

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



## HUERFANO COUNTY GOVERNMENT GRANT APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

**Date:** July 25, 2023  
**To:** Huerfano County Board of County Commissioners  
**From:** Carl Young, County Administrator  
**Re:** DOLA Main Street LIVE – Fox Theatre Walsenburg  
**Attachments:** Draft Application

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**Summary:** This is a request to apply for a DOLA Energy and Mineral Assistance Fund Grant to assist with funding the Phase 2 remodel of the Fox Theatre Walsenburg. The final budget is still being developed, but will not exceed \$2M. 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. The Fox Theatre Walsenburg intends to apply for a History Colorado State Historical Fund Grant in October.

### **Requested Motion/Action:**

Motion to approve the application to the DOLA Energy and Mineral Impact Assistance Fund Grant, Main Street LIVE Set Aside for the Fox Theatre Remodel for an amount not to exceed \$1.5M 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.

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Signature of the Chair

Approved

Approved w/ Changes

Denied