



Lee Foster
Executive Director

October 28, 2025

Columbus City Council
City Hall
1111 1st Avenue, 3rd Floor
Columbus, Georgia 31901

Dear City Council:

Reinvesting in the Arts: RiverCenter at 25

RiverCenter for the Performing Arts is the beating heart of Columbus—a stunning cultural landmark that unites our entire community through world-class performances, educational outreach, and partnerships that enrich the city’s social, economic, and artistic vitality. As RiverCenter approaches its 25th anniversary in April 2027, many core systems require critical upgrades to ensure continued safe and reliable operations for national touring productions, local arts organizations, and the more than 190,000 patrons who attend over 600 events each year.

Reinvesting in the Arts: RiverCenter at 25 capital campaign is an \$8.5 million initiative to proactively modernize HVAC units, chillers, and humidifiers; replace the generator, switchgear, and elevators; repair roofs and sealants; enhance the Bill Heard Theatre’s technical systems and seating; and refresh aesthetic features such as carpets, fountains, and the Broadway median. With \$1.38 million already pledged and \$2.5 million pending, we are still in RiverCenter’s quiet phase of this effort. We respectfully request \$4.25 million from the State of Georgia—representing 50% of the project cost—to complete these vital improvements. This phased, two-year investment will prevent system failures, preserve RiverCenter’s legacy as a cornerstone of cultural life, and sustain downtown Columbus’ economic and civic vitality for decades to come.

For questions about the vital capital campaign or about RiverCenter, please contact me.

Best and thanks,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lee Foster". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first and last names being clearly legible.

Lee Foster
Executive Director and CEO