facade. The exterior is sheathed with drop-siding except on the first and second floors of the east (front) side, where vertical siding appears to have been applied over the original. The lobby walls are plaster above a wood wainscot. The wainscot is original, as are the doors, trim, windows, stairwells, and second- and third-story wood floors. The auditorium has a small stage, but it was converted to a cinema in the 1950s and has never had a live performance emphasis. There is no pit, fly loft, balcony seating, or proscenium arch. The auditorium ceiling and second floor are supported off a beam running the length of the building that projects below the auditorium ceiling. The beam is attached to the bottom cord of the roof trusses by a series of steel rods. The auditorium and lobby floors are wood under carpet and linoleum, depending on location.

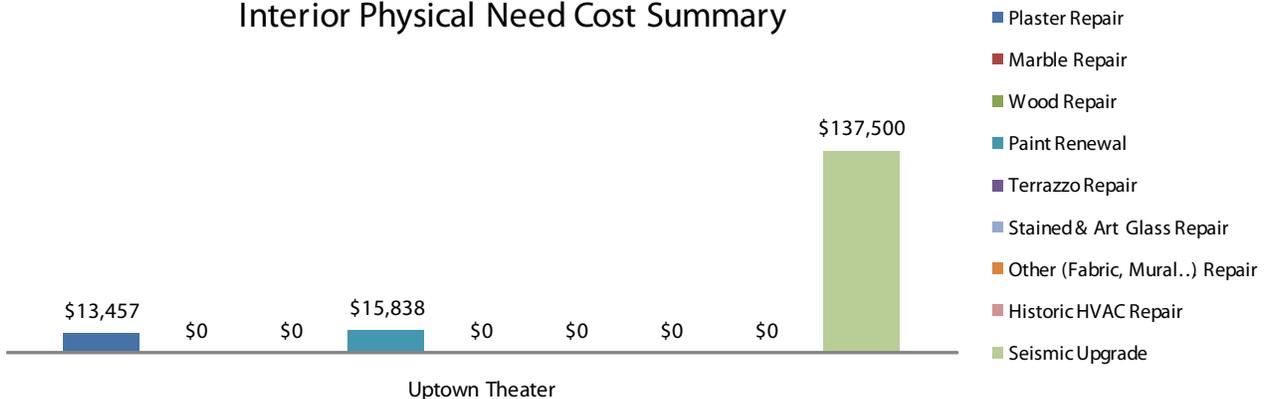
# UPTOWN THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and good condition. The most pressing physical concern is the cladding. A leaking leader box or downspout is getting the siding wet on the west side of the building. All siding needs painting, especially on the alley side (rear). Some nails are bleeding and some portions of siding are broken or damaged. There are several double hung wood sash windows that are original to the building and appear to be in restorable condition. There has been no seismic upgrade to the building. Since the building has an unusual structural system (second floor is supported off a beam running the length of the building), tying this structure together would protect this unique architecture from damage or possible failure during a seismic event. The electrical system is being updated as time and money allows. Presently the building does not meet ADA codes for restrooms, exiting or seating. To install handicapped accessible toilets would greatly alter the historic interior, but creating handicapped seating would only require the removal of a few seats. The building is not sprinkled. The roof is only seven years old and is not leaking.

### Exterior Physical Need Cost Summary



### Interior Physical Need Cost Summary



# VARSITY THEATER



Field site: 83	Historic Names: Unknown
Location: 4329 University Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105, King County	Register: N/A
Built: 1921	Seats: Unknown
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Double

**Physical Highlights:** This single-story theater adjoins single-story commercial buildings on either side. Structural materials have been covered by terra cotta, stucco, tile, and a large triangular marquee on the front facade. Still visible is a panel with “Meister Building” and the shaped parapet. Above the marquee are a dentil course and cornice. Tiles of various sizes (2” x 2”, 4” x 4”, 6” x 6”) cover the entrance section of the front facade. Between the sets of entrance/exit doors is an anodized aluminum-framed ticket window. Interior spaces were not accessible. Overall, the footprint is rectangular and the style Commercial.

## VARSITY THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Not surveyed on the interior, and no exterior condition issues noted. Integrity has not been evaluated because the interior was not accessed.



# VILLAGE THEATER

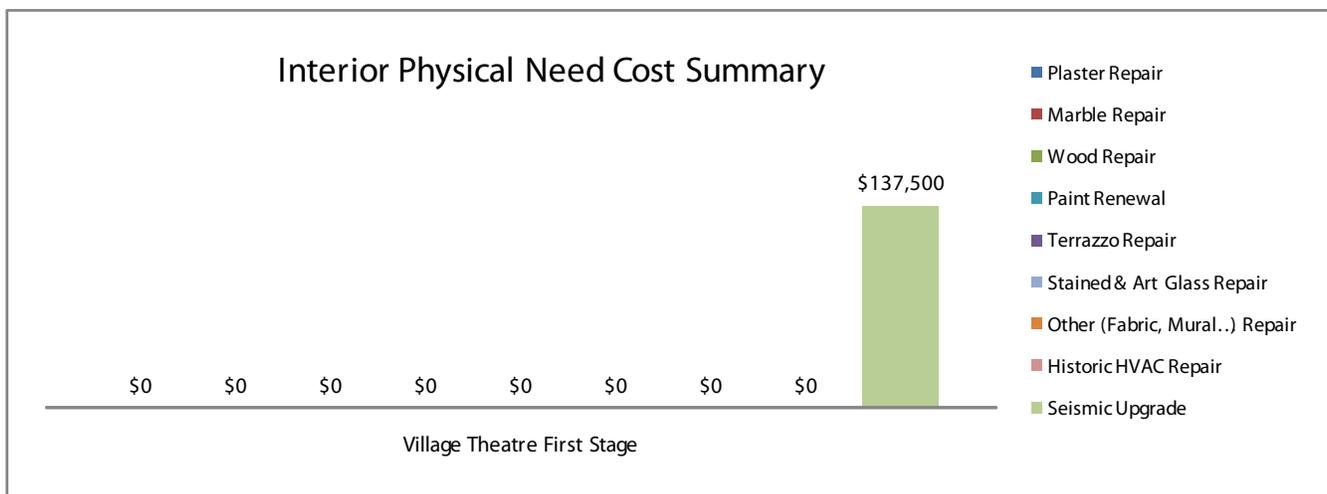
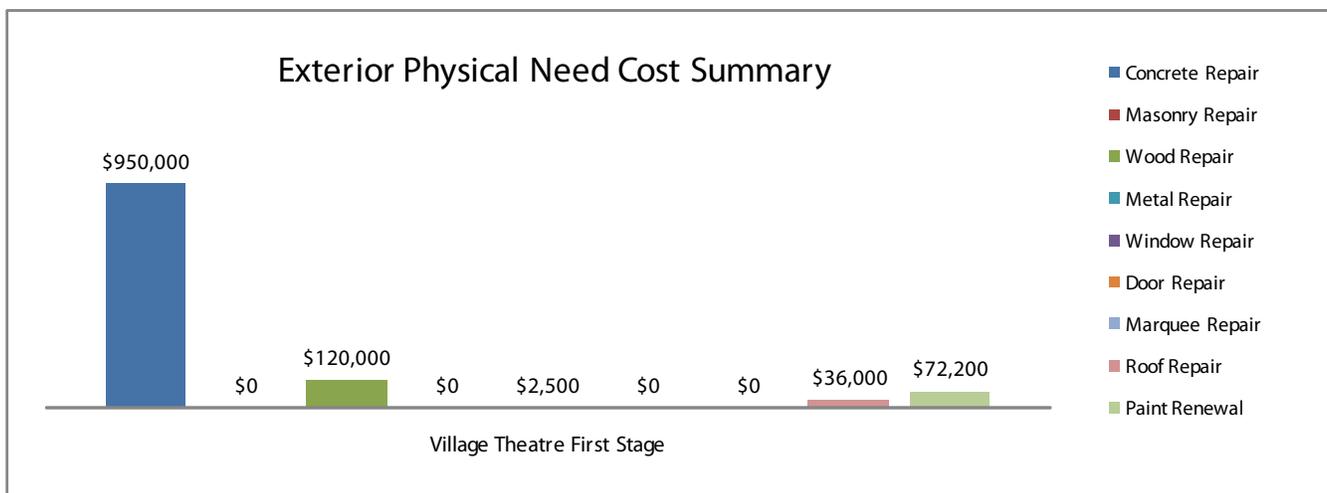


Field site: 69	Historic Names: Issaquah Theater, First Stage
Location: 120 Front St. N., Issaquah, WA 98027, King County	Register: N/A
Built: 1913	Seats: 199
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Non-profit	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Single

**Physical Highlights:** This theater is a two-story, rectangular, wood-framed building. The gable roof is covered in asphalt/comp shingles. Both the interior and exterior have been heavily altered over the course of the building's life. The wood siding on the front of the building is not original. Rather, it is applied over a layer of asphalt veneer and the original drop-siding. The sides of the building are covered with the same asphalt material, with a faux brick pattern. The slope of the auditorium floor was changed, and an orchestra pit was added or relocated in 1979. The lobby has an unusual plan, with space on one side, most recently occupied by a coffee vendor. Dressing rooms are located on the second floor. There is a functional stage but no proscenium arch. On the balcony level, a technical/lighting room occupies the typical location of a projection room. The original theater function seems to have definitely involved vaudeville and possibly early film as well. It is now a performance space for children's productions.

# VILLAGE THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, moderate integrity and poor condition. The most pressing physical concerns are the foundation, exterior walls, and roof. The building needs a perimeter foundation and drains. Sections of the extant wood sill are deteriorating from pests and water exposure. Interior footings for the floor need to be reinforced. All exterior walls need restoration. Drop-siding needs to be repaired, restored, and painted. New roof gutters and downspouts should be installed and tied to the storm drains. The windows and doors need to be stripped and painted, and the interior needs a complete restoration, including the second floor. The building has not been seismically upgraded, and there is no fire suppression system (fire sprinklers). There is an ADA entrance/exit ramp and restroom.



# LIBERTY II



Field site: 5	Historic Names: Vitaphone Theater, Liberty Twin
Location: 19 S. Mission St., Wenatchee, WA 98801, Chelan County	Register: N/A
Built: 1930 (George Purvis)	Seats: 500
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Double

**Physical Highlights:** On the same block as the Liberty (Fox) Theater is the former Vitaphone Theater. Now called the Liberty Twin, it operates under the same management as the Liberty. A concrete and stone foundation supports the structural brick walls and the flat, wood-framed roof. A shaped parapet and varied window moldings are some of the characteristic elements. Exterior walls are clad in brick and painted stucco; interior walls are lath and plaster. There are two arched recessed areas at each end of the front facade. There are two rectangular recessed areas centered in the front facade, above which are round inset areas. The entry doors and windows are anodized aluminum. There is no marquee, but the divided, recessed entry remains. Although built as a cinema, the single-story theater has a small stage and a proscenium arch. The former balcony was sealed off in 1984 as a separate auditorium with a second screen.

## LIBERTY II

**Condition Issues:** Overall, moderate integrity and excellent condition. There are no pressing physical concerns. The auditorium was duplexed in 1984. Portions of the exterior have been changed, but there is integrity, such as the varied window moldings above street level and the shaped parapet. The front facade retains its stucco above the non-historic tiled entry. Upper level windows have been infilled, leaving only non-historic, aluminum-framed shop windows at street level. There is no fire suppression (sprinkler) system. The first floor is ADA accessible, including the restrooms. The roof was redone in 1991.



# VOGUE THEATER

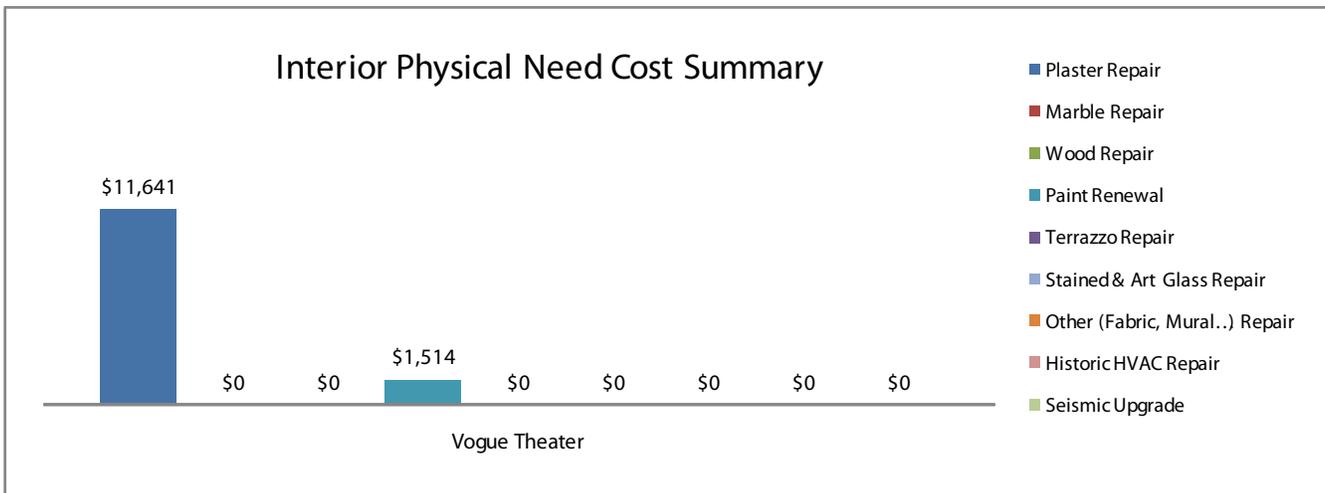
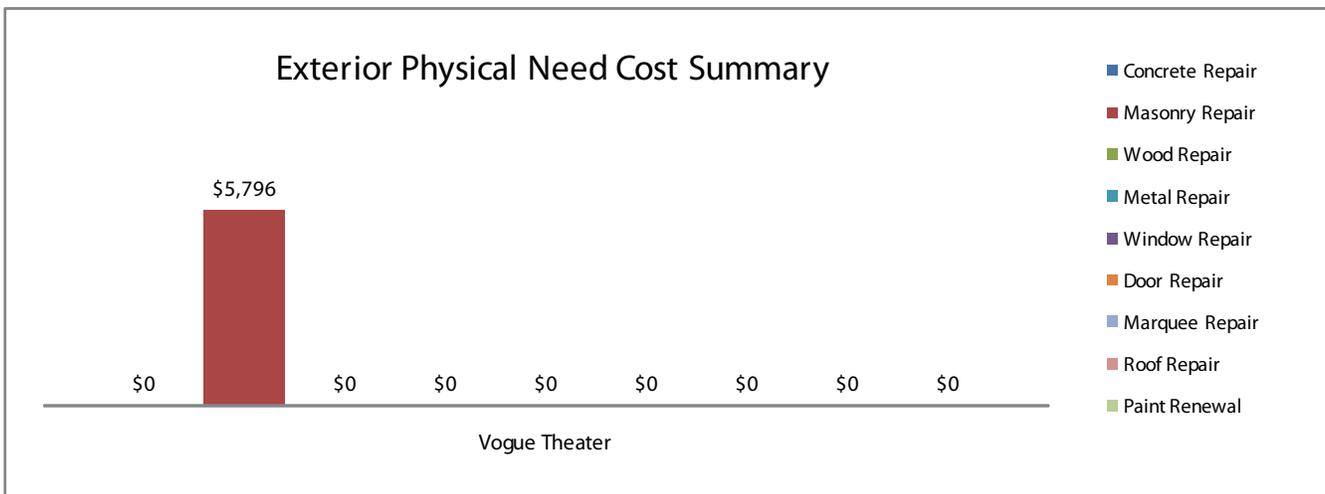


Field site: 18	Historic Names: Lane Theatre
Location: 210 Pennsylvania Ave., Cle Elum, WA 98922, Kittitas County	Register: State
Built: 1923 (White)	Seats: 0
Current Function(s): Closed	Historic Function(s): Performing Arts, Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: None

**Physical Highlights:** The Vogue is a rectangular, one-story brick structure with a lobby at the front and a stage at the rear. The front entry is recessed from the sidewalk with double doors on either side of a central ticket window. To either side of the recessed area is a small retail space. Exterior ornament is limited to patterns created by brick orientation and inset tiles above the balcony windows. There are large transoms made of glass block over both sets of entry doors as well as the ticket window. The floor and foundation are poured concrete. Walls are framed with brick pilasters, and the infill material changes based on location. At the front of the theater, the walls are all brick whereas, the infill changes to hollow clay tile toward the rear. On top of the brick pilasters rest wood trusses, which in turn support a flat-on-hip roof. A small fly loft, small pit, and limited behind-stage space all indicate the original focus on vaudeville entertainment. It is believed that early films were also shown. The balcony has a wood floor and is a suspended horseshoe type, with access via a stairwell from the lobby.

# VOGUE THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, moderate integrity and fair condition. The most pressing concerns are being addressed by renovation efforts in 2008. However, the renovation itself is also a cause for loss of integrity as historic material is being removed. Interior plaster and lath has been removed from the ceiling and walls. Oval shaped auditorium walls (inset from the brick exterior walls) have also been removed. All seats have been removed from the auditorium although a few remain stored inside the building. It is reported that this demolition was necessary because of the water damage caused during the years the building was unoccupied. Wall coverings, which appear to be of fibrous material covered by silk, are being removed because of their water damage and coal dust saturation. Brick walls need repointing. There is no heating system now. There is no canopy or marquee remaining. The wood floor of the balcony is in good condition but the status of the balcony support mechanisms is unknown. Renovation plans call for the balcony to remain but with modifications. The concrete main floor is exposed but in good condition. A new roof was recently installed. At this level of renovation, it must be assumed that the building will have to be brought up to existing building and safety codes.



# VUE DALE DRIVE-IN THEATER



Field site: 6	Historic Names: Unknown
Location: 1546 S. Mission St., Wenatchee, WA 98801, Chelan County	Register: N/A
Built: 1953	Seats: 600
Current Function(s): Cinema	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Private	Operator: Private
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: Double

**Physical Highlights:** As is typical of drive-in theaters, the Vue Dale consists of a long driveway, a large parking field, and a clubhouse containing restrooms, projection systems, and concessions. The second floor of the concrete block clubhouse contains a manager’s apartment. A free-standing, metal marquee with neon tubing at the driveway entrance advertises what is playing. Near the southeast corner of the clubhouse, a ticket booth divides the driveway. A second screen and field have been added to the northwest of the clubhouse. The original field’s screen blew over, and now both screens are steel-framed and non-historic. Total parking capacity is 450 cars. Speaker boxes in the parking field were removed in 1981 in favor of dial-in radio sound. The clubhouse is clad with T-111 siding on portions of the second floor, but otherwise the concrete block walls are exposed on both the exterior and interior. Windows are fixed pane, aluminum-framed.

## VUE DALE DRIVE-IN THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and excellent condition. No physical concerns noted.



# JOSEPH F. WHEELER THEATER

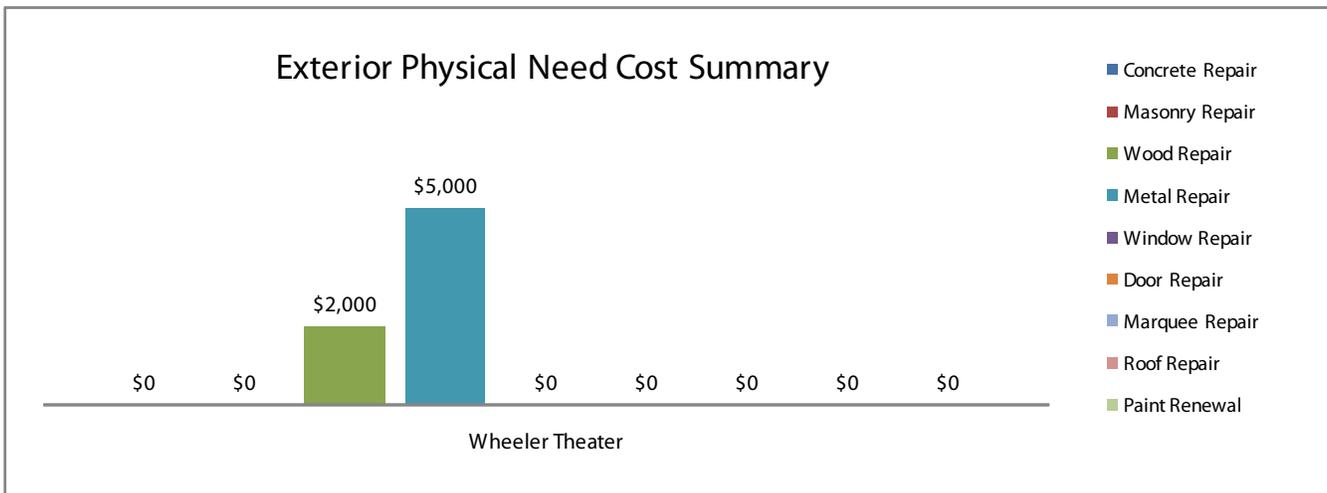


Field site: 48	Historic Names: War Department Theater
Location: 223 Battery Way, Port Townsend, WA 98368, Jefferson County	Register: National
Built: 1932	Seats: 261
Current Function(s): Performance Arts	Historic Function(s): Cinema
Ownership: Public	Operator: Non-profit
Screen(s) Original: Single	Screen(s) Current: None

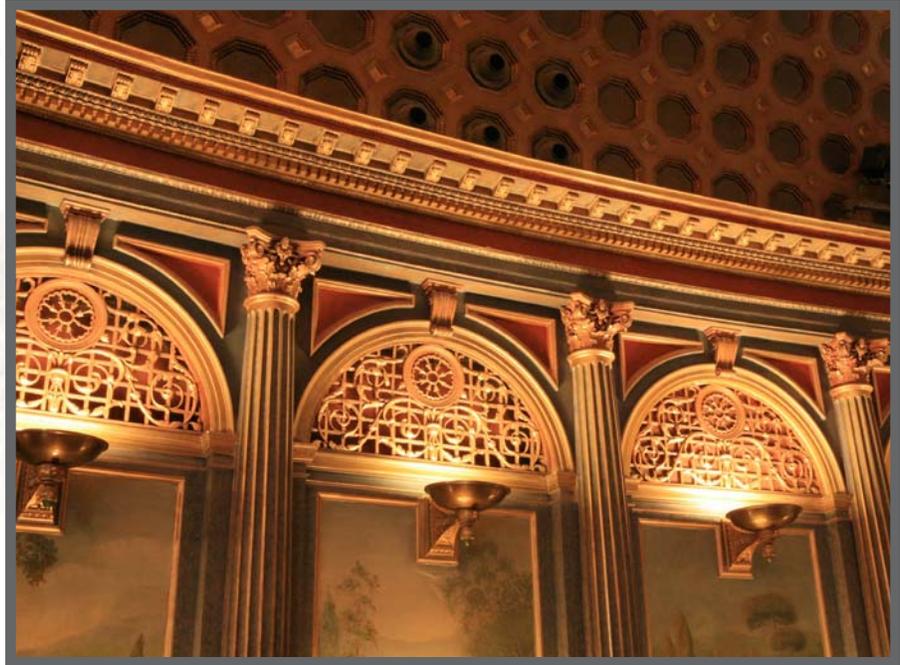
**Physical Highlights:** Located at Fort Worden, the Wheeler Theater stands alone. A poured concrete foundation supports structural brick walls and a gable roof. It exhibits the Georgian style in the symmetrical facade arrangement, projecting pediment, and multi-light sash windows. The exterior does not give much indication that a theater exists within the building except for a ticket booth dividing the entryway and a plain metal canopy. Windows are a mix of wood sash types and steel casement types. The lobby is unusual in that it has a barrel vault ceiling and no concession stand. Between the lobby and the back of the auditorium seating is a six-foot-wide arcade corridor. There is no balcony seating, just projection and storage rooms. An apron extends the original stage. There is a double-proscenium arch, but no pit or fly loft. With no original back-stage space, a small addition at the rear of the theater acts as a dressing room for this small-scale performance venue. The auditorium has a color scheme fitting its military past, including the two-tone green original seats. There is wainscoting in the lobby and auditorium that attempts to replicate marble. The material is unknown, but it may be Bakelite.

# JOSEPH F. WHEELER THEATER

**Condition Issues:** Overall, high integrity and excellent condition. The most pressing physical concerns are damage to the pediment trim over the entry, building systems, and a damaged canopy. The gable end pediment is missing a piece of wood trim. The mechanical system is old, as is the electrical system; both need upgrading. Inset radiators are spaced along the walls; these are also original and need to be serviced and restored. A passing truck banged the entry canopy on one corner. The building has not been seismically upgraded, and it does not have a fire suppression system (fire sprinklers). The structural system appears to be in excellent condition.

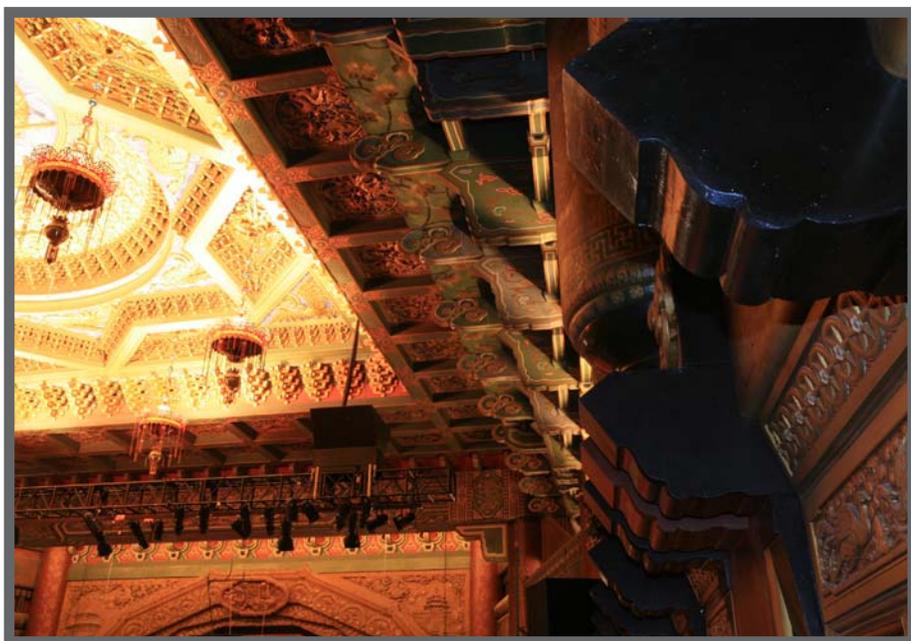


## 3.0 PRESERVATION SUPPORT MECHANISMS



*Metropolitan Performing Arts Center. Photograph by Susan Johnson, Artifacts Consulting, Inc.*

This chapter provides an overview of the existing support mechanisms for theater preservation. It also delves into the details of various grant programs and tax-based incentives. To set the proverbial stage, section 3.1 **Why are Historic Theaters Important?** summarizes why theaters are vital economic development and cultural resources for Washington’s communities. Section 3.2 **State Funding History** shares a history of the grant and direct appropriation funding from the state government to historic theaters. Tax incentives and other financing tools are delineated in section 3.3 **Existing Incentives**.



5th Ave Theatre, Seattle. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

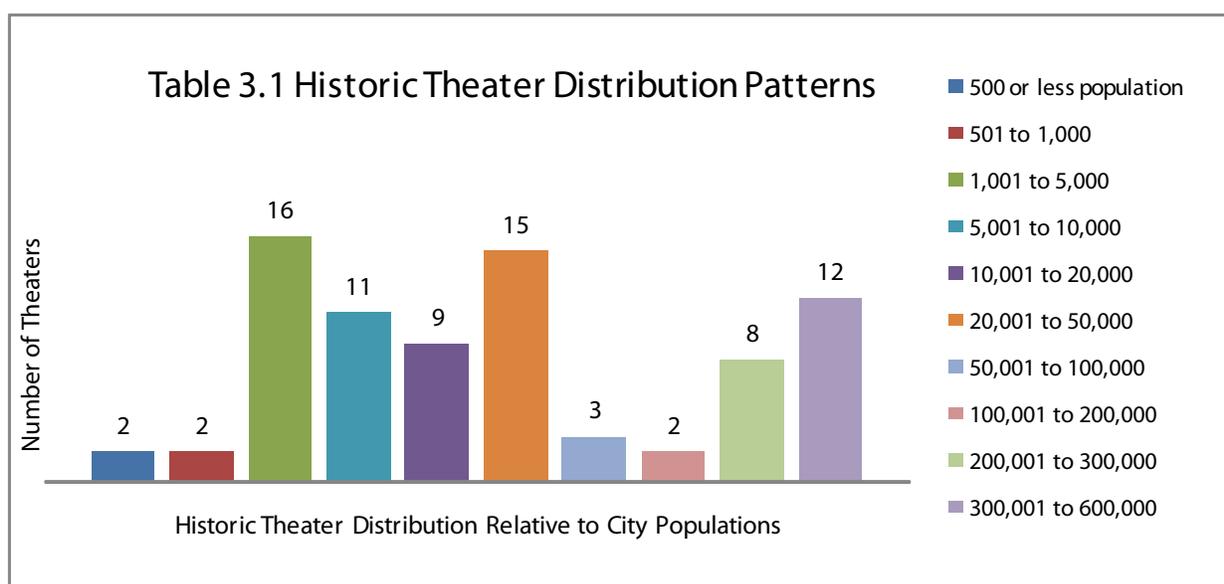


## 3.1 WHY ARE HISTORIC THEATERS IMPORTANT?

Travel the Main Street of any American town and a theater will likely be there, anchoring the street and beckoning residents and visitors alike to lose themselves for a time in another world. Whether they are architectural masterpieces, or modest storefronts with a marquee, theaters occupy a place in the heart of communities. They are the window to the wider world, the venues for imagination, the places that awaken young minds, the sanctuaries of art and cinema. Historic theaters are treasured places. Architecturally, historic movie palaces reflect community prosperity and ambition. Closed and shuttered, they also reflect hard times and changing economies. Still, these buildings and the art displayed inside them inspire passion, nostalgia, and determination. Across Washington, historic theaters run the gamut from the gloriously restored Fox in Spokane to the much-loved Roxy in Morton. As venues for performances and film, they are essential to community education and well-being. As distinctive buildings, they are essential to economic development and maintaining community character.

Eighty operating historic theaters remain in Washington. They are scattered in both small towns and urban neighborhoods. In fact, 25 percent of the theaters are located in communities with a population of under 5,000, and 56 percent are in communities under 50,000. Most are owned and managed by individuals. As businesses, they are important contributors to local economies. They buy goods and products, employ people, and pay taxes. They also offer the necessary venues for artistic productions and movies and, thereby, support an arts economy that ripples far beyond individual artists to include construction workers, graphic designers, electricians, and many other trades and services. Additionally, historic theaters are indispensable assets in developing cultural tourism—the fastest + segment of the tourism market. Finally, active theaters are one of the necessary amenities to attract and retain highly educated, skilled, and creative workers.

Americans for the Arts annually produces the Creative Industries Report, which surveys the business impact of the arts and its contribution to local and state economies. The most recent report, released in January 2008, reveals that over 600,000 arts businesses exist in the United States, representing 4.3 percent of all businesses, employing nearly 3 million people, or 2.2 percent of the work force.<sup>1</sup> Performing arts make-up 18 percent of those businesses and 16 percent of the employees, while film, radio, and television represent 16 percent of businesses and 24 percent of employees.



In Washington, it is estimated that over 18,000 arts-related businesses exist and employ over 62,000 people.<sup>2</sup> Seattle alone is the home of 1,025 performing arts and movie-related businesses, which employ 4,585 people. Businesses and employment in these sectors are growing. Performing arts businesses in Seattle increased by 17 percent between 2007 and 2008, with a corresponding 9.49 percent increase in jobs.<sup>3</sup>

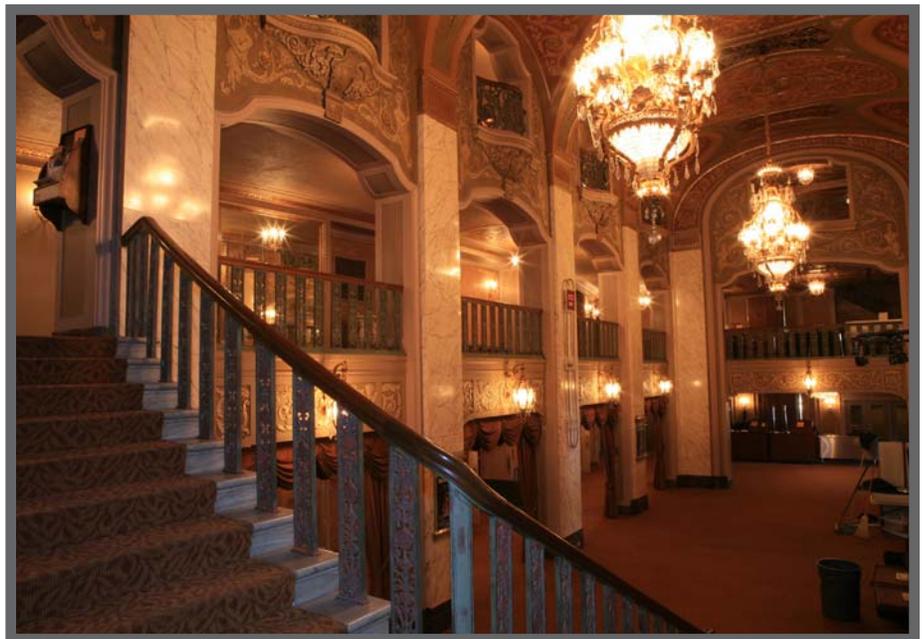
Audience spending also impacts local economies. A 2005 study by the Seattle Arts and Cultural Affairs Office estimates that resident attendees spend on average \$21.27 per day in event-related purchases, while non-resident attendees spend an average of \$31.92 per day. The economic impact of audience spending on state revenues is estimated at over \$6 million per year, and at \$5.5 million for local government.<sup>4</sup>

Often at the center of downtown and neighborhood revitalization efforts, are historic theaters. Some, like the Fox in Spokane, the Mt. Baker in Bellingham, and the Broadway theaters in Tacoma, are regional cultural centers, attracting restaurants, galleries, and other businesses that derive customers from theater audiences. Theaters become downtown anchors, attracting additional business and building investment and even housing. Smaller theaters in communities like Port Townsend and Chelan also create after-hours activity, drawing people back downtown to a friendly and safe environment.

Historic theaters play a crucial role in supporting cultural tourism, which is a large and growing industry. Described as, “travel to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present,” cultural tourism includes historic, natural, and cultural attractions that draw visitors who tend to stay longer and spend more than other tourists.<sup>5</sup> In fact, cultural tourists spend \$623 per day versus other tourists who spend \$457 per day.<sup>6</sup> The Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) reported in 2002 that 81 percent of those traveling identified themselves as heritage cultural tourists. The Washington Tourism Office estimated visitors spent \$1.45 billion on arts, entertainment, and recreation in 2007 and, up from \$1.08 billion in 1997.<sup>7</sup> Even though only a portion of this spending was in historic theaters, the impact is still substantial.

Such theaters attract visitors in ways that suburban multi-plexes cannot; and, while they lack some of the advantages in film distribution rights and physical amenities that modern theaters enjoy, historic theaters make up the difference by programming to audiences that appreciate and prefer authentic, one-of-a-kind historic character to the blandness of modern American theaters.

Why are historic theaters important? Why should Washington citizens be concerned about their viability? Because these theaters are bellwethers of the social and cultural vitality of our communities, they offer the venues to support local productions and artists, they are economic engines and job producers, and they bring education and entertainment value to their audiences. They are also beautiful, often exotic, and filled with the echoes of past generations that learned about the outside world on their stages. As centers of community life, they occupy a special place in the hearts and minds of the citizens of Washington.



Paramount Theatre, Seattle. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

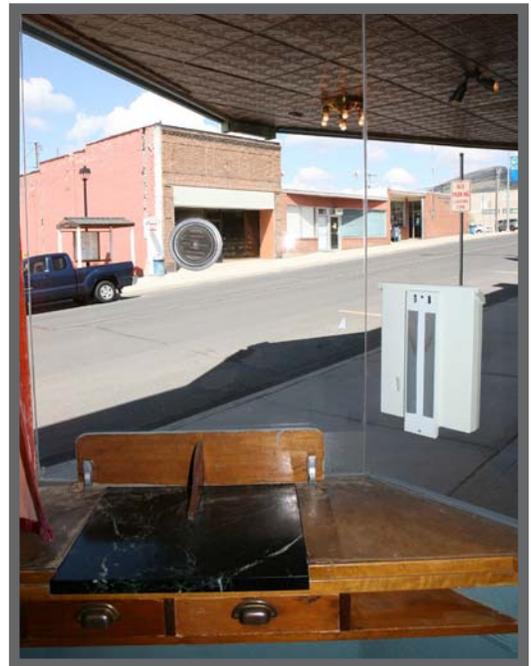


## (Endnotes)

- <sup>1</sup> Robert L. Lynch, Creative Industries 2008, the State Report(Washington, DC: Americans for the Arts, January 2008), 1
- <sup>2</sup> Lynch, Creative Industries, 7
- <sup>3</sup> Creative Industries in Seattle, WA (Washington, DC: Americans for the Arts,2008) 2-3.
- <sup>4</sup> Art & Economic Prosperity III, the Economic Impact of Arts and Cultural Organizations and their Audiences in the City of Seattle 2005(Washington, DC: Americans for the Arts,2007).
- <sup>5</sup> Cultural Heritage Tourism, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington DC, <http://www.culturalheritagetourism.org/aboutUs.htm>.
- <sup>6</sup> Cultural Heritage Tourism 2007 Fact Sheet( Washington, DC: National Trust for Historic Preservation, April 2007) 1
- <sup>7</sup> Dean Runyan & Associates, Washington state Travel Impacts and Visitor Volume, 1991-2007 ( Washington state Tourism Office, Washington state Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development, December 2007) 6, 7.



Lincoln Theatre, Mount Vernon. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



View of downtown Tekoa from the ticket window of Tekoa Empire Theater. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



## 3.2 STATE FUNDING HISTORY

The State of Washington has invested in its historic theaters through several grant programs and through direct legislative appropriations. In an effort to gain a broad understanding of the extent of that support over the years, several funding sources were examined, including the Building for the Arts Program (B for A), administered by the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (DCTED); the Heritage Capital Projects Fund (HCPF), administered by the Washington state Historical Society (WSHS); a short-lived historic theaters program, administered by the then Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP); and, Community Projects, which are direct legislative appropriations over the past three biennia. The total investment of those programs is \$17.5 million for twenty-six historic theaters since 1991, an average of \$1 million per year. This support has stimulated over \$36 million in additional public and private investment. A biennial break-down of the total state funds for historic theaters is provided. (See [Table 3.2](#))

YEAR	HCPF	B FOR A	LOCAL COMMUNITY PROJECTS
1999-2001	\$180,000	\$248,163	
2001-2003	\$250,000	\$771,000	
2003-2005	\$56,925	\$510,000	\$2,350,000
2005-2007	\$392,581	\$495,000	\$3,189,000
2007-2009		\$2,170,000	\$2,000,000

## 3.2.1 BUILDING FOR THE ARTS

The oldest of the capital grants programs reviewed, Building for the Arts began in the 1991-93 biennium as, “A competitive grant program to assist nonprofit organizations in acquiring, constructing, or rehabilitating performing arts, art museums, and cultural facilities.”<sup>1</sup> The program provides up to 20 percent of the costs related to acquisition and major new construction or renovation, not to exceed \$1 million.<sup>2</sup> Grants are restricted to nonprofit organizations. Since 1991, the program has provided over \$8.5 million of state capital funding to historic theaters. This represents 18 percent of the total Building for the Arts funding available, and 49 percent of the total funding to historic theaters since 1991. Additional project investment generated by these grants amounts to over \$34.25 million. (See [Table 3.2.1](#))

TABLE 3.2.1 BUILDING FOR THE ARTS

	<u>1993-</u> 1991-1993	<u>1995-</u> 1995	<u>1997-</u> 1997	<u>1999-</u> 1999	<u>2001-</u> 2001	<u>2003-</u> 2003	<u>2005-</u> 2005	<u>2007-</u> 2007	<u>2007-2009</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>
Total Appropriation	\$11,250,000	\$6,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$6,000,000	\$5,600,000	\$3,850,000	\$4,468,000	\$5,390,000	\$12,000,000	\$46,758,000
Admiral Theater - Bremerton	\$639,000							\$180,000		\$819,000
Broadway - Tacoma	\$1,770,000					\$50,000	\$400,000			\$2,220,000
Mt. Baker - Bellingham		\$237,150				\$128,000				\$365,150
WA Center - Olympia		\$60,000								\$60,000
Columbia - Longview			\$75,000		\$50,168				\$750,000	\$875,168
ACT - Seattle			\$485,877							\$485,877
Little Theater - Walla Walla			\$15,000							\$15,000
Paramount - Seattle			\$971,754						\$750,000	\$1,721,754
Princess - Prosser				\$115,000						\$115,000
Everett Theater - Everett					\$60,870	\$350,000		\$215,000		\$625,870
State (Harlequin) - Olympia					\$113,713				\$75,000	\$188,713
Harrington Opera House					\$23,412	\$13,000				\$36,412
Fox Theater - Spokane						\$230,000				\$230,000
Lincoln - Mt. Vernon							\$110,000			\$110,000
Roxy - Morton								\$75,000		\$75,000
Empire - Tekoa								\$25,000		\$25,000
Village - Seattle									\$575,000	\$575,000
University Theater - Seattle									\$20,000	\$20,000
Totals	\$2,409,000	\$297,150	\$1,547,631	\$115,000	\$248,163	\$771,000	\$510,000	\$495,000	\$2,170,000	\$8,562,944
Percentage to Historic Theaters	21%	5%	52%	2%	4%	20%	11%	9%	2%	18%

\* Not all theaters listed above were included in this physical needs assessment.



## 3.2.2 HERITAGE CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND

Created in 1997, the Heritage Capital Projects Fund was established as, “. . . a competitive process to solicit proposals for and prioritize heritage capital projects for potential funding in the state capital budget. The society (Washington state Historical Society) shall adopt rules governing project eligibility and evaluation criteria.”<sup>3</sup> The findings in its enabling legislation defined its purpose.

*The legislature finds that the state of Washington has a rich heritage in historical sites and artifacts that have the potential to provide life-long learning opportunities for citizens of the state. Further, the legislature finds that many of these historical treasures are not readily accessible to citizens, and that there is a need to create an ongoing program to support the capital needs of heritage organizations and facilities.*<sup>4</sup>

Grants are provided to local governments, tribes, nonprofits, and public development authorities. The fund provides a one-third match toward acquisition, new construction, rehabilitation, exhibitions, and equipment. Grants do not exceed \$1 million. Since the initial funding cycle in the 1997-1999 Biennium, the legislature has distributed \$879,506 in grants to five historic theaters. This represents 3 percent of the total Heritage Capital Project funds available and 5 percent of the total funding to historic theaters. Additional project investment generated by these grants amounts to \$1,759,012.00.

Historic theaters are eligible to apply for grant funding from both the Building for the Arts program and the Heritage Capital Projects Fund. However, applicants may not receive grants from both in the same biennium. (See [Table 3.2.2](#))

**TABLE 3.2.2 HERITAGE CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND GRANTS**

	1997-1999	1999-2001	2001-2003	2003-2005	2005-2007	2007-2009	TOTAL
Total Appropriation	\$4,100,000	\$4,000,000	\$4,198,130	\$4,500,000	\$4,612,500	\$10,000,000	\$31,410,636
Liberty - Dayton		\$180,000					\$180,000
Lincoln - Mt. Vernon			\$250,000				\$250,000
Fox - Spokane				\$56,925	\$102,000		\$158,925
Broadway - Tacoma					\$225,000		\$225,000
Village - Seattle					\$65,581		\$65,581
Total		\$180,000	\$250,000	\$56,925	\$392,581		\$879,506
Percentage to Historic Theaters	0%	5%	6%	1%	9%	0%	3%

### 3.2.3 COMMUNITY PROJECTS

These are direct legislative appropriations, generally without matching requirement. The projects are administered through the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development. Since the 2003-2005 Biennium, five historic theaters have received over \$7.5 million, representing 43 percent of the total funding to historic theaters. (See [Table 3.2.3](#))

TABLE 3.2.3 COMMUNITY PROJECT GRANTS				
	<u>2003-2005</u>	<u>2005-2007</u>	<u>2007-2009</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>
Fox Theater - Spokane	\$1,500,000	\$2,398,000	\$2,000,000	\$5,898,000
7th Street - Hoquiam	\$100,000	\$600,000		\$700,000
Capitol - Yakima	\$500,000			\$500,000
Paramount - Seattle	\$250,000			\$250,000
Mt. Baker - Bellingham		\$200,000		\$200,000
Totals	\$2,350,000	\$3,198,000	\$2,000,000	\$7,548,000



## 3.2.4 DAHP HISTORIC THEATER GRANTS

The Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (now the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation) operated a grant fund directed at historic theaters in 1991 - 1992. Funding totaled \$575,000, and grants were awarded to eight projects across the state. These grants represent 3 percent of the total funding to historic theaters. (See [Table 3.2.4](#))

TABLE 3.2.4 DAHP HISTORIC THEATER GRANTS				
THEATER GRANTS 1991-92				
Lincoln Theater - Mt. Vernon	\$4,847	\$11,000	\$28,500	\$44,347
Mt. Baker - Bellingham	\$114,000	\$61,410	\$22,037	\$197,447
Rialto Theater - Tacoma	\$234,048			\$234,048
Admiral - Seattle	\$23,800			\$23,800
Concrete Theater - Concrete	\$11,000			\$11,000
Raymond Theater - Raymond	\$16,000			\$16,000
Rose Theater - Port Townsend	\$43,353			\$43,353
Ruby Theater - Chelan	\$5,000			\$5,000
Total	\$452,048	\$72,410	\$50,537	\$574,995

### (Endnotes)

- <sup>1</sup> Revised Code of Washington 43.63A.750, Performing Arts, Art Museums, Cultural Facilities – Competitive Grant Program for Non-Profit Organizations, Section (1), 1999.
- <sup>2</sup> CTED Capital Programs, 2007-2009 Building for the Arts (BFA) Grant Guidelines, Washington state Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development, 2006, 5
- <sup>3</sup> Revised Code of Washington 27.34.330, Heritage Capital Projects, 1995.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid.

TABLE 3.2.4.1 GRANTS TO HISTORIC THEATERS 1991-2009

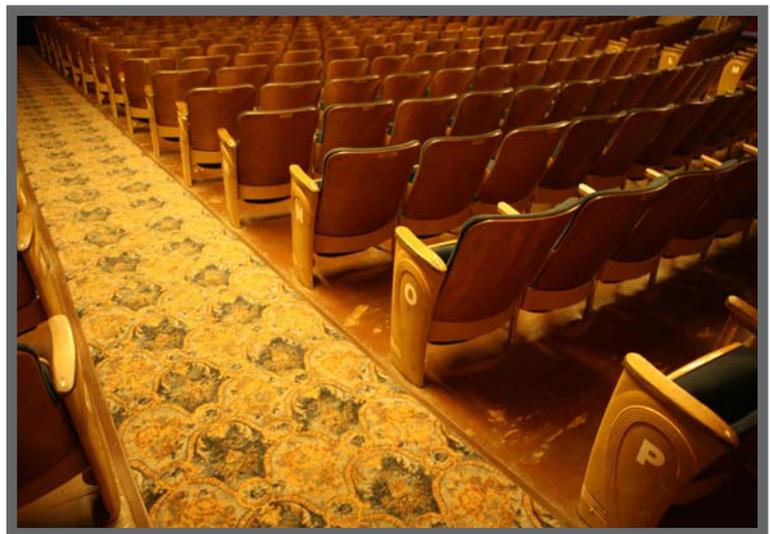
	1991-1993	1993-1995	1995-1997	1997-1999	1999-2001	2001-2003	2003-2005	2005-2007	2007-2009	TOTALS
Total All Funds Available	\$11,824,995	\$6,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$9,700,000	\$9,600,000	\$8,048,130	\$11,318,000	\$13,200,500	\$24,000,000	\$96,691,625
Paramount - Seattle			\$971,754				\$250,000		\$750,000	\$1,971,754
7th Street - Hoquiam							\$100,000	\$600,000		\$700,000
Lincoln - Mt. Vernon	\$44,347				\$250,000		\$110,000			\$404,347
Mt. Baker - Bellingham	\$197,447	\$237,150			\$128,000			\$200,000		\$762,597
Fox - Spokane					\$230,000		\$1,556,925	\$2,500,000	\$2,000,000	\$6,286,925
Admiral - Bremerton	\$639,000							\$180,000		\$819,000
Columbia - Longview			\$75,000		\$50,168				\$750,000	\$875,168
Broadway - Tacoma (2)	\$2,004,048				\$50,000		\$400,000	\$225,000		\$2,679,048
Capitol - Yakima							\$500,000			\$500,000
Admiral - Seattle	\$23,800									\$23,800
Concrete Theater - Concrete	\$11,000									\$11,000
Raymond Theater - Raymond	\$16,000									\$16,000
Rose Theater - Port Townsend	\$43,353									\$43,353
Ruby Theater - Chelan	\$5,000									\$5,000
WA Center - Olympia		\$60,000								\$60,000
ACT (Eagles) - Seattle			\$485,877							\$485,877
Little Theater - Walla Walla			\$15,000							\$15,000
Princess Theater - Prosser				\$115,000						\$115,000
Everett Theater - Everett					\$60,870		\$350,000	\$215,000		\$625,870
Harlequin (State) - Olympia					\$113,713				\$75,000	\$188,713
Harrington Opera House					\$23,412		\$13,000			\$36,412
Roxy - Morton								\$75,000		\$75,000
Empire - Tekoa								\$25,000		\$25,000
Village - Seattle								\$65,581	\$575,000	\$640,581
Liberty - Dayton								\$180,000		\$180,000
University Theater - Seattle									\$20,000	\$20,000
Totals	\$2,983,995	\$297,150	\$1,547,631	\$115,000	\$428,163	\$1,021,000	\$2,916,925	\$4,085,581	\$4,170,000	\$17,565,445
Percentage to Historic Theaters	25%	5%	52%	1%	4%	13%	26%	31%	17%	18%

\* Not all theaters listed above were included in this physical needs assessment.

## 3.3 EXISTING INCENTIVES

In addition to grant funding, Washington state supports the arts through a collection of tax incentives and financing tools. Local governments also play a major role in supporting the arts through grant programs, transfer of development rights programs, zoning incentives, and building code relief. The emphasis of all these programs is on facilities. While ongoing operations may be the biggest need for historic theaters, little assistance is available to support that need, particularly for private owners and operators. This section discusses the existing federal, state, and local incentives currently available and describes a proposal to support the arts that may be coming to the state legislature for discussion in the near future.

Historic theaters may draw upon tax incentives available through federal and state government for historic preservation and the arts. They may also, depending on the circumstances, be eligible to use tax incentives designed to promote affordable housing and economic development.



Columbia Theatre, Longview. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

### 3.3.1 FEDERAL TAX CREDITS

On the federal side, the most important historic preservation incentive is the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentive Program. This provides a 20 percent tax credit for substantial rehabilitation of properties certified as “contributing” to historic districts. Properties must be income-producing, and all work must meet the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. According to *The Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation in Washington state*, twenty-nine projects, representing \$131 million in expenditures, used the incentive through 2004. The majority of those projects are located in Seattle. The Eagles Auditorium in Seattle, rehabilitated for ACT Theatre, is a prime example of an historic theater utilizing these tax credits.

A 10 percent tax credit is also available for non-historic buildings built before 1936 that are not residential.

These credits, of course, are only useful for entities with tax liability. Nonprofits may still utilize the credit by forming limited partnerships with private investors who provide equity investments and hold an ownership position in the project for at least five years in exchange for the tax credits generated by rehabilitation.



### 3.3.2 STATE HISTORIC TAX CREDITS

On the state side, Special Valuation for Historic Properties is Washington state’s primary historic preservation incentive and reduces the tax penalty for undertaking substantial rehabilitation. Adopted in 1985, this legislation revises the assessed value of certain historic properties such that approved rehabilitation expenses are deducted for a period of ten years if the work is performed within twenty-four months of application. Special valuation is a local option and pertains only to classes of properties approved by county authorities. Eligible properties must either be listed to the National Register of Historic Places individually or as contributing properties to a historic district, or they must be listed to the local register of historic places established by a Certified Local Government (CLG). Applicants must undertake substantial, approved rehabilitation work that must be equal in cost to at least 25 percent of the assessed value of the structure before rehabilitation. Applicants must also agree to maintain the property and receive approval from a local review board prior to making any additional changes.

The Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation reports; between 2000 and 2004, 189 buildings statewide qualified for special valuation, generating \$342 million in rehabilitation activity. However, only 6 percent of those projects were located outside of the Seattle, Tacoma, and Spokane areas.



Carbon arc projector, Roxy Theater, Newport. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

TABLE 3.3 EXISTING INCENTIVES & FINANCING TOOLS

	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	NON-PROFIT
<b>Tax Incentives</b>			
<b>Federal</b>			
Investment Tax Credit-Historic Properties		x	x
New Market Tax Credits		x	x
Empowerment Zones & Renewal Communities (Yakima/Tacoma)		x	
Facade Easements		x	x
<b>State</b>			
<b>Property Tax</b>			
• Open Space		x	
• Performing Arts			x
• Special Valuation-Historic Properties		x	x
• Facade Easements		x	x
<b>Sales Tax</b>			
• Arts/Cultural			x
<b>Leasehold</b>			
• Historic Properties*	x		
• Public Facility Districts	x		
<b>B&amp;O Tax</b>			
• Arts/Cultural Organizations			x
<b>Grants</b>			
<b>Federal</b>			
Save America's Treasures	x		x
CDBG	x	x	x
<b>State</b>			
Building for the Arts	x		x
Heritage Capital Projects	x		x
Community Projects	x		x
<b>Local</b>			
Lodging (hotel/motel tax)	x		x
Historic Documents Surcharge	x		x
Private Foundations	x		x
<b>Financing/Governance Tools</b>			
<b>State</b>			
<b>Housing Finance Commission</b>			
• Tax-Exempt Bonds			x
• Low-Interest Loans**			x
Public Facility Districts	x		
Cultural, Arts, Stadium Districts	x		
<b>Local</b>			
Transfer Development Rights		x	x
Public Development Authorities	x		x
Zoning Bonuses		x	x
Process Incentives		x	x

\* Applies to projects owned by a municipality, listed on the national or state register of historic places, and located in a national historic reserve.

\*\* Capital Plus - partnership with the WA Community Reinvestment Association (WCRA)



### 3.3.3 FACADE EASEMENTS

Facade easements are voluntary agreements whereby property owners give up a portion of their property rights to a government entity or a nonprofit preservation organization established to protect historic structures. Once recorded, easements run with the title of a property and generally restrict inappropriate changes in the exterior appearance in perpetuity. Agreements are usually developed that stipulate what is being delivered in the easement and defines the responsibilities and expectations of both the easement donor and the receiving organization. The difference between the values of the property before and after the easement is in place may qualify as charitable contributions for purposes of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Properties must be listed to the National Register of Historic Places or to a local register and must be accessible to the public. A professional, qualified appraisal is required to meet IRS guidelines.



Undated historic interior view of Bullitt Cabaret, ACT Theatre, Seattle. Source: courtesy of ACT Theatre.

## 3.3.4 OTHER FEDERAL TAX INCENTIVES

In addition to historic tax incentives, historic theaters may qualify for the following federal tax programs.

### 3.3.4.1 NEW MARKET TAX CREDITS

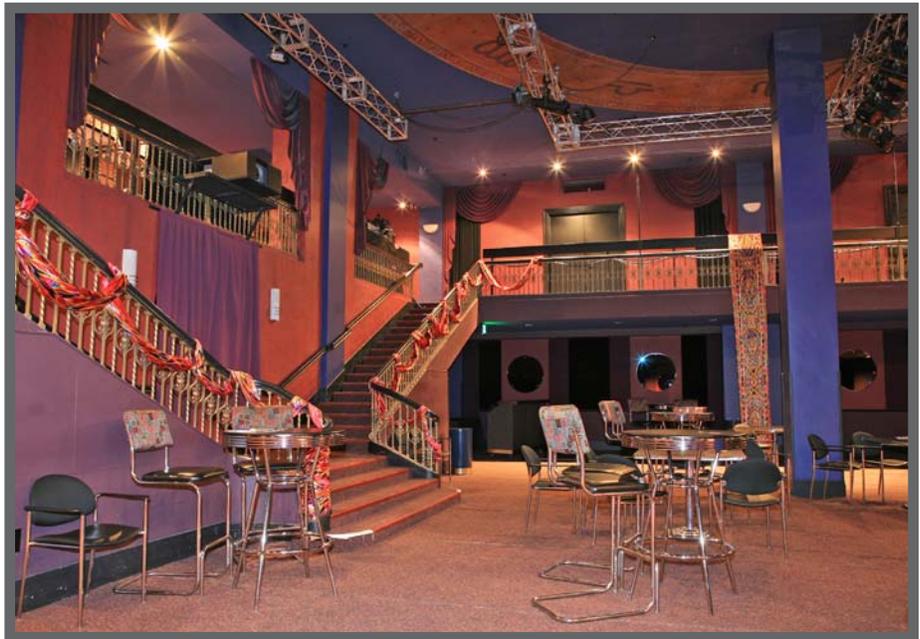
New Market Tax Credits is a federal incentive designed to encourage investment in low-income areas that have difficulty accessing capital. The credits are available to Community Development Entities that then partner with equity investors to loan funds to qualified projects in designated low-income communities. The 39 percent credit is available to commercial and mixed-use projects that include residential rental units. Cultural facilities are considered commercial projects. The Historic Preservation tax credit and the New Market Tax credit may be “twinned” to provide even more equity for qualifying projects. The Capitol Theatre in Yakima anticipates using these credits in their major rehabilitation efforts.

### 3.3.4.2 COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT ZONES & RENEWAL COMMUNITIES

Renewal Communities are federally designated and refer to urban neighborhoods that are economically distressed. Businesses looking to locate or expand in these areas are eligible for certain wage credits, deductions, investment incentives, bond financing, and regulatory relief in order to create jobs. In addition, they are eligible, as distressed communities, to apply for Low-Income Housing and New Market Tax Credits. Washington Renewal Communities include portions of Yakima and Tacoma. More information on eligibility is available at the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Community Renewal Initiative website: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/economicdevelopment/programs/rc>

Community Empowerment Zones are created by the state government and also provide various tax deferrals and credits to support neighborhood revitalization. Portions of six Washington communities are designated, including areas in Bremerton, Yakima, King County, Tacoma, and Spokane. More information about Community Empowerment Zones can be found at the state’s Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development website: <http://www.cted.wa.gov>.

These programs are aimed at assisting private businesses in disadvantaged neighborhoods. While theater owners and operations would not be traditional clients of these programs, they may apply in individual cases. Renewal Communities, in particular, provide a Commercial Revitalization Deduction for substantial rehabilitation of commercial buildings in those areas.



Bullitt Cabaret, ACT Theatre, Seattle. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



## 3.3.5 OTHER STATE TAX INCENTIVES

The state of Washington provides several tax incentives that are either specifically targeted to supporting the arts, or can be used to reduce tax burdens on historic theaters. Those incentives include the property, sales, leasehold excise, and business and occupation taxes as well as federal, state and local grants.

### 3.3.5.1 PROPERTY TAX

Performing Arts Organizations (RCW 84.36.060): Established in 1981, this provides exemptions on real and personal property owned or leased to nonprofits involved in productions and performances of musical, dance, artistic, dramatic, or literary works. Approximately eighty-eight parcels owned by sixty-six organizations statewide are eligible.

### 3.3.5.2 SALES TAX

Arts and Cultural Organizations (RCW 82.12.031): This exempts items purchased by artists and cultural organizations acquired for exhibitions or presentations from retail sales/use tax. Items used to provide cultural presentations and performances are included. Approximately 300 to 350 artists and cultural organizations are eligible.

### 3.3.5.3 LEASEHOLD EXCISE TAX

Historic Property (RCW 82.29A.130): This exempts property owned by a municipality or the federal government from leasehold excise tax if it is listed to a state or federal register of historic places and is located within a designated national historic reserve. This exemption currently only applies in Clark County.

Public Facility Districts: This exempts property owned by public facilities districts, including sports facilities, entertainment venues, conference and convention centers, and special events facilities.

### 3.3.5.4 BUSINESS & OCCUPATION TAX

Arts/Cultural Organizations (RCW 82.04.4322, 4324, 4326 and 4327): This provides Business & Occupation (B&O) tax deductions for revenue to performing arts groups and art history museums derived from government grants, tuitions, manufactured items, and business income (charges for admission).

### 3.3.5.5 OTHER GRANTS

State-sponsored capital grants to historic theaters have contributed over \$17.5 million to support facility rehabilitation. Other potential grant sources are briefly mentioned below.

#### *Federal Grant Sources*

A few federal grants are available to historic theaters. Save America's Treasures (SAT) is a grant program provided by the partnership between the National Park Service and the National Trust for Historic Preservation; it distributes \$20 to \$30 million in grants annually. The partnership also raises private funds in support of national significant landmarks. Approximately 50 percent of the funding is earmarked by Congress. Eligibility for these grants is quite rigorous, as applicants must be listed to the National Register of Historic Places and be considered nationally significant. Few Washington theaters meet this standard. Theaters that have received grants include the Admiral in Bremerton and the Fox in Spokane.

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) is another source of federal grant options that are often used to support community revitalization efforts in disadvantaged areas. Block grants are administered by the state



Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development in rural areas and by local governments in larger, urban areas. Block grants may be used for theater rehabilitation, as well as housing and commercial development; however, theaters must compete with other local funding priorities, and they must be located in areas that qualify to receive funding. As CDBG are federal funds, they do not have the same prohibitions regarding lending of credit as state funds and may be a more flexible financing tool.

### *State Grant Sources*

The Washington state Arts Commission provides grants for operations through its Institutional Support Program. The purpose of this program is “...to support a portion of the total operating costs, including program and administrative, of each participating organization.” Qualified applicants are arts nonprofits or government agencies with at least seven years of operations, a paid staff, and an annual operating income of over \$577,000. Selected organizations and institutions receive a minimum award of \$10,000 with additional amounts pro-rated amongst the successful applicants.

### *Local Grant Sources*

The state’s Lodging Tax offers opportunities for local governments to invest in tourism infrastructure, which, by extension, may help support capital and operating needs of historic theaters. RCW 67.28.180 allows counties to impose a basic 2 percent sales/use tax on forms of lodging. An additional 2 percent may be imposed for a total of 4 percent as long as the total of the sales tax, lodging tax, and other special district sales taxes do not exceed 12 percent. This funding is to be used exclusively for tourism promotion and/or acquisition and operations of tourism-related facilities.

Tourism promotion is defined as:

*... activities and expenditures designed to increase tourism, including but not limited to advertising, publicizing, or otherwise distributing information for the purpose of attracting and welcoming tourists; developing strategies to expand tourism; operating tourism promotion agencies; and funding marketing of special events and festivals designed to attract tourists.*

Tourism-related facilities are defined as:

*... real or tangible personal property with a usable life of three or more years, or constructed with volunteer labor, and used to support tourism, performing arts, or to accommodate tourist activities.*

In the statute, acquisition includes:

*... siting, acquisition, design, construction, refurbishing, expansion, repair, and improvement, including paying or securing the payment of all or any portion of general obligation bonds, leases, revenue bonds, or other obligations issued or incurred for such purpose or purposes under this chapter.*

The facilities that might be eligible for funding through this local program must be operated primarily for tourists. Facilities must also be owned and operated by county government or a partnership involving other municipalities or private parties.

Local lodging tax advisory committees, composed of businesses that collect the tax and activities that receive tax revenues, determine grant priorities and funding. The state Department of Revenue reports that for the period ending in 2000, thirty-eight counties collected basic lodging taxes, amounting to \$17.3 million. King County collected the bulk of that amount at \$14 million. Fourteen counties also collect the special tax, which generated \$4.3 million.



In most cities and counties, lodging taxes may be used by historic theaters for capital needs in select circumstances. The most far-reaching use, however, may be as a tool to promote visitation to and productions in historic theaters in the same city or county. The situation is quite different in King County.

The lodging tax is used in King County to fund a wide array of cultural programs. The King County Lodging Tax for Culture was established in 1987 in order to pay the bonds for the construction of the Kingdome. Part of the tax revenue over \$5.3 million must be set aside to support arts and heritage activities through 2012, at which time the bonds are to be retired. This funding has profoundly affected arts and heritage organizations and facilities in King County. According to 4Culture, a county public development authority created to manage arts and heritage funding, the tax has been used to create the following impacts:

- *New arts facilities and local history museums in communities throughout King County;*
- *Expanded opportunities for suburban and rural audiences to attend and participate in the arts;*
- *A regional network of local arts agencies providing cultural programs for their local communities;*
- *Education programs in all King County public school districts;*
- *More than 200 arts and heritage organizations receiving annual support for programs;*
- *\$844 million in economic impact annually, including \$300 million in “new money,” spent by visitors; and,*
- *7 million visitors to cultural events each year.*

This funding will significantly diminish after 2012. 4Culture is required to place 40 percent of current revenues in an endowment, the interest from which will then be used to continue programs after 2012. But because of rules around public investments, and a weakening economy, the endowment will be far below projections. Lodging tax revenue from 2012 to 2020 is dedicated to retiring the bonds used to build Qwest Field. The legislature took action in 2008 in SB 6638, which sets up a committee to study the allocation of all visitor tax revenues. The report is due in 2009.

In 2005, the legislature passed HB 1386, which provided for a Historic Documents Surcharge to fund the preservation of historic documents. The bill calls for a surcharge of \$5 per recorded instrument. One dollar of that surcharge is to be placed in the county general and used at the discretion of the county commissioners in order to fund historic preservation or historic programs. In larger, more populated counties, this fund has the potential to provide significant support to historic preservation projects. However, many counties have not yet developed processes to distribute funding.



## 3.3.6 FINANCING AND REGULATORY TOOLS

A variety of financing tools exist to help the rehabilitation of historic theaters. Nonprofit organizations offer financing services. The state provides access to tax exempt bonds, low interest loans, and the authority to create special use districts. Local governments use transfer of development rights, zoning bonuses, and building code relief in order to assist theater construction and rehabilitation.

### 3.3.6.1 HISTORIC THEATER FINANCING FUND

In a joint effort between the League of Historic American Theatres and the National Trust Community Investment Corporation, the Historic Theater Financing Fund helps theater owners to access federal and state tax credits, to produce equity in order to finance rehabilitation projects, and reduce the amount of money needed through conventional financing or fundraising. The fund uses the federal historic preservation tax credits and the New Market tax credits. It is available to members of the League of Historic American Theatres. Theaters must be historic—either listed to or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places—or, if not historic, be built before 1936.

#### *Housing Finance Commission*

The state Housing Finance Commission has two programs that could provide assistance to historic theaters. Its nonprofit program provides tax-exempt bonds to finance land, buildings, and equipment consistent with the nonprofit mission, which includes the following:

- *Construction and rehabilitation of buildings;*
- *Purchase of land, equipment, and buildings;*
- *Refinancing of existing capital debt;*
- *Lease or purchase of equipment; and,*
- *Development and feasibility study costs, such as architectural, engineering, accounting, and legal costs directly related to the project and its development can also be financed.*

Nonprofit theaters and performance halls are eligible applicants.

Capital Plus is a \$3 million fund that is available to nonprofits for low-interest loans for financing capital expenses, equipment purchases, or capital leases. The fund is a collaborative effort between the Housing Finance Commission and the Washington Community Reinvestment Corporation. Maximum loans are \$500,000 at interest rates quoted at 4.75 percent to 6 percent.

### 3.3.6.2 SPECIAL USE DISTRICTS

Two special taxing districts are available at the option of local governments to support theater rehabilitation:

*1) Cultural, Arts, Stadium and Convention Center Districts (RCW 67.38): The legislature created this tool in 1982 to assist, “. . . the construction, modification, renovation, and operation of facilities for cultural arts, stadium and convention uses.” Cities and counties may create districts, which are quasi-municipal corporations with the authority to issue revenue bonds backed by a voter-approved increment increase in property taxes. Funding is for capital expenses only. No such districts currently exist in Washington.*

*2) Public Facilities Districts (RCW 35.57): These districts were created in 1999 as means to finance large publicly-owned regional centers, defined as, “. . . a convention, conference, or special events center, or any combination of facilities, and related parking facilities, serving a regional population constructed, improved, or rehabilitated after July 25, 1999, at a cost of at least ten mil-*



lion dollars, including debt service.” Special event centers are defined as, “. . . facilities, available to the public, used for community events, sporting events, trade shows, and artistic, musical, theatrical, or other cultural exhibitions, presentations, or performances.” District creation is restricted by population size. These districts are also quasi-municipal corporations and may issue revenue bonds backed by an admissions tax and parking taxes. RCW 82.14.390 amended the original bill to include the ability to use sales and use taxes to defray revenue bonds. The sales tax mechanism is a deferral of a portion of the state sales tax collected. Currently, several local governments are using this vehicle to finance historic theater rehabilitation, including the Columbia Theater in Longview (\$6.1 million), the Capitol Theatre in Yakima (\$10 million in phases 2 and 3), and the Mount Baker in Bellingham (\$4.1 million).

The Prosperity Partnership of the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) is supporting an additional financing tool in order to support operations of science and cultural facilities. One of the partnership’s proposals is the creation of a Cultural Access Fund that would allow increased educational programs, free attendance, discounted tickets, and stabilized budgets for organizations. The Cultural Access Fund proposal requires the legislature to enable single or multi-county regions to form cultural access districts in order to receive funding generated from either a state sales tax credit or a voter approved 1 percent increase in sales tax. PSRC anticipates this vehicle could raise \$60 to \$80 million annually in the four-county region consisting of King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Kitsap counties.

The Cultural Access Fund is modeled on the Science and Cultural Facilities District in Denver. Since 1988, it has provided an estimated \$38 million in annual funding to more than 300 arts, cultural, and heritage organizations in seven counties. The legislature renewed the statute in 1994. Voters overwhelmingly re-authorized the district in 2004 for a period of fourteen years.

### 3.3.6.3 TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

The transfer of development rights (TDR) involves voluntary, market-driven transactions. In such a transaction, property owners transfer their rights to build to maximum allowable standards from areas where communities wish to discourage development to those where they wish to focus development. In the case of historic theaters, most of which are located in downtown areas, the concept is that they could trade their rights to build taller buildings to developers looking to maximize the allowable base density of other projects in the area. TDRs are generally private transactions, but some communities, including Seattle, purchase development rights and bank them for future use.

With the loss of the historic Music Hall in Seattle in 1991, the city expanded its existing TDR program to include landmark theaters. The program provided over \$2 million in funding for the rehabilitation of the Paramount Theater and the Eagles Auditorium. Seattle disbanded this narrowly focused program in 1997 in favor of an expanded TDR program available to local historic landmarks and other uses. To date, only Seattle and Clark County have used TDRs for historic preservation purposes. In order for TDRs to work effectively, enough development pressure must exist to make the unused development rights of historic theaters valuable. With the recent decision to increase heights and densities in downtown Seattle, the TDR program may be less compelling to developers.

### 3.3.6.4 ZONING INCENTIVES

Zoning bonus programs are typical in large metropolitan areas. They award developers increased heights and densities in exchange for the developer providing certain amenities. Historic preservation, theater preservation, and new performing arts spaces are typical amenities in bonus programs. Developers are still constrained by maximum height and density standards, but the ability to gain marketable commercial floor area in exchange for including certain facilities and activities that may enhance the overall value of the project is a powerful

incentive. Other zoning incentives typically may involve exemptions from parking, setbacks, or landscape requirements for historic structures.

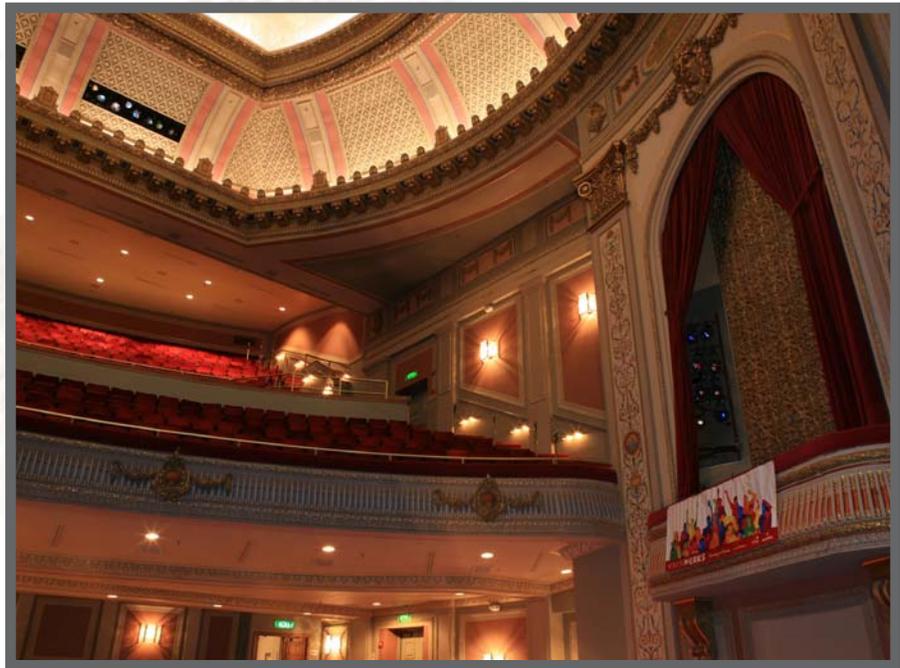
### 3.3.6.5 PROCESS INCENTIVES

Local governments can create additional incentives for historic theater rehabilitation by providing relief within the permit process and through sensitive application of building codes. Streamlined permitting, which may involve “fast-tracking” theater projects and accelerated reviews, pre-approved checklists for environmental reviews, and more flexible design review standards.

Building code relief is a function of thoroughly understanding the allowances within the code for historic buildings. The International Building Code (IBC) is the adopted building code in Washington state. Its sister code—the International Existing Building Code (IEBC)—has been adopted in some jurisdictions. Both codes provide for flexible approaches to older properties that allow historic characteristics to be retained while still meeting modern life safety standards. Historic theaters represent a huge challenge within building codes. Typically, local theater owners and code officials work closely to monitor life safety issues. The IEBC provides some relief by allowing owners to incrementally improve standards over time in order to eventually meet full code compliance. In some communities, building departments have the authority to modify specific requirements of the building code for landmark properties as long as safety standards are not compromised.



## 4.0 IDEAS & CONSIDERATIONS



*Capitol Theatre. Photograph by Susan Johnson, Artifacts Consulting, Inc.*

In this chapter, opportunities for future historic theater support are outlined. Section 4.1 **Business Related Technical Assistance** presents some of the unique obstacles threatening continued theater operation along with ideas for addressing those obstacles. Section 4.2 **Proposed Historic Theaters Program** deals with the limitations and patterns in theater support from the state to date. This section also describes a potential model for a holistic theater preservation program. The model builds on existing technical expertise within the Washington state Arts Commission and the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation along with the creation of a theater preservation fund.



Kiggins Theatre, Vancouver. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



## 4.1 BUSINESS RELATED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

A successful theater operation is a complex amalgam of meeting patrons' expectations for ambiance, customer service, cleanliness, comfort, ticket/concessions prices, and the variety of films/performances available. Simply addressing the physical needs of each building limits the scope of support historic theaters need. During the course of this survey and physical needs assessment, it was discovered that each theater has an individual situation, an individual set of needs. Some do not need much assistance with regard to restoration, but they need seismic retrofitting or general updating of seating, projection systems, and other elements that will likely not be considered for state funding. Other theaters need restoration that should be combined with increased marketing. This section will address some of the potential areas where technical assistance might benefit historic theater operations and help ensure continued survival.

One obstacle that many historic theaters in Washington face is an outdated business model. Single-screen cinema owners generally realize the challenge of maintaining an aging building while still operating a viable business. However, being a successful manager of a small theater requires a diverse set of knowledge and skills. Running a business and running a theater, including projection and the other technical aspects, are often required of the same individual. In general, the technical expertise is paramount and the business expertise often learned by necessity.

Some managers have met the challenge of competing with cineplexes by offering their patrons something special, like presenting background information on the featured movie before the screening or offering ticket/concession deals. Financially successful theaters are clean, comfortable, and have established relationships with their patrons. They are destinations unto themselves but also integral parts of their communities. Successful managers are keenly aware of the types of films or live performances their local audience desires; they know the appropriate price of a ticket and generally have good business instincts. Theaters, that face financial challenges, may need guidance with improving various aspects of their business model or assistance conducting a market assessment/survey in order to increase profits and sustainability. In some cases, a third party perspective on the visitor experience would be useful feedback.

Several nonprofit-operated, performing arts theaters offer drama education or training in addition to their ticketed events. Many theaters function as venues for community events, like band fundraisers or political debates. For those theaters that are struggling to build or maintain community relationships, outside assistance in the form of strategic planning with a consultant could be beneficial.

In some cases, a theater is operated by a nonprofit organization and relies heavily on volunteers and board members. A consulting service for such theaters would be an excellent resource, as theaters could learn how to more effectively use volunteers, train board members, and organize and utilize the physical space of their building for maximum benefit. Increased planning for all ownership models along with increased connections to available funding sources (for capacity building, for mural restoration, etc.) would be ideal.

Effective marketing of historic theaters is a broad topic with many possibilities. Many theaters are already advertising through email newsletters, upcoming events flyers, and individual business websites. However, theaters without a website could use assistance designing one. Some theater owners may need an outside business consultant to reexamine existing marketing mechanisms in order to explore means for improvement or options for promoting themselves

Another idea to consider is a Theaters Guide to Washington. Modeled on the Artists Guide to Seattle, created by the Seattle Visitors Bureau, perhaps a Theaters Guide could provide the public information about historic theaters or upcoming performances. Group marketing for Washington's historic theaters could also coincide



with future regional film festivals. Private and nonprofit organizations for theater preservation, such as Cinema Treasures or the League of Historic American Theaters, are potential resources for any future marketing efforts.

One of the most pressing issues for single-screen cinemas is the high cost of film licensing and the high percentage of profit taking by the studios. Further study should be done on the details, but licensing fees appear to range from \$200 to over \$400 per film. Profit taking refers to the amount of ticket sales a movie studio will demand back from each theater. There are complex formulas that take into consideration national box office performance and the length of time a film has been in release, but basically 80 to 90 percent of ticket sales may go back to a movie studio. Chain-owned cineplexes are given financial incentives that offset these profit takings, but independent theaters do not receive such benefits. With few exceptions, all the cinemas in this survey are single-screen, and independently owned and operated. Advocacy for the conglomerate of single-screen cinemas could address some of the challenges they face from the film industry.

Similarly, the challenges of booking live stage acts in small venues, especially in remote communities, could be resolved if approached cooperatively among the theaters. One idea is a reinvention of the historic vaudeville circuit model. For example, a historic theaters organization or theater liaison with a statewide arts council might act as facilitator in choosing acts to book with multiple small theaters. A given performer might have only one or two appearances with multiple theaters, but overall they would have enough shows to make the trip worthwhile. Small theaters could then share the booking costs, thereby increasing profit margins. In summary, outside consultants or facilitators could assist with the following areas of technical assistance:

- *Fully integrating historic theaters into their communities;*
- *Increasing sustainability and effectiveness of business models;*
- *Using volunteers and boards of directors more efficiently;*
- *Building organizational capacity;*
- *Connecting owners/managers to funding sources;*
- *Marketing on multiple levels and through multiple mediums;*
- *Lobbying film establishment to reduce licensing fees and profit taking for independent, single-screen cinemas; and,*
- *Collaborating on performance schedules to increase offerings and reduce booking costs.*



New Ritz Theater, Ritzville. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.

## 4.2 PROPOSED HISTORIC THEATERS PROGRAM

During the course of this study, several key issues emerged that influenced the thinking of the study team about a recommended approach to supporting historic theaters in Washington. These issues have led the team to encourage consideration of a comprehensive program around historic theaters that incorporates the skills and services available through both the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) and the Washington state Arts Commission (WSAC) in order to support both building rehabilitation activities and business and organizational development, resulting in safe, beautiful, and functional buildings housing vital and dynamic programming.

The findings that drive this recommendation include:

- *Theater ownership patterns: Of the eighty historic theaters identified in Washington, fifty-four, or nearly 70 percent, are privately owned.*
- *Public investment: Since 1991, the State of Washington has invested \$17.5 million in historic theaters through various grant programs and direct appropriations—an average of just over \$1 million per fiscal year.*
- *Funding patterns: Of the eighty historic theaters, twenty-two, or just over 27 percent, received state-sponsored funding since 1991. The bulk of available funding has gone to larger theaters in larger communities. Eight of those twenty-two state-funded historic theaters are in Seattle, Tacoma, Spokane, or Everett and received 73 percent of the funding. Recipients of the largest amount of funding include the Fox Theater in Spokane (\$6.3 million), the Broadway (Pantages, Rialto) Theaters in Tacoma (\$2.7 million), and the Paramount Theater in Seattle (\$2 million). Communities with a population under 100,000 have 88 percent of the historic theaters and shared 22 percent of the provided funding.*
- *Capital needs: The physical needs surveys reveal that the most pressing needs for historic theaters are—in order of concern—roofs, interior plaster work, exterior facades, building systems upgrades, and marquees.*
- *Existing grants programs: Building for the Arts and the Heritage Capital Projects Fund both provide funding for public and nonprofit-owned historic theaters. While both grant programs conduct application workshops, neither is staffed to provide technical assistance to potential grantees, particularly the specialized needs of theaters. The match requirements of each grant fund (80 percent and 66 percent respectively) are beyond the means of many smaller theaters. Both funds manage only a single grant round per biennium, which eliminates any funding for emergency situations.*
- *Operations: All theaters face challenges with ongoing operations, particularly with rising energy and production costs, flat local economies, and film distribution systems that favor multi-plexes over smaller independent movie houses. Other challenges are more fundamental. Many independent theater operators lack the skills and information to make their businesses more successful. Theaters owned by nonprofits often need assistance with organizational development and, particularly, with developing effective capital campaigns. Currently, little specialized technical assistance is available to the owners/operators of historic theaters. The proposed Cultural Access Fund legislation may offer communities another important option to support arts programming and operations.*

Based on these findings, the study team concludes the following:

- *A program targeted to the special capital and business needs of historic theaters by incorporating both grants support and ongoing technical assistance is the optimum way for the state to support long-term success and protect its investment.*
- *An active, organized network of historic theater owners/operators is needed to share information.*

- *Technical assistance is required to assist with market analyses and business models, to support organizational development and local capital campaigns, to develop marketing and cultural tourism strategies, and to build historic theater circuits for productions and programming.*
- *Private theater owners must be able to access support in order to keep their landmark buildings and local arts programming operational.*
- *All theater owners need access to building and theater professionals, such as architects, structural engineers, and lighting engineers, in order to adequately assess building needs and costs and to be able to stage rehabilitation activities in the most appropriate and cost-effective ways.*
- *Well-defined programs of rehabilitation will create better grant requests to Building for the Arts and the Heritage Capital Projects Fund.*
- *A new grants program specifically targeting historic theaters provides better across-the-board access to funding for this special building type.*
- *Grant funding should be targeted to the most pressing aspects of theater rehabilitation: roofs, interior plaster work, exterior facades, building systems upgrades, and marquees.*



Metropolitan Performing Arts Center, Spokane. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



## 4.2.1 THE PROGRAM

The study team suggests that the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) and the Washington state Arts Commission (WSAC) collaborate on a new approach that capitalizes on their networks and expertise and that brings new resources to the eighty historic theaters in Washington. The goal of the Washington Historic Theaters Program is to revive and strengthen historic theaters as the cultural and economic hubs of Washington communities. (Refer to program diagram on the following page.)

The program includes three major elements: technical assistance, an assessment track, and a theater stabilization grants fund. Each of these elements is briefly outlined below:

- *Technical Assistance: This element builds and manages a historic theaters network, provides technical information, directs owners/operators to sources of funding and financing, supports training and workshops, and assists with business and organizational development needs. DAHP and WSAC work jointly to determine how to best handle requests and coordinate responses.*
- *Assessment Track: Resources are provided to focus comprehensive assistance to historic theaters that are or are about to be engaged in major rehabilitation activities. In this approach, teams created by DAHP and WSAC analyze building, programming, and business issues for the purpose of recommending a comprehensive direction for owners/operators. The goals are to help them focus their resources most effectively, improve financing models and grant applications, and create better business plans in order to support the programming necessary for ongoing building maintenance. Participation in the assessment should be voluntary and not be a prerequisite to grant funding. It is anticipated, however, that in many cases participation will result in increased applications for all grant sources.*
- *Theater Stabilization Grants Fund: A matching grant program targeted to the critical capital needs identified in the survey provides access to funding to all of Washington's historic theaters. This grant fund focuses on the most important building elements related to safety and maintaining the historic integrity of theaters, which, if not attended to, might directly lead to closure or demolition. Owners/operators should be able to apply to Building for the Arts or the Heritage Capital Projects Fund as appropriate for needs beyond those addressed in the stabilization program.*
- *Historic Theater Advisory Committee: An advisory committee composed of representatives from private sector, the arts and heritage communities, local elected officials, and the legislature would be charged with developing the details of the program, defining grant criteria, and making grant decisions.*

### 4.2.1.1 DAHP/WSAC ROLES

The Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) and the Washington state Arts Commission (WSAC) bring crucial tools, skills, and networks to the administration of the Historic Theaters Program. DAHP's understanding of historic buildings, financial incentives, tax credits, and sources for technical expertise is essential to building owners and community intent with regard to protecting their historic assets. WSAC brings its existing programs, a broad understanding of the business side of the arts, as well as an extensive network of artists, volunteers, theater designers/engineers, and community arts donors to the table. Together, these two agencies could build a national model for collaboration that supports a comprehensive approach to saving the cultural cornerstones of our communities for future generations.



### 4.2.1.2 FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

The state has invested considerable resources in historic theaters since 1991. In order to protect that investment and to build on the momentum of this study, the new Historic Theaters Program should be funded at a level that provides adequate support for the technical assistance and assessment elements and at least equals the precedent in average annual grant funding to historic theaters. Subject to review by all parties, the technical assistance and assessment costs of the program are estimated to be approximately \$650,000 for the biennium. It is recommended that the grants program be funded at \$2 million for the biennium.

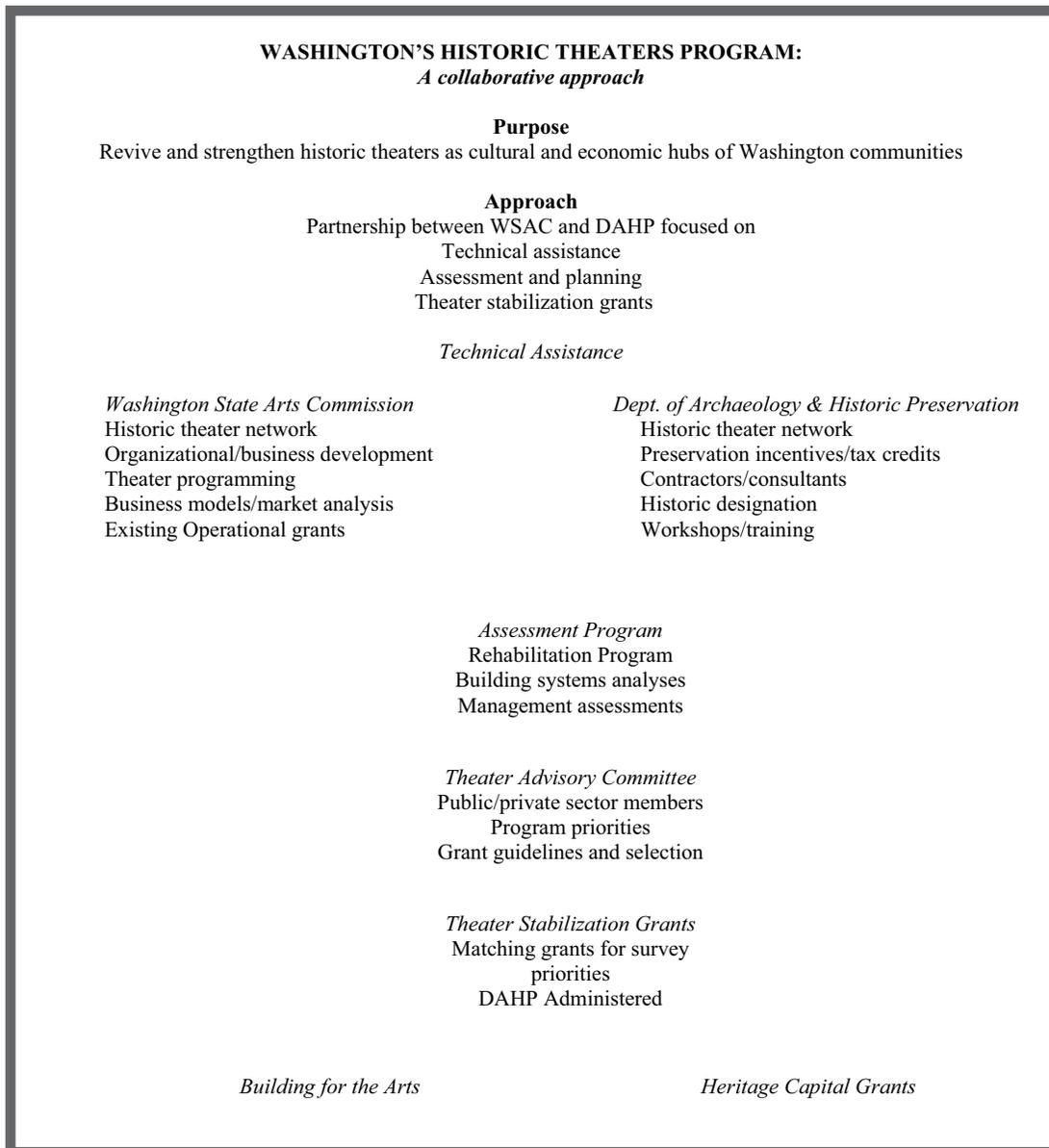
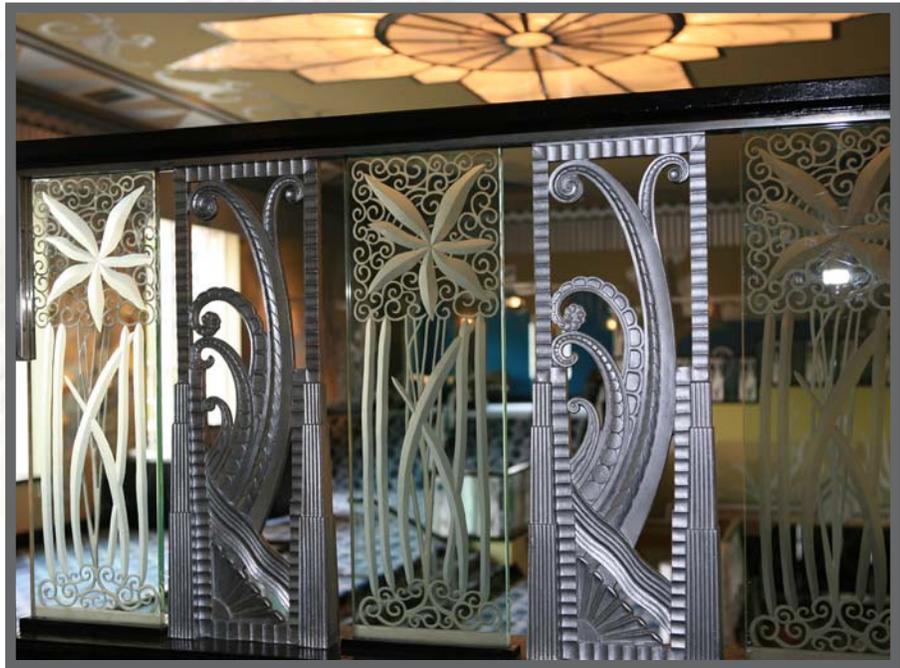


Diagram of the theater program model. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc. 2008.



## 5.0 SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

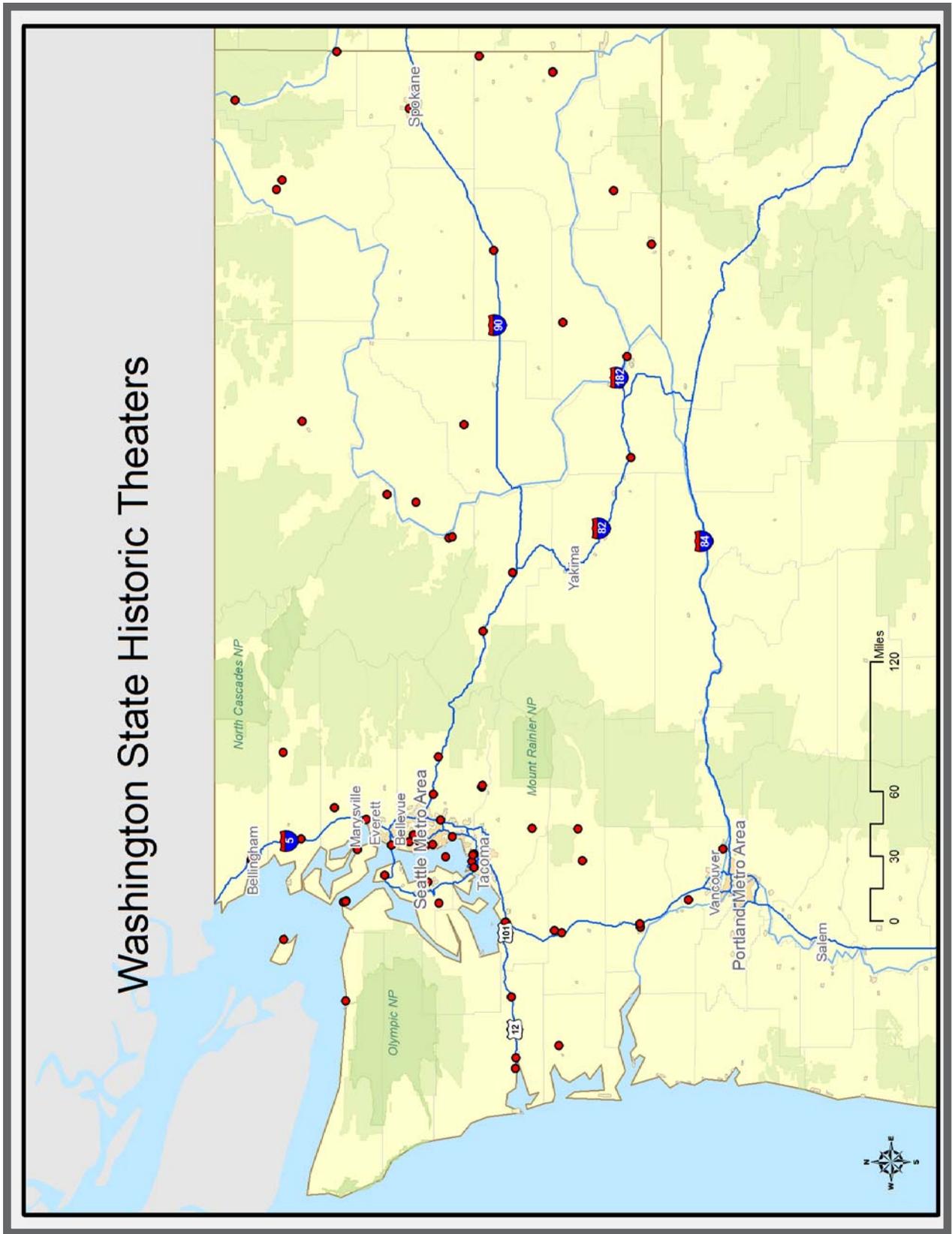


*Fox Theater. Photograph by Susan Johnson, Artifacts Consulting, Inc.*

**T**his chapter serves as an appendix for the report. The first section, [5.1 Maps](#), contains a state map displaying the locations of all eighty historic theaters. Due to the close proximity of some theaters, a single icon may be present where there is more than one theater. Section [5.2 Bibliography](#) contains the resources consulted during the research conducted for this report.



# 5.1 MAPS



## 5.1.1 LIST OF SURVEYED THEATERS

- *5th Avenue Theatre*
- *7th St. Theatre*
- *ACT Theatre*
- *Admiral Theatre (Bremerton)*
- *Admiral Theatre (Seattle)*
- *Alpine Theater*
- *Audian Theatre*
- *Auto Vue Drive-In*
- *Blue Mouse Theater*
- *Capitol Theater (Olympia)*
- *Capitol Theatre (Yakima)*
- *Chehalis Theatre*
- *Clyde Theater*
- *Columbia Theatre of the Performing Arts*
- *Concrete Theater*
- *D & R Theater*
- *Elma Theater*
- *Everett Theatre*
- *Fox Theatre (Centralia)*
- *Fox Theater (Spokane)*
- *G Theater*
- *Garland Theatre*
- *Grand Theatre, Taproot Theatre*
- *Guild 45th Theatre I*
- *Kelso Theater*
- *Kenyon Hall*
- *Kiggins Theatre*
- *Lee Theatre*
- *Liberty Theater (Ellensburg)*
- *Liberty Theatre (Wenatchee)*
- *Lincoln Theatre*
- *Lynwood Theater*
- *Metropolitan Performing Arts Center (MET)*
- *Moore Theatre*
- *Mt. Baker Theatre*
- *Narrows Theater*
- *Neptune Theatre*
- *New Ritz Theatre*
- *Nifty Theatre*
- *North Bend Theater*
- *Old Liberty Theater*
- *Olympic Theatre*
- *Omak Cinema*
- *Pantages Theater*
- *Paramount Theater*
- *Princess Theater*
- *Raymond Theatre*
- *Renton Civic Theater*



- *Rialto Theater*
- *Richland Theater*
- *Rose Theater*
- *Roxy Theatre*
- *Ruby Theater*
- *State Theater*
- *Sunset Theatre*
- *Tekoa Empire Theater*
- *Temple Theater*
- *Uptown Theater*
- *Varsity Theater*
- *Village Theater*
- *Liberty II*
- *Vogue Theater*
- *Vue Dale Drive-In Theater*
- *Joseph F. Wheeler Theater*





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