

John Galusha, Chairman
Arica Andreatta, Commissioner
Karl Sporleder, Commissioner



HUERFANO COUNTY GOVERNMENT GRANT APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Date: November 14, 2023
To: Huerfano County Board of County Commissioners
From: Carl Young, County Administrator
Re: DOLA Main Street LIVE – Fox Theatre Walsenburg
Attachments: Award Letter

Summary: We have been awarded a DOLA Energy and Mineral Assistance Fund Grant in the amount of \$1.5M to assist with funding the Phase 2 remodel of the Fox Theatre Walsenburg and this is a request to accept the award. The cost estimate for the project is approximately \$2M. The scope of work includes: (1) marquee canopy rehabilitation; (2) masonry rehabilitation; (3) foundation drainage rehabilitation; (4) fire escape rehabilitation; (5) Rooftop Unit Replacement; (6) installation of 15 kW Solar PV System; (7) Stage Lighting and Curtains; and (8) related design, engineering, and archeological monitoring. The Fox Theatre Walsenburg has applied for a History Colorado State Historical Fund Grant which will provide some matching funds.

Requested Motion/Action:

Motion to accept the award of \$1.5M from the DOLA Energy and Mineral Impact Assistance Fund Program for the Fox Theatre Remodel with \$500,000 in matching funds.

Grant Program:

The Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) supports efforts by local governments through the Energy and Mineral Impact Assistance Fund (EIAF) program. Directing place-based development, redevelopment, and housing in downtowns is a critical component to a robust and active economy, local government fiscal health, and sustainable development patterns. Main Street LIVE will fund downtown public infrastructure and facilities as Livability Investments for Vibrant Economies. This \$17.5 million infusion will reinvest in our downtowns and enhance long-term sustainability, add to the built environment (buildings, streets, infrastructure), attract workforce, and augment other energy and housing projects. This Initiative supports a reduced local match. This Initiative is a part of and will follow the regularly planned cycles of the Energy and Mineral Impact Assistance Fund (EIAF) Program.

Our Project:

This project continues our efforts to rehabilitate the Fox Theatre Walsenburg. The scope of work includes: (1) new stage lighting and curtains; (2) a new HVAC system; (3) at least 10 kW of solar panels; and (4) masonry rehabilitation and state rehabilitation. Depending on the costs of these items, we may include a bathroom renovation, concession stand renovation, and changes to the main level seating.

Alignment with County Objectives:

This project aligns with the following strategic priorities:

- **INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES:** Maintain, preserve, and improve the quality of County-owned infrastructure and facilities, particularly the County Road System
- **HEALTH AND WELLNESS:** Support the development and improvement of community programs and amenities that enhance public health and wellness through recreation, arts, and culture with a particular focus on youth development

Financial Considerations:

The County hopes to receive as much as \$1.5M from the Department of Local Affairs. This special initiative of the Energy and Mineral Impact Fund Program requires a 25% Match. This is a reimbursement grant funded with State money.

Background:

The Fox, since 2014, has experienced flooding in the basement, water infiltration at the roof, masonry deterioration, and life safety issues for several years. These building conditions are leading to on-going deterioration of interior and exterior historic materials and resulting in life safety concerns. The condition of the fire escape renders an area of the building unoccupiable due to limited egress. If roof and foundation water infiltration are not addressed, additional interior damage to finish materials in the basement and inside the historic theatre will continue. Where water damage has occurred in the theatre, some of the ceiling plaster is loose, creating a life safety hazard below. This project will address these most critical needs.

Because of the above listed conditions, the Fox Theatre Walsenburg has not been able to maximize the full use potential of the building that the community needs. Currently, the building's lack of heat, frequent flooding, life safety issues, and roof issues hinders the ability to use the building more regularly. Since the FTW has occupied the building, it has not been able to host plays because of the lack of stage equipment and the damaged dressing rooms in the basement which are unusable due to the repeated flooding from burst pipes and overall water infiltration. This moisture infiltration coupled with the lack of insulation on the stage also makes the theatre unusable during the cold winter months. Currently, visitors bring their own blankets in order to make viewing films in the theatre semi-comfortable. Similarly, the demand for access to cultural and art events is increasing.

Huerfano County is growing and becoming an increasingly popular tourist destination; the new Cuchara Mountain Park promises to draw more people to the region. Youth are also looking for more things to do in the area and are increasingly drawn to the events hosted by the Theatre. This project will help the building and the FTW be better equipped not only to physically host this increasing usage and demand, but also to alleviate the drain of FTW's resources on some of the building's constant maintenance issues. The programming that the Fox Theater supports needs to expand in order to meet these demands and so that it can continue to do so for the next generation.

Signature of the Chair

Approved

Approved w/ Changes

Denied



COLORADO
Department of Local Affairs
Division of Local Government

November 8, 2023

The Honorable John Galusha, BOCC Chair
Huerfano County
401 Main Street, Suite 201
Walsenburg, CO, 81089

RE: EIAF 9778 - MSL Huerfano County Fox Theatre Walsenburg - Phase 2

Dear Commissioner Galusha:

Congratulations! After thorough review, I am excited to offer a grant award in the amount of \$1,500,000 from the Main Street LIVE Initiative to assist with the above mentioned project. This award is contingent upon receiving a determination of effect from History Colorado and the State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation by January 31, 2024.

Your project was reviewed based on a variety of factors such as its connection to energy impact, degree of need, measurable outcomes, amount of request, relationship to community goals, level of local match and community support, management capacity, resiliency and readiness to go. Competition for these limited funds is intense and we are seeing great demand.

DOLA supports local governments with direct place-based development, redevelopment, and housing in downtowns as a critical component to a robust and active economy, local government fiscal health, and sustainable development patterns. The Main Street LIVE Initiative is designed to fund reinvestment in downtowns and enhance long-term sustainability, add to the built environment, attract workforce, and augment other energy and housing projects.

These grant funds will be from state severance tax proceeds, which may cause you to go to election to receive and spend them. You should confer with your legal and budget advisors to determine if such an election is necessary.

Please contact your DOLA Regional Manager, Tara Marshall, at 719-250-6944 for information on how to proceed. Expenditure of State funds prior to the contract being fully executed cannot be included in the contract budget or reimbursed by the State. Per our program guidelines, this offer is valid for one year from the date of this letter.

I wish you success with your project. Thank you for helping Colorado build an economy where all Coloradans can thrive.

Sincerely,

Rick M. Garcia
Executive Director

cc: Rod Pelton, State Senator
Ty Winter, State Representative
Carl Young, Huerfano County
Tara Marshall, DOLA

