

# Performing Arts Center Feasibility Study

Presentation to Erie Town Council  
August 26, 2025  
Town Hall  
645 Holbrook St

# Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Presentation
  - I. Market Study
  - II. Needs Assessment
  - III. Recommendations
  - IV. Comparable Projects
  - V. Cost Estimate
  - VI. Economic Impact
3. Q&A

# Introductions



**National arts  
management  
consulting firm**



**Stacey McMath**

**Senior Consultant,  
Webb Mgmt**



**Local architecture  
firm with leading  
experience  
building Colorado  
arts facilities**



**Chris Wineman**

**Principal, Semple  
Brown Design**

# Feasibility Study Goals

## Testing the potential for a Performing Arts Center (PAC) in Erie

The purpose of this study was to assess the viability, community impact, potential locations, financial implications, and operational considerations for establishing a Performing Arts Center within the community.

The impetus for this study was a question on a community survey where 65% of respondents indicated that they strongly supported or somewhat supported the Town of Erie building a new performing arts center. 70% of respondents indicated that they were very or somewhat likely to attend an event at a new PAC.

This feasibility study is conducted in parallel with a strategic plan update for Erie's parks, recreation, open space, and trail amenities.



# Study Components

## Phase One:

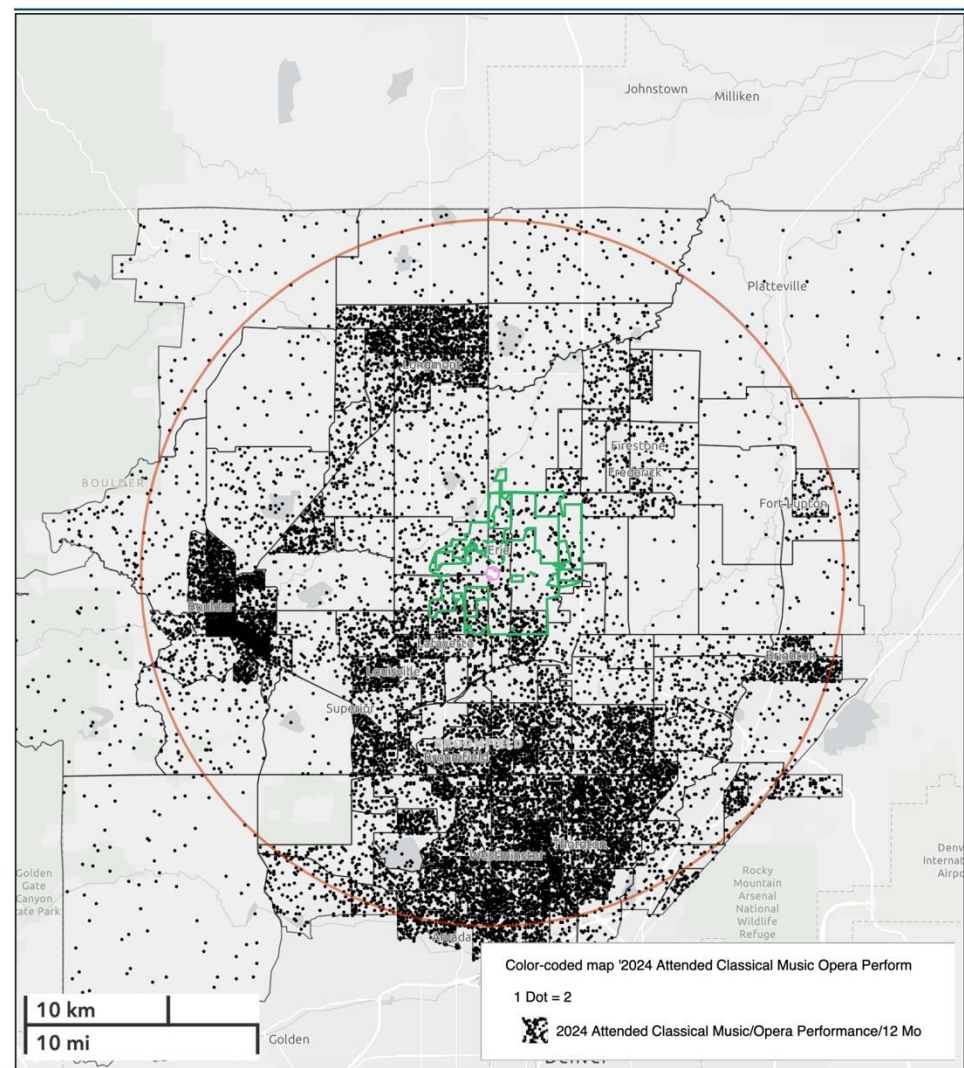
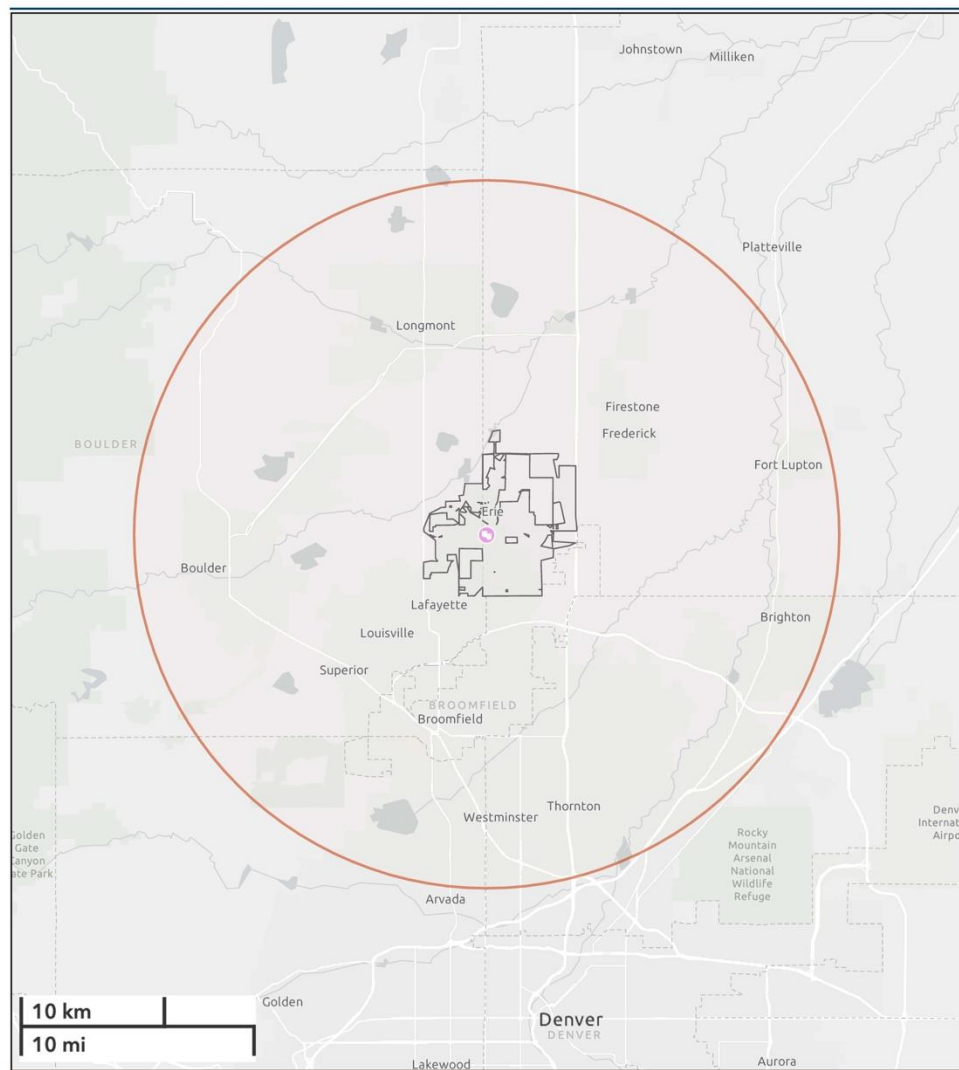
- One-on-one and group meetings
- Market Analysis
- Forces & Trends
- Facility Inventories
- User Demand and Utilization
- Community Benefits Assessment
- Facility Recommendations

## Phase Two:

- Site Review
- Physical & Operating Assumptions
- Functional Space Program
- Capital Cost Estimate
- Economic Impact

# Market Study

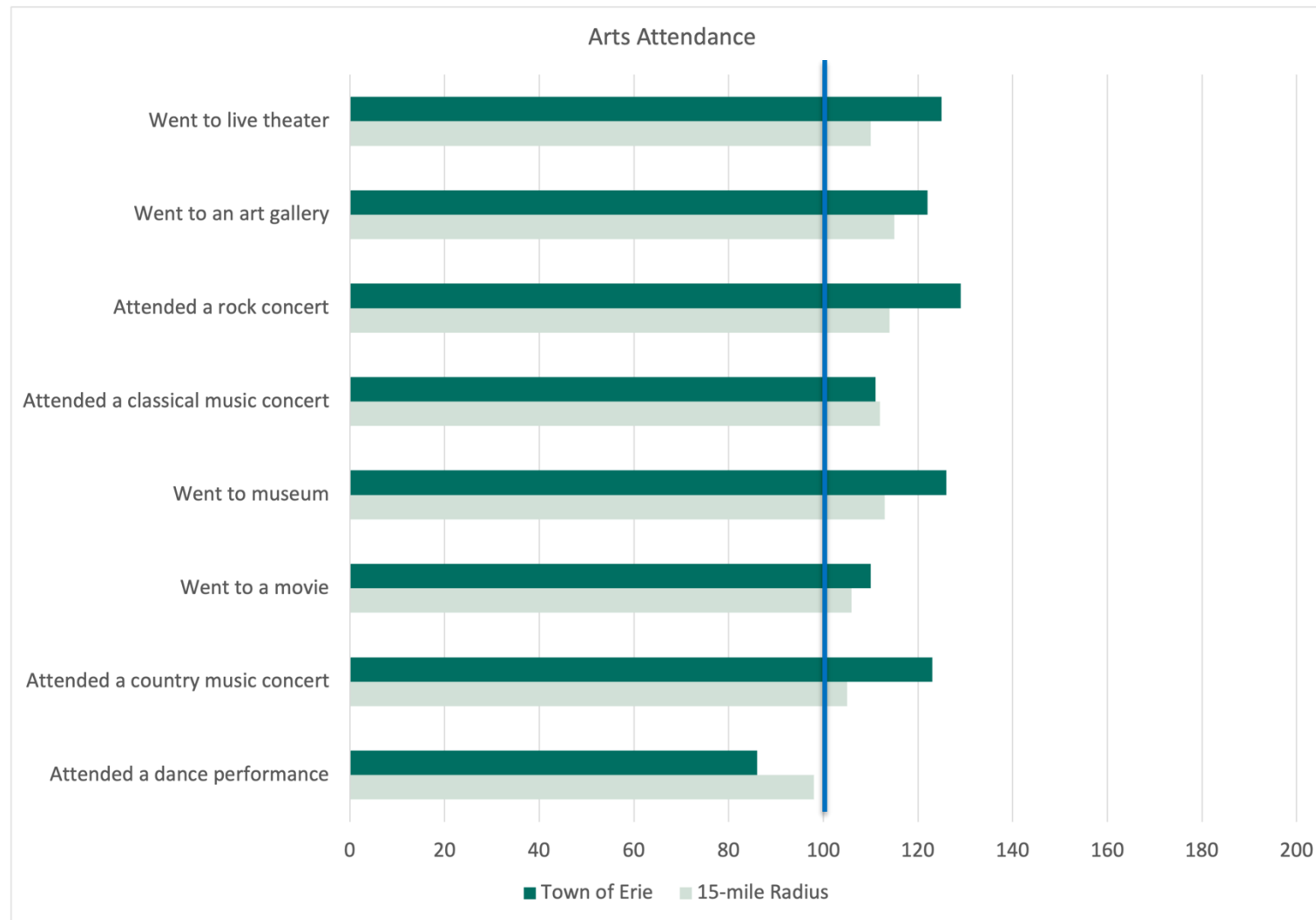
## Market Area: a 15-mile radius



Source: Esri

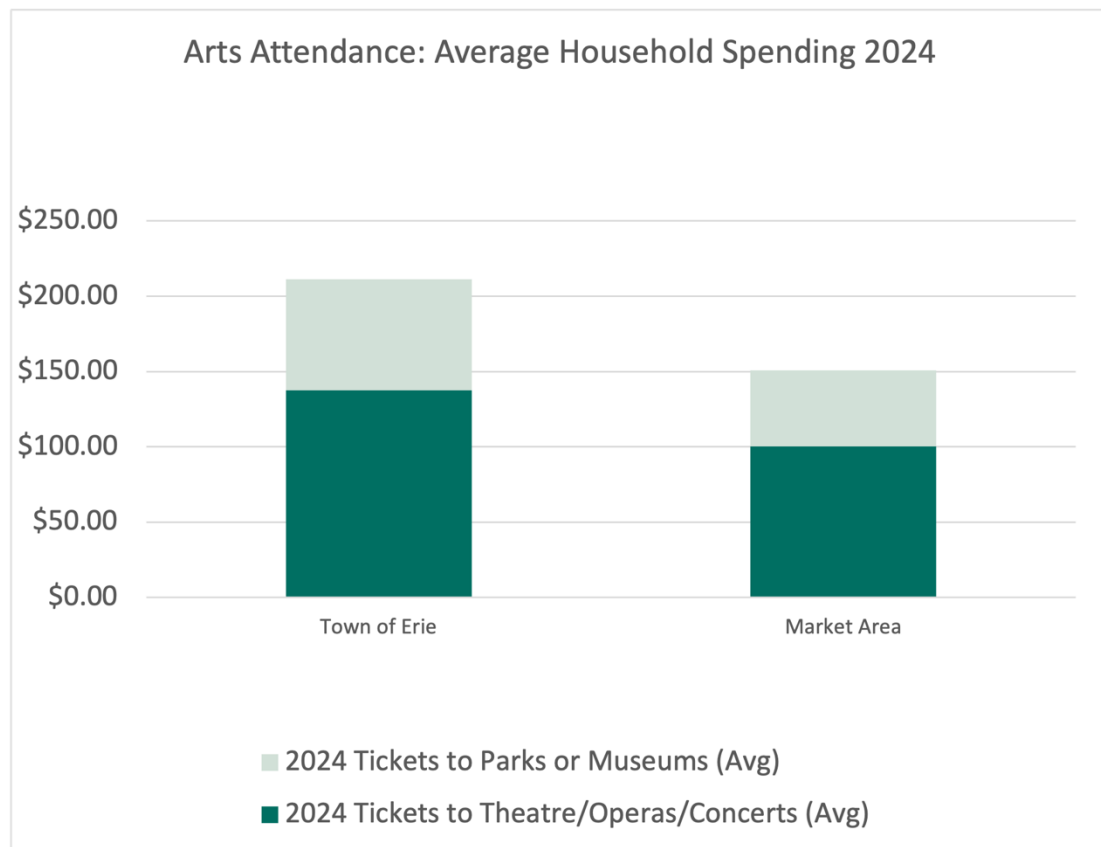


## Arts Attendance Potential

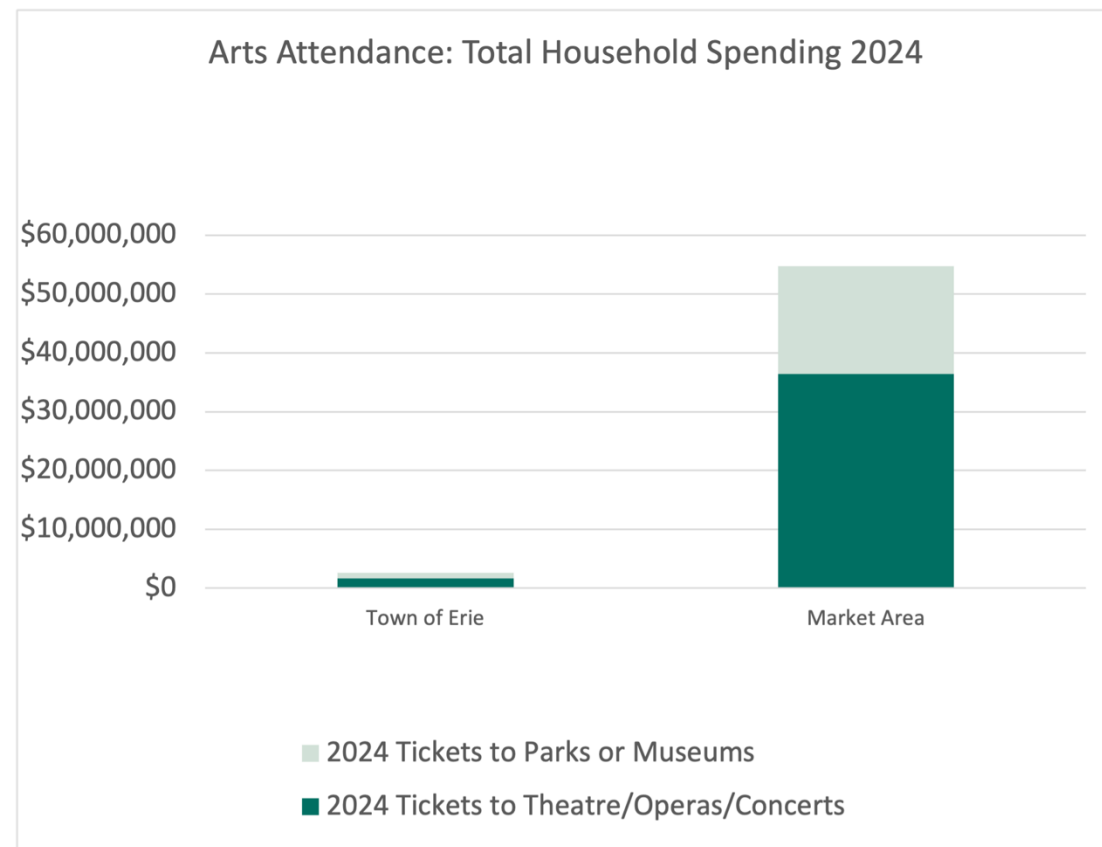


Source: Esri

## Economic Indicators



Source: Esri



# County Arts Vibrancy

Southern Methodist University's DataArts initiative provides an Arts Vibrancy scores for counties across the US. Each score shows how a county performs relative to other counties on a scale of 0-100.

Boulder County performs better than 96% of counties nationwide on SMU's arts vibrancy index. Adams County performs better than 93% of counties in the US, and Weld County performs better than 75%.

96/100

Boulder County

93/100

Adams County

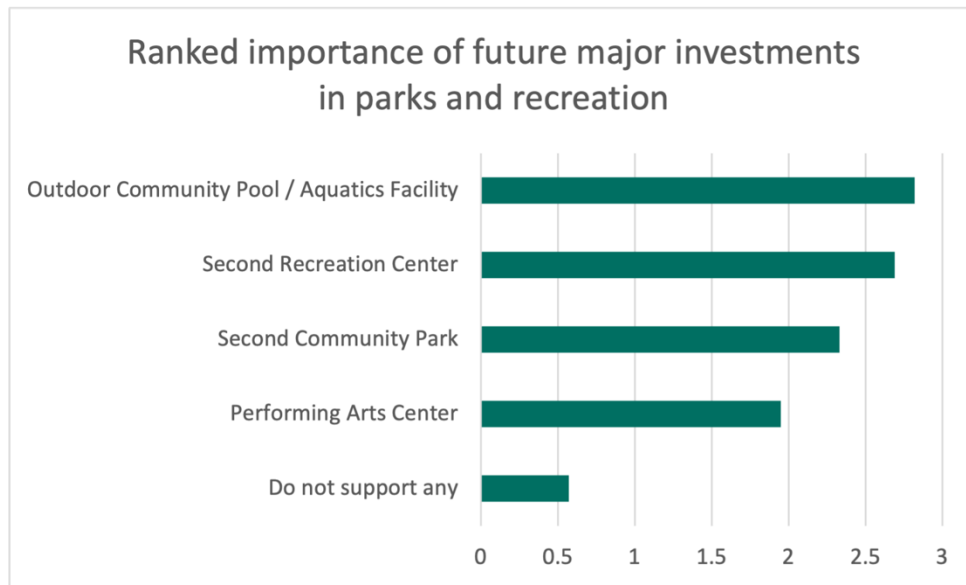
75/100

Weld County

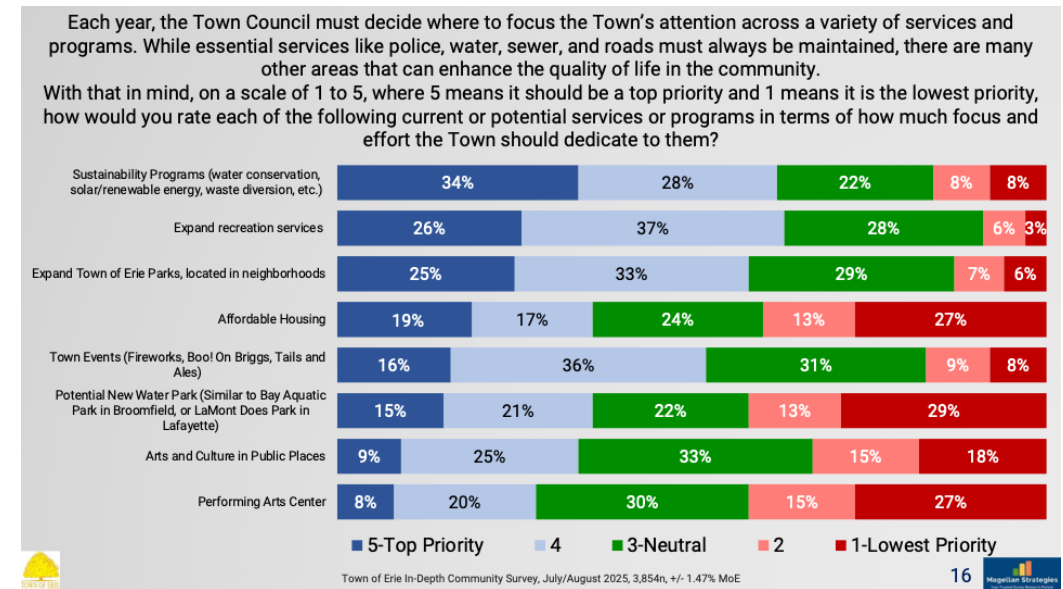
Source: SMU DataArts

# Concerns: Community Support

- There is limited infrastructure for arts advocacy in Erie.
- Residents are aware of failed initiatives and projects.
- Interviewees and survey respondents suggested that there may not be community support to fund a new arts center.



Source: Engage Erie PROST Survey as of 5/30/25 n726



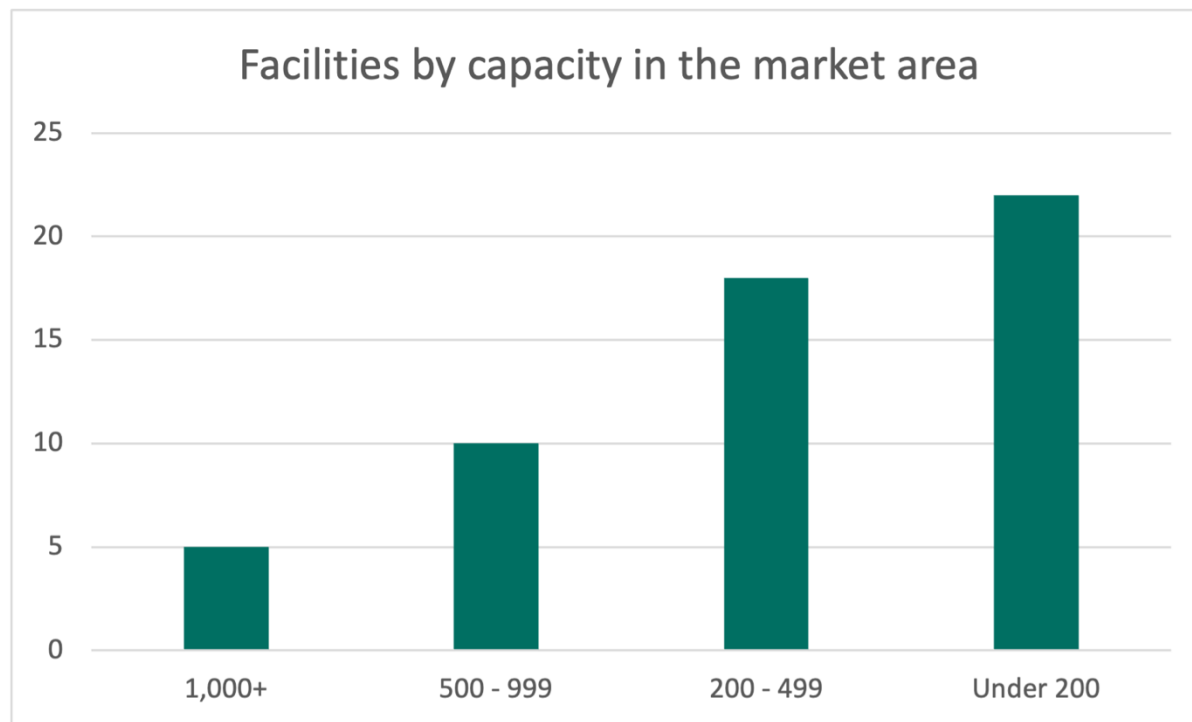
Source: Town of Erie In-Depth Community Survey July/August 2025 n3,845

# Market Study: Conclusions

- Town of Erie residents have demographic indicators that correlate with a high potential for arts participation.
- The market area has high potential for arts attendance and contributions.
- A new venue would rely on the potential market in a fifteen-mile radius around the Town of Erie.
- The market has strong potential to support a facility once constructed, but there may be limited community support for a new building.

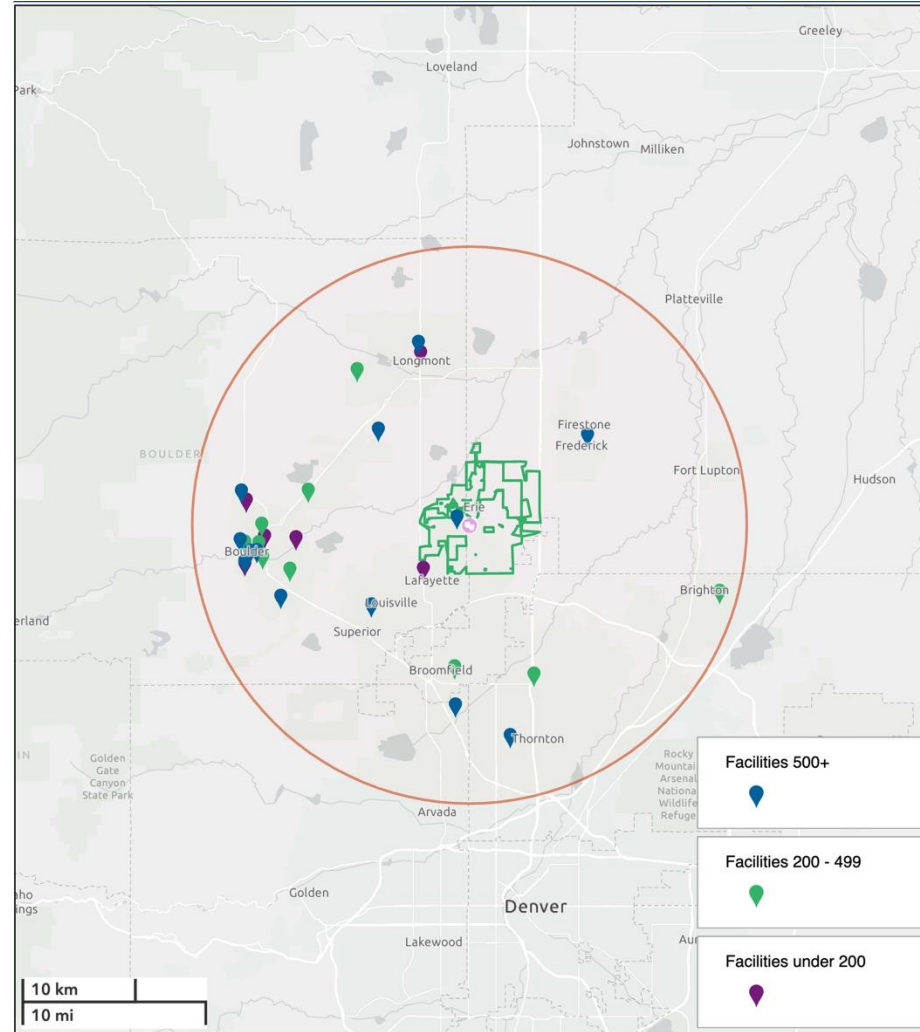
# Needs Assessment

## Performing Arts Facilities Inventory



## Mapping the Inventory

*The venue situation is DIRE. There is Mackie, but nobody likes using it. Its too big, its very expensive, and its not professionally handled. The churches are too small and too churchy and you can't use the public schools because they can kick you out.*  
- Interview participant



Source: Webb Mgmt Facilities Inventory. Esri

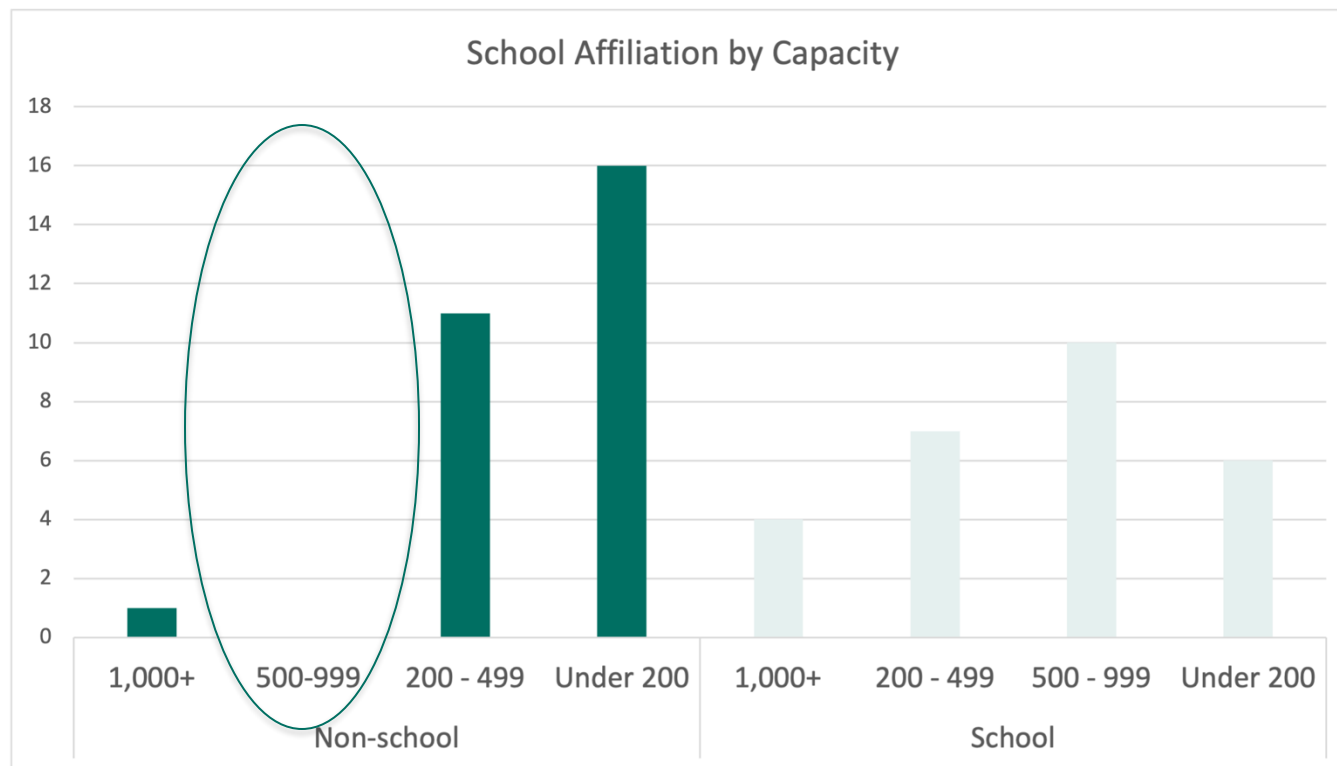


## Mapping the Inventory

There is not a single performing arts facility over 500 seats in the market area that is independently operated and meets the needs of local arts nonprofits.

A performing arts center will greatly benefit Erie and its image.

- Survey Respondent



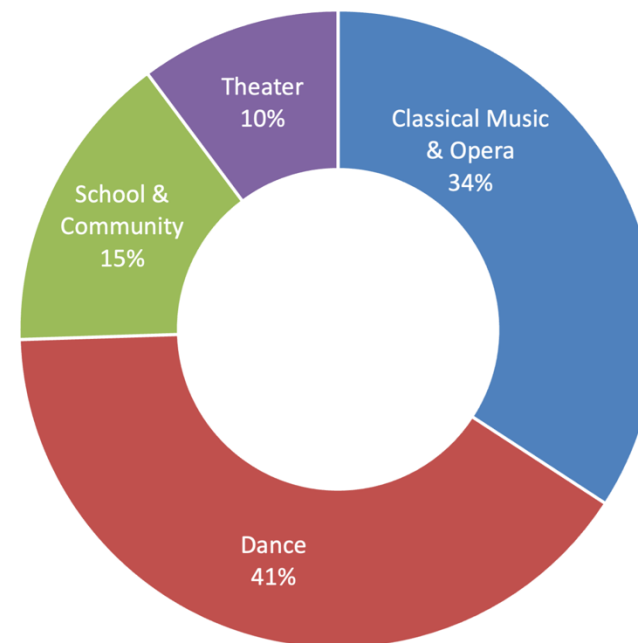
Source: Webb Mgmt Facilities Inventory. Esri

# User demand

The organizations below suggested that, provided it met their needs, they could activate a new performing arts center for approximately 155 days per year.

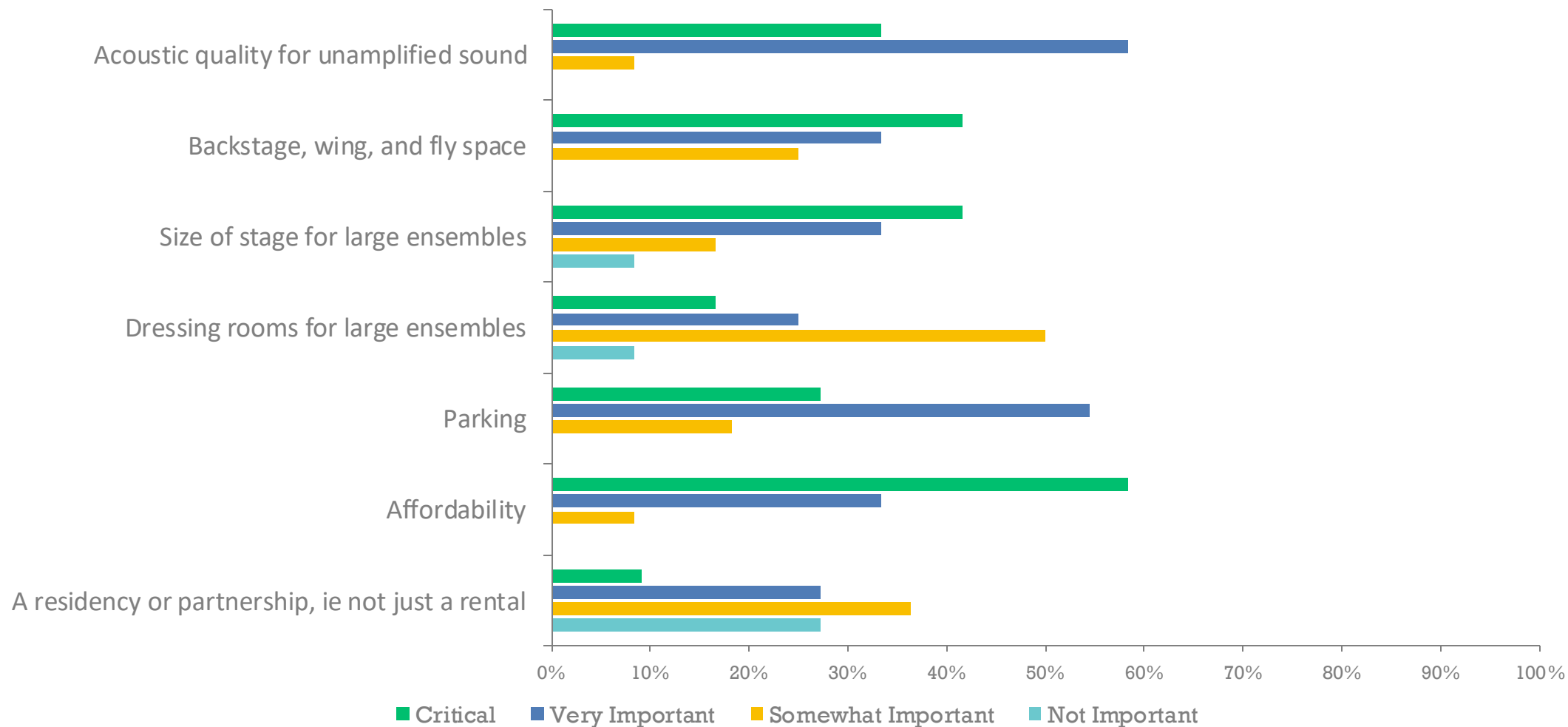
The Cultural Caravan  
Boulder Opera  
Boulder Symphony & Music Academy  
Greater Boulder Youth Orchestra  
Boulder Valley School District  
St. Vrain Valley School District  
Boulder Ballet  
Dancespace  
Danse Etoile Ballet  
David Taylor's Zikr Dance Ensemble  
Parasol Arts  
Boulder Ensemble Theatre Company

Performance days by discipline



Source: Webb Mgmt User Survey

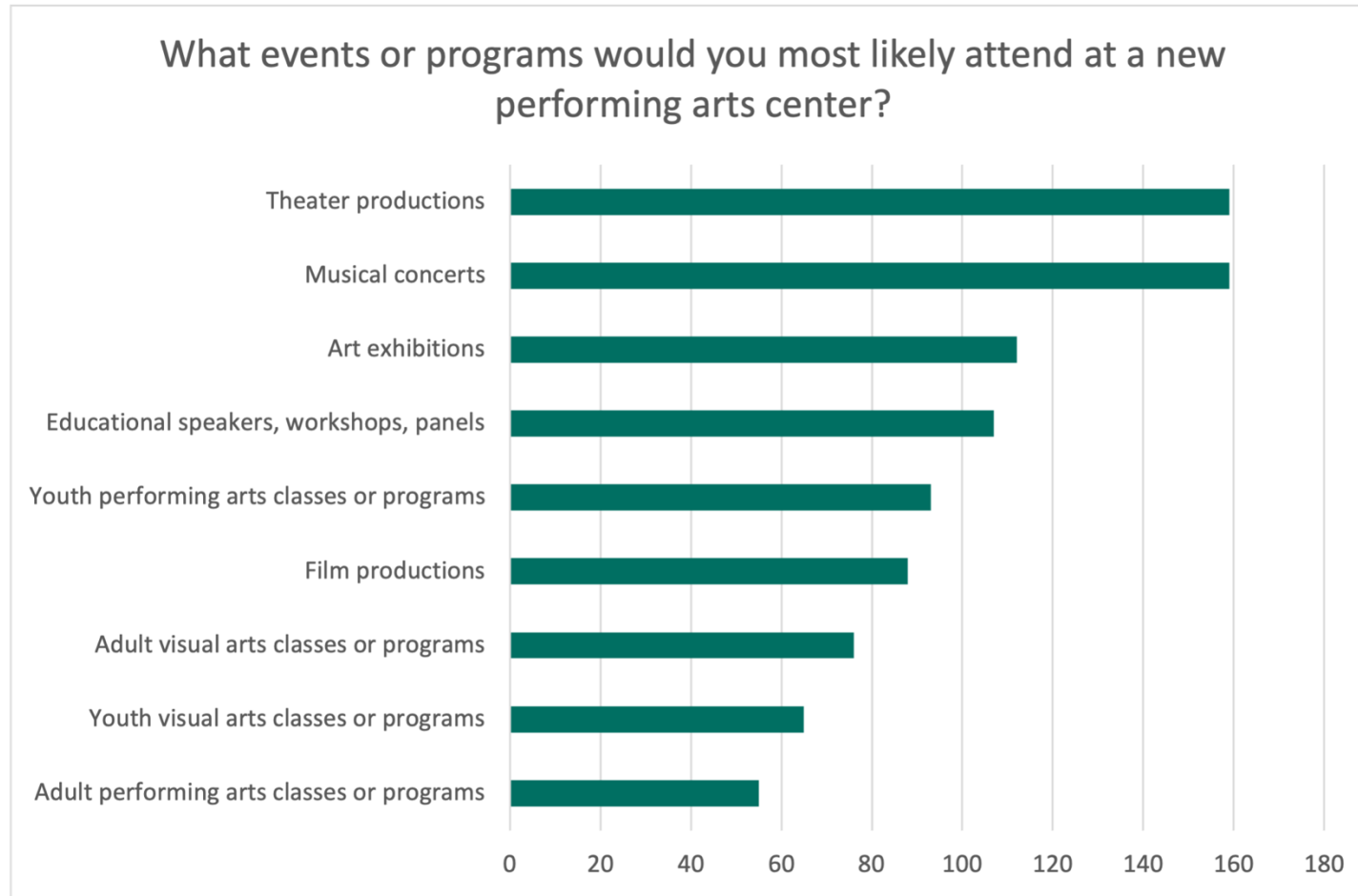
## Design Priorities



Source: Webb Mgmt User Form

## Survey Respondents' Priorities

Question: What events or programs would you most likely attend at a new performing arts center? Select all that apply.



Source: Engage Erie PROST Survey as of 5/30/25 n726

# Needs Assessment: Conclusions

- There is a critical gap in the facilities landscape that an Erie PAC could fill.
- Nonprofit arts groups are waiting in the wings for a facility that meets their needs.
- Potential users seek a space that is hospitable to larger ensembles and unamplified sound.
- Professional performances could form the core of a busy calendar, with additional community offerings programmed by the town.

# Feasibility: Key Questions

**Is there sufficient audience potential in the market area?**

**Yes.** The Town of Erie and the market in a 15-mile radius around Erie have strong potential to support an additional performing arts facility.

**Is there an opportunity in the market to meet a facility need?**

**Yes.** Nonprofit organizations, particularly those in musical genres not currently served, are in dire need of a performance space with 500 seats or more. Affordability will be key in partnering with excellent regional organizations.

**Are there potential users of a new performing arts facility?**

**Yes.** Many organizations indicated a strong willingness to move their programming to Erie, including organizations that would like to explore the potential to be in residence.

**Would a new performing arts facility align with Erie's goals and priorities?**

**Maybe.** New arts facilities have the potential to improve residents' quality of life and give them local access to events. However, there are many competing priorities in the community.

# Recommendations

# Recommendations

- Build a performing arts center on the currently identified site that includes 600-700 seat theater that fills the gap in the market.
- The main space should be designed for high-quality musical performances with flexibility to host theater, dance, and events.
- The PAC should also include spaces for rehearsals, smaller events, and visual and performing arts instruction. Multi-use studio spaces will relieve pressure on the ECC and activate the center during the day.
- Embrace the PAC as a civic space, envisioning other opportunities for use. A lobby/public area has the potential to be a bustling, community-serving space.



# Multi-disciplinary main venue

- 650-700 seats
- Orchestra level with cross-aisle
- Single balcony
- Adjustable acoustics in audience chamber
- Live mix/control cockpit
- Catwalks above for lighting



# Stage Area

- Playing area: 45 x 40
- Wings additional
- Storage space for orchestra shell
- Orchestra pit with lift provides a stage extension
- Digital projector and screen
- Resilient stage floor





# Performance Support

- Dressing Rooms: 2 chorus (10 stations ea) plus 2 guest artist (2 stations ea)
- Green Room
- Wardrobe (with laundry)
- Control booth

Anticipate use of at least one rehearsal studio as a backstage support space/warmup area for larger ensembles.





# Multi-purpose Studios

- Primary rehearsal studio: 1900 sf to duplicate main stage area; includes telescoping seating to enable use for small performances
- Dance/Movement Studio: 1600 sf
- Visual Arts Studio: 1200 sf
- Multipurpose Studio: 1200 sf
- Locker/changing room suite









# Public Spaces

- Multi-level lobby
- Concession area
- Loading/Live Storage
- Box office
- Display capability





# Functional Space Program

REVISED FUNCTIONAL PROGRAM: Erie Cultural Center					
OPERATIONAL AREAS	New Space	1	2	Comments	Programming Notes
<b>Theatre</b>					
Seating Area: 650 seats	6,500	4,500	2,000	Adjustable acoustics	Assumes cross-aisle with one balcony and live mix position
Stage: 40 x 45	1,800	1,800			Orchestra, Chorus, Dance, Musical Theatre, Drama
Wings: 2 @ 20 x 42	1,680	1,680			
Shell storage	240	240		Storage for towers, ceiling units flown	
Orchestra Pit	800			Forestage when elevated	Musical theatre, opera, dance
Control Booth	350		350	Sound, Lighting and stage manager	
Green Room	350	350			
Dressing Rooms: 2 chorus @ 16	800	800			
Dressing Rooms: 2 guest artist @ 2	250	250			
Dimmer/Communications Rack Room	100		100		
Wardrobe	350	350		Includes laundry	
<b>Theatre Total</b>	<b>13,220</b>	<b>9,970</b>	<b>2,450</b>		
<b>Multipurpose Studios</b>					
Rehearsal Studio	1,900	1,900		Matches size of stage; 20 feet high; telescoping seating	Acts as a smaller performance space
Rehearsal Studio Storage	500	500			
Piano Storage (2)	240	240			
Dance/Movement Studio	1,600		1,600	Resilient floor, mirrored walls, 20 feet high	Yoga, etc. as well as dance performance
Dance/Movement Studio Storage	300		300		
Multipurpose Studio	1,200		1,200		Camps, classes, workshops
Multipurpose Studio Storage	300		300		
Visual Arts Studio	1,200		1,200	Sealed concrete floor, sinks, north light; partition wall to divide the space	
Visual Arts Studio Storage	300		300		
Locker/changing rooms: 2 @ 500 sf each	1,000		1,000		
<b>Multipurpose Studios Total</b>	<b>8,540</b>	<b>2,640</b>	<b>5,900</b>		
<b>Common Spaces</b>					
Lobby	3,500	2,500	1,000	Two levels	Hanging capability for art exhibition
Box Office: 3 windows	135	135			
Lobby Storage	70	70		Programs, easels, chairs	
Restrooms: 13 Women's	780	450	330		
9 Men's	360	240	120		
3 Family	300	200	100		
Bar/Cafe/Concessions	300	300			
Loading/Storage/Assembly	1,000	1,000		Live loading; shops offsite	
Offices: mgr, td, bo, mktg/dev, conf/work room	1,040		1,040	4 offices; Open plan with conference room	
<b>Common Spaces Total</b>	<b>7,485</b>	<b>4,895</b>	<b>2,590</b>		
<b>Total Assignable Space</b>	<b>29,245</b>	<b>17,505</b>	<b>10,940</b>		
<b>Gross Building Space @ 1.4</b>	<b>40,943</b>	<b>24,507</b>	<b>15,316</b>		

# Theater Programming

- Resident organizations
- Partner programs
- Community rentals
- Programs presented by Parks and Recreation

 Resident or rental performance

 Adult & civic programming

 Kids & family programming

 Rehearsal, tech, load-in, load-out

January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February

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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

March

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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

April

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

May

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

June

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

July

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

August

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

September

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5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

October

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

# Studio Programming

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>Rehearsal Studio</b>							
9a - 12p							
1p - 3p							
4p - 7p							
<b>Dance/Movement Studio</b>							
9a - 12p							
1p - 3p							
4p - 7p							
<b>Multipurpose Studio</b>							
9a - 12p							
1p - 3p							
4p - 7p							
<b>Visual Arts Studio</b>							
9a - 12p							
1p - 3p							
4p - 7p							

	ECC-scheduled programming
	Theater support space
	Partner programs
	Community Rentals

Note that the visual arts and multipurpose studios are divisible, offering the opportunity for one or two classes in the timeslots indicated.



# Additional Recommendations

- Rental Rates
- Staffing and Leadership
- Marketing
- Food and Beverage Operations
- Building Maintenance
- Fundraising
- Civic Space Activation



# Comparable Projects

## *Regional Examples:*

### **Colorado Mesa University Astoria Theater**

***Grand Junction, CO***

***Status: Open***



Capital Cost: \$54 Million

Date of Groundbreaking: March 2023

Date of Opening: September 2024

Owner: Colorado Mesa University

Main Space Capacity: 860

Building square footage: 49,000

Additional performance spaces: none

## *Regional Examples:*

### **University of Northern Colorado Campus Commons**

**Greeley, CO**

**Status: Open**



Capital Cost: \$60 Million

Date of Groundbreaking: Late 2016

Date of Opening: Early 2019

Owner: University of Northern Colorado

Main Space Capacity: 670

Building square footage: 108,000

Additional performance spaces: 400 seat multipurpose room and 50 seat presentation room



## Regional Examples:

### Morse High Performing Arts Center

San Diego, CA

Status: Open



Capital Cost: \$63.5 Million

Date of Groundbreaking: March 2022

Date of Opening: November 2024

Owner: San Diego Unified School District

Main Space Capacity: 480

Building square footage: 24,416

Additional performance spaces: 99 seat  
Blackbox theatre

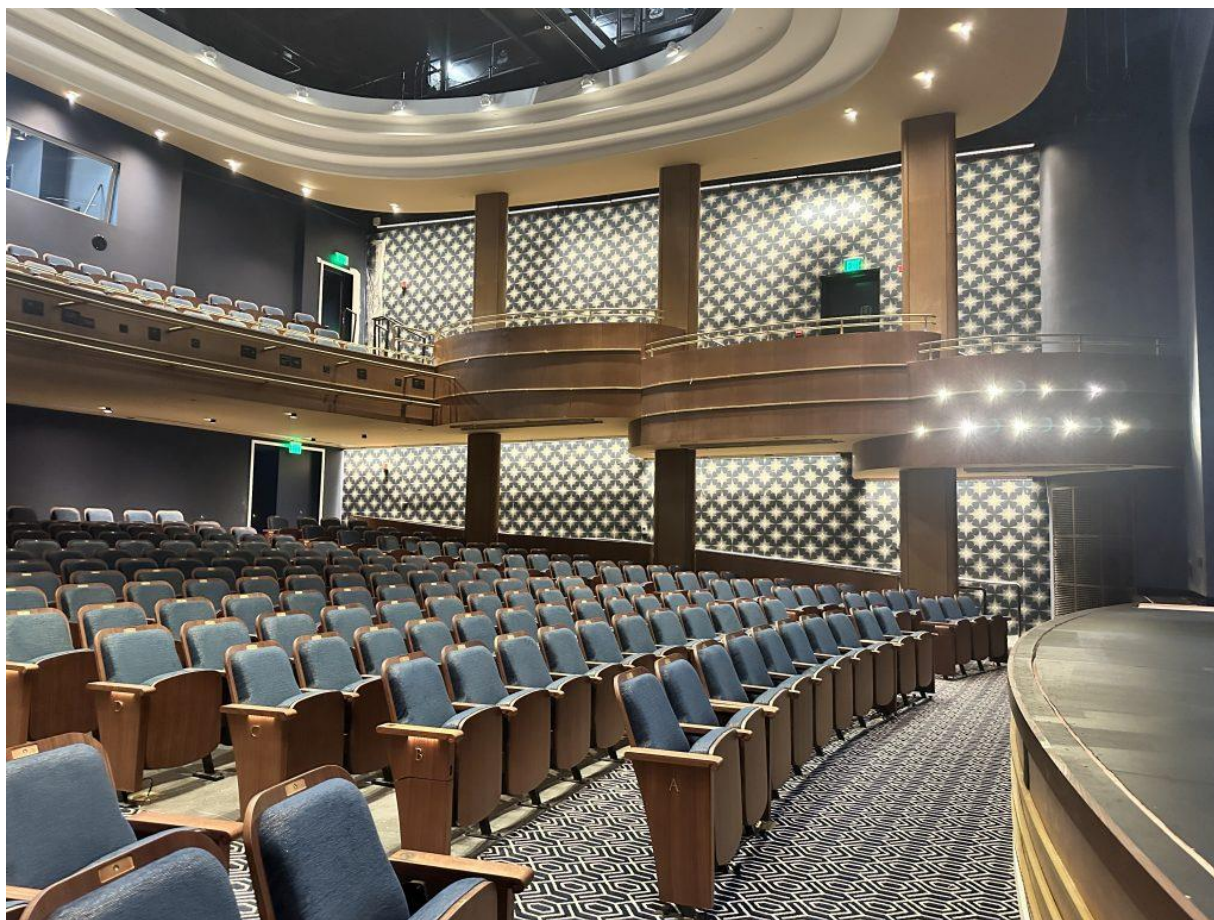


## Regional Examples:

### ***Gulfshore Playhouse Baker Theatre and Education Center***

***Naples, FL***

***Status: Open***



Capital Cost: \$72 Million

Date of Groundbreaking: 2021

Date of Opening: October 27, 2024

Owner: Gulfshore Playhouse

Main Space Capacity: 368

Building square footage: 40,243

Additional performance spaces: 125 seat  
Struthers Studio Theatre, plus Conference Rooms  
and Educational Classrooms

## *Regional Examples:*

### **Loretto Heights Cultural Hub**

**Denver, CO**

***Status: In Planning/Proposed  
Renovation***



Capital Cost: \$60 Million

Date of Groundbreaking: Fall 2025

Date of Opening: 2027

Owner: City of Denver

Main Space Capacity: 750 (reduced from its original capacity of 900)

Building square footage: 51,783

# Cost Estimate

# Cost Consultants

Cost+Plus is a professional firm dedicated to providing project and cost management services of the highest quality for all types of performing arts and museum projects worldwide.



## Project Lead: Joe Perryman

### Recent Cost Management Projects:

- Perelman Performing Arts Center at the World Trade Center, New York
- Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library, North Dakota
- Woodruff Arts Center, Atlanta
- Denver Center for the Performing Arts
- American Museum of Natural History, New York
- Dallas Museum of Art
- Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts, Orlando
- Cleveland Institute of Music
- Tennessee State Museum, Nashville



# Cost Summary

Square footage 50,550 gsf

**Project Costs**  
**(2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2025)** **\$78,905,000**

Includes:

Total direct trade costs

Design contingency

Fees, bonds, insurance, permits

Change order contingency

Soft costs allowance

**Escalation Contingency**  
**8.8%, 23 months to start** **\$6,945,000**

**Total escalated project cost**  
**(2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2027)** **\$85,850,000**

# Cost Detail

## Erie Cultural Center Erie, Colorado

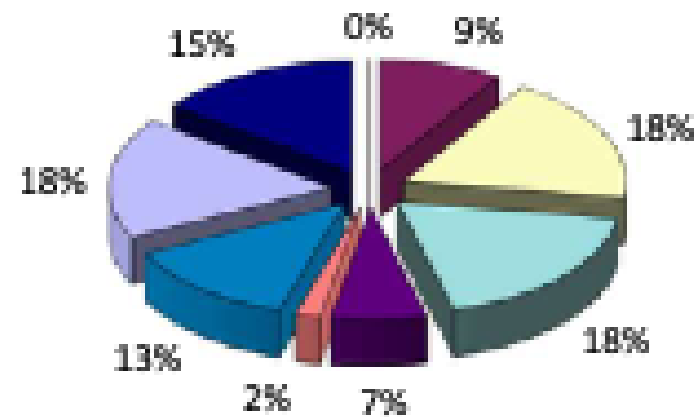
### Programmatic Project Cost Summary

30 June 2025

	NEW CONSTRUCTION	SITEWORK	TOTAL
Gross Floor Area (gsf) per SB's Revised Functional Program (5 May 2025)	50,550 gsf		
1.0 Demolition of Existing Structures			n/a
2.0 Direct Trade Costs	\$799/gsf \$40,395,000		\$40,395,000
3.0 Specialist Performance/Theatrical and A/V Equipment Budgets Allowances:			
3.1 Performance/Theatrical Equipment:			\$3,700,000
3.1.1 650-seat Theatre	\$3,000,000		
3.1.2 Rehearsal Studio, Dance/Movement Studio & Multipurpose Studio	\$650,000		
3.1.3 Ancillary Spaces	\$50,000		
3.2 Audio/Visual Equipment:			\$1,300,000
3.2.1 650-seat Theatre	\$1,000,000		
3.2.2 Rehearsal Studio, Dance/Movement Studio & Multipurpose Studio	\$200,000		
3.2.3 Ancillary Spaces	\$99/gsf \$100,000		
4.0 Enabling/Site Development/Landscaping/Building Utilities Allowances		\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
<b>TOTAL DIRECT TRADE COSTS (2ND QUARTER 2025)</b>	<b>\$898/gsf \$45,395,000</b>	<b>\$1,000,000</b>	<b>\$46,395,000</b>
5.0 Design Phase Contingency	10% \$4,540,000	\$100,000	\$4,640,000
6.0 General Conditions/Requirements, Fee, Bonds, Insurances, Permits, Etc.	18% \$8,990,000	\$200,000	\$9,190,000
<b>TOTAL BID COSTS (2ND QUARTER 2025)</b>	<b>\$1,166/gsf \$58,925,000</b>	<b>\$1,300,000</b>	<b>\$60,225,000</b>
7.0 Construction Phase Change Order Contingency (CMAR/GMP)	3% \$1,770,000	\$40,000	\$1,810,000
<b>TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST (2ND QUARTER 2025)</b>	<b>\$1,201/gsf \$60,695,000</b>	<b>\$1,340,000</b>	<b>\$62,035,000</b>
8.0 Project Soft Costs Allowance	30% \$18,210,000	\$400,000	\$18,610,000
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST (2ND QUARTER 2025)</b>	<b>\$1,561/gsf \$78,905,000</b>	<b>\$1,740,000</b>	<b>\$80,645,000</b>
9.0 Escalation Contingency (23 months to start of construction)	8.8% \$6,945,000	\$155,000	\$7,100,000
<b>TOTAL ESCALATED PROJECT COST (2ND QUARTER 2027)</b>	<b>\$1,698/gsf \$85,850,000</b>	<b>\$1,895,000</b>	<b>\$87,745,000</b>

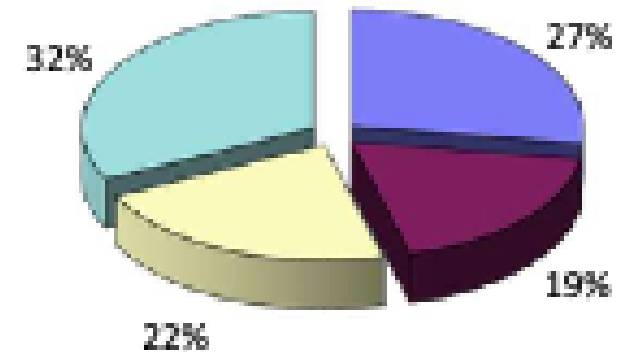
# Cost Detail

## ELEMENTAL COST ANALYSIS



- 1.0 Demolition (0%)
- 2.0 Substructure (9%)
- 3.0 Superstructure (18%)
- 4.0 Exterior Skin (18%)
- 5.0 Interior Partitions & Doors (7%)
- 6.0 Vertical Movement (2%)
- 7.0 Interiors (13%)
- 8.0 Mechanical (18%)
- 9.0 Electrical (15%)

## ZONAL COST ANALYSIS



- A - Demo, Substr & Structure (27%)
- B - Exterior Skin (19%)
- C - Interior Fitout (22%)
- D - Mechanical & Electrical (32%)

# Economic Impact

# Economic Impact Process

Economic impact is the increases in economic activity caused by new facilities, incremental operating expenditures, and new audiences.

Impact is calculated for Boulder and Weld Counties using multipliers purchased from the Bureau of Economic Analysis. Inputs related to construction, non-personnel expenditures by the operating organization, and audience expenditures lead to three sets of outputs:

- **Direct impact:** spending by the operating organization and audiences
- **Indirect impact:** increased business spending in the market area resulting from direct spending
- **Induced impacts:** household spending resulting from direct and indirect spending.

We have projected the one-time impacts related to the renovation of the center and then the ongoing economic impacts related to the spending related to the operations of the facility and event audiences.

# Economic Impact Assumptions

Our analysis is based on the following assumptions:

- The PAC is owned and operated by the Town of Erie; any revenue generated returns to the Town's General Fund
- Expenditures in areas such as energy, insurance, and telecommunications are bundled with other Town of Erie contracts and services
- Utilities are calculated based on the ECC's PSF expense, with appropriate increases for theatrical lighting and sound
- A portion of annual box office revenue is returned to renting or resident organizations; this is included in the impact calculations as an expenditure

# Economic Impact: New Facility Construction

Project Inputs		Construction Industry Multipliers		Project Outputs
Gross Square Feet	50,550	New Economic Output (Sales)	1.5986	\$137,239,810
Construction Costs/sf middle of range	\$1,698.32	New Earnings	0.3699	\$31,755,915
Capital Budget	\$85,850,000	New Employment (person years)	5.3772	462

# Economic Impact: Facility Operations

Summary of Impact on Boulder and Weld Counties		
Operations		
Estimated Y3 Non-personnel spending	Input (Spending)	\$2,069,000
New Economic Output (Sales)	Output (Sales)	\$3,291,677
New Earnings	Earnings	\$869,696
New Employment (person years)	Jobs Created (annual)	22



# Economic Impact: Audience Spending

Summary of Impact on Boulder and Weld Counties		
Audience Spending		
Estimated Impactful Audience Spending	Input (Spending)	\$557,759
New Economic Output (Sales)	Output (Sales)	\$900,664
New Earnings	Earnings	\$239,734
New Employment (person years)	Jobs Created (annual, in addition to facility jobs)	6

# Economic Impact: Total Annual

Summary of Impact on Boulder and Weld Counties		
Total Annual Operating Impacts (Operations + Audience Spending)		
New Economic Output (Sales)	Output (Sales)	\$4,192,341
New Earnings	Earnings	\$1,109,430
New Employment (person years)	Jobs Created (annual)	28

# Q&A