



July 26, 2024

City of Billings Planning and Community Services
Attn: Andy Zoeller
P.O. Box 1178
Billings, MT 59103-1178

Request for TIF Assistance - Babcock Theater

Dear, Andy -

The DBP is hereby submitting a request for TIF assistance on behalf of the Arthouse Cinema & Pub, the Nonprofit that manages the Babcock Theater campus on behalf of the City of Billings, for a project in the Expanded North 27th Street Urban Renewal District.

The project involves rehabilitation efforts of the 2810 2nd Ave N theater with mostly exterior work but some interior upgrades as well. Since its acquisition of the operations of the theater, the Arthouse Cinema & Pub has made several improvements to the structure of the Babcock but many significant areas are in desperate need of attention. The Historic Marquee is over 70 years old and its drainage system needs to be stabilized. The sidewalk is similar to many downtown sidewalks where there is a vault housed underneath, its support beams are severely eroded. The entrance doors are not the most secure or energy efficient and the path leading up to the door can get slippery due to water collection due to its uneven surface. Finally, there's an abandoned brick chimney that has eroded whose bricks are falling off in the alley. The interior includes adding railing in the balcony and jacking up stairs & flooring. The good news, the Arthouse Cinema & Pub has secured a grant, in-kind donations, and a fund to cover some of the costs.

The total project cost is \$586,929 but the request for TIF assistance is for \$300,000 toward the exterior improvements. The Board of Directors of the DBP support this project & recommend approval. This project complies with the Montana Code Annotated in terms of eligible expenses. Furthermore, this project conforms with many goals & elements of the Urban Renewal Plan as well as the Downtown Billings Strategic Plan to contribute toward a safer sidewalk and alley experience as well as safer and celebrated entryway to the theater. This will ensure a Historic asset like the Babcock Theater is preserved, maintained, and well presented to continue visitations downtown.

The DBP is requesting a position for review by the Billings City Council during its regular meeting Monday, August 26th.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mehmet Casey, Development Director | Downtown Billings Partnership