

# THE FISCHER

## Grand Opera House

& Arts Complex 

## History of Preservation

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### PHASE 1 (1983 - 1997)

Initial studies show economic value to the community through a restored Fischer Theater. The City took title to the building and a significant fund raising effort began to provide matching funds for a state of Illinois Civic Center Authority grant.

Gene Hackman, Jerry Van Dyke, Dick Van Dyke, Donold O'Connor and Bobby Short joined forces for the only time on stage at the David S. Palmer Civic Center to raise money for the project.

The state grant never became a reality due to funding cuts. VHF invested the funds and provided maintenance as needed while alternative funding sources were explored.

Contributions paid	\$524,748
Interest	\$220,496
Total Revenue - Phase One	\$745,244
Maintenance & Fundraising costs*	-\$320,302
Cash balance from Phase One	\$424,942

\*Roof donated 1991/disposal costs \$12,000, installation of gas and water taps at \$6,296, replaced windows at \$39,240, improvements to Palace Park at \$29,495.

### PHASE 2 (1998 - 2006)

In fall 1997 the city's concern about the stability of the building increased. The City Council voted by a slim majority to save the building again and members of Old Town Preservation joined the board. The cash remaining from Phase One was used to stabilize the building and to begin renovation work on the lobby, cafe and office/gift shop. The building was opened to the public from 2001 to 2005 to reintroduce the building to the public for classic movies, concerts, and stage productions. Costs associated with these events, including utilities, offset revenue generated.

Cash from Phase One	\$424,942
Contributions and program	
Income (Phase Two)	\$378,937
Building improvements	
(Phase two)*	(-\$561,521)
Utilities, insurance	
And taxes (Phase two)	(-\$139,210)
Event Expense	
(Phase two)	(-\$103,510)

Total Expenses	
Phase two	(-\$804,241)
Cash balance Phase two	-\$362.00

\*Includes stabilization of south wall and trusses, roof replacement (2003), lobby improvements, restrooms, stairway, care, office, installation of contributed boiler.

### **Phase 3 (2006 - Today)**

Vermilion Heritage Foundation is taking the steps recommended by the League of Historic American Theaters (LHAT) to start again in our approach to preserving a historic landmark while creating a tourist destination and a continued focus on arts education for our community. McQueen and Associates Consultants have conducted a market assessment and analysis. WJE Engineers have conducted a Phase I initial assessment to confirm structural stability and then subsequent evaluations of costs for repair and renovation. This will give us the basis for a professional fundraising campaign.