

City Council – May 16, 2023

Mike Reid, Economic Development Director



Downtown Improvement and Theater District Funding Package

OPINION AND COMMENTARY

Editorials and other Opinion content offer perspectives on issues important to our community and are independent from the work of our newsroom reporters.

EDITORIALS

If you haven't been to downtown Olympia lately, you might be surprised at how popular it is

BY THE OLYMPIAN EDITORIAL BOARD

UPDATED MARCH 27, 2023 9:52 AM



View from the Fourth Ave. Bridge overlooking downtown Olympia. STEVE BLOOM sbloom@theolympian.com



Only have a minute? Listen instead

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The trends in downtown Olympia are terrific: 84 percent of community residents and downtown stakeholders say it's on the right track, up from 21 percent in 2020, according to the Olympia Downtown Alliance.

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PRESENTING SPONSOR



MAY 15-21 2023



Olympia Arts Walk

April 28-29

Community Arts Celebration



artswalkoly.com



Unfold by Aimee Schreiber

ARTS & CULTURE

Olympia's live theater companies among many nationwide struggling to bring back audiences

BY MOLLY GILMORE CONTRIBUTING WRITER

APRIL 17, 2023 5:00 AM



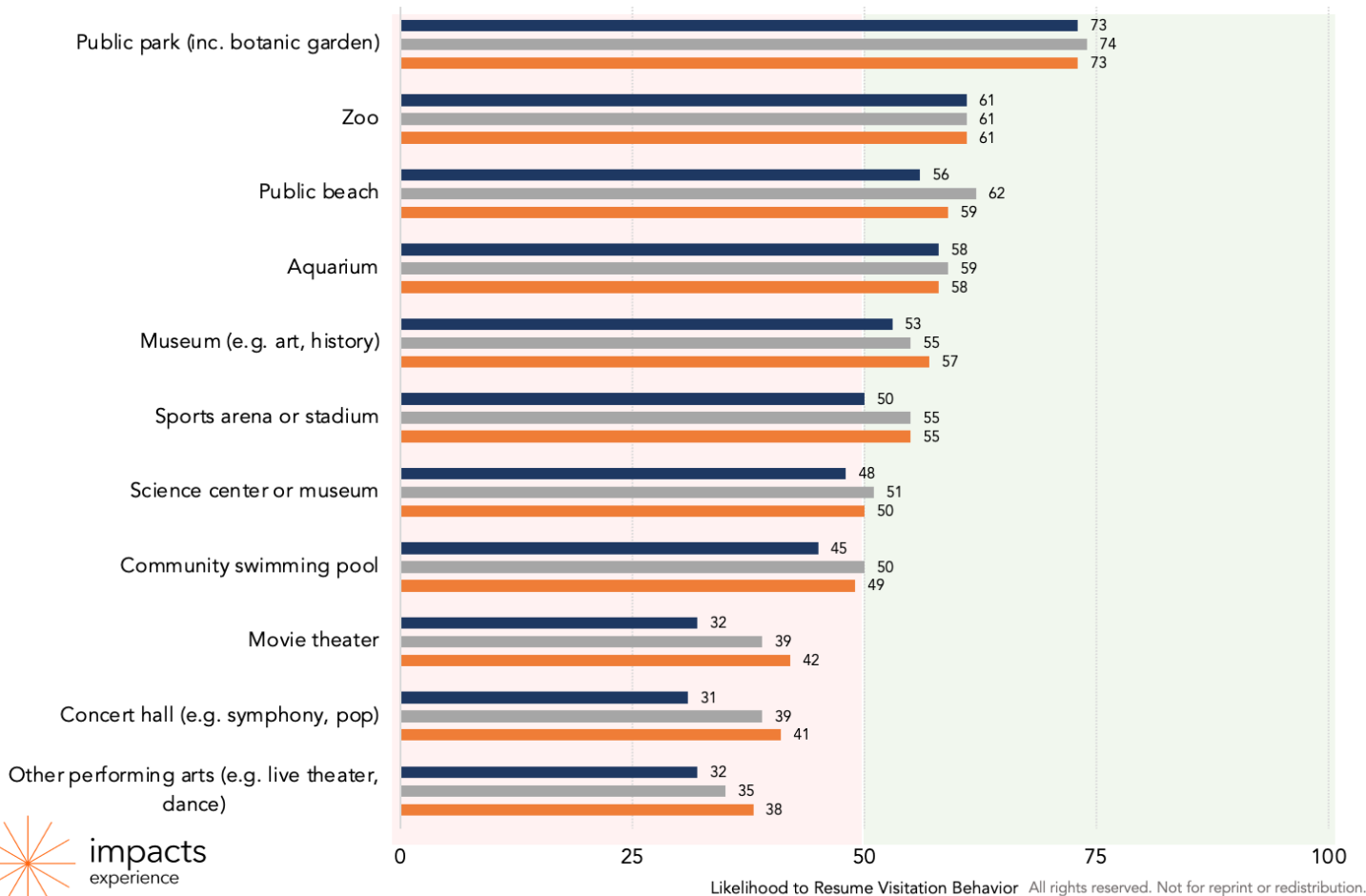
Harlequin Productions' Aaron Lamb says audiences are smaller after the pandemic than they were before, and the company is dealing with fewer subscribers and less revenue. STEVE BLOOM sbloom@theolympian.com

“We’re not selling what we would hope to be selling,” said Harlequin Productions artistic director Aaron Lamb. “The audience coming back from the pandemic is a lot smaller than it was before, and that’s not unique to us.”

Return to normal activities

By category of visitor-serving organization

■ EOY 20 ■ EOY 21 ■ EOY 22



*“Here’s the bad news: Despite increases compared to 2020 and 2021, distribution of demand as it relates to performing arts organizations is still notably below the 2019 level. People who once considered themselves regular patrons at theaters, concert halls, and other performing arts organizations have adjusted their preferences toward other experiences instead. **Predictably, this impacts market potential for performing arts organizations.**”*

There’s no way around this reality for performing arts organizations. The journey back to pre-2020 distribution of demand may continue to be a long one.”

The Pandemic Has STILL Shifted the Types of Cultural Entities People Prefer to Visit

Colleen Dilenschneider – Impacts Experience

www.colleendilen.com/2023/02/01/the-pandemic-has-still-shifted-the-types-of-cultural-entities-people-prefer-to-visit-data/

Project	Explanation	Amount
Downtown Lighting Enhancements	Continued holiday lighting for 2023 and additional festival light projects	\$20,000
Retail Pop-Up Program/Vacant Space Activation	Temporary tenanting of high visibility vacant space in DT core with emerging entrepreneurs managed by the Olympia Downtown Alliance. Project expenses could include real estate costs, insurance, utilities, marketing, and more. Targeted focus of effort can be minority and women-owned businesses.	\$35,000
Placemaking Microgrant Program	Piloted in 2022, provides \$500 “microgrants” for small businesses downtown to invest in small placemaking projects (planters, lighting, signage, pressure washing, etc.) or promotional events in the place of business.	\$15,000
Pressure Washing Expansion	Additional sidewalk pressure walking in high pedestrian areas downtown.	\$7,500
LoveOly Brand Expansion	“Love Oly” branded clings in vacant storefront windows, street pole banners, pole wraps, and other similar concepts.	\$10,000
Downtown Subtotal		\$87,500

Theater Support

Project	Amount
Olympia Family Theater	\$50,000
Olympia Film Society – Capitol Theater	\$100,000
Harlequin Productions	\$150,000
Theater Subtotal	\$300,000



HARLEQUIN

Theater Annual Reporting

A requirement of funding will be to submit an annual report for 10 years identifying efforts and activities in the following areas:

- Development a “low income or affordable access program” and report total numbers of discounted tickets or program participants.
- Complete an “Accessibility Assessment” and report annually on completed improvements.
- Host a community benefiting meeting/event/forum semi-annually.
- Identify and implement ways to support emerging artists and arts entrepreneurs.

Failure to report annually will disqualify the organization from future funding such as Lodging Tax, Cultural Access Tax, and City grants.

Project	Amount
Downtown Lighting Enhancements	\$20,000
Retail Pop-Up Program/Vacant Space Activation	\$35,000
Placemaking Microgrant Program	\$15,000
Pressure Washing Expansion	\$7,500
LoveOly Brand Expansion	\$10,000
Olympia Family Theater	\$50,000
Olympia Film Society – Capital Theater	\$100,000
Harlequin Productions	\$150,000
Olympia Indie Music History Project	\$25,000
Subtotal	\$412,500

Funding Source

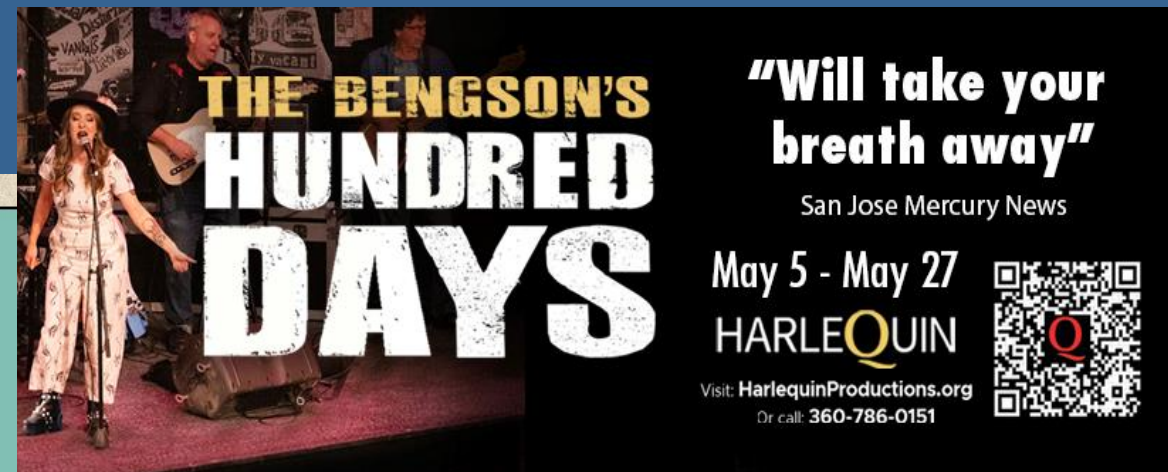
The Economic Development Reserves currently has an available fund balance of \$2,063,450.

If this package of funding is approved as presented it will reduce the fund balance to \$1,650,550. This fund is reserved for economic development initiatives and was the source of funding for the majority of the pandemic related recovery programs.



Alice in Wonderland
May 19-28

Olympia Family Theater



Upcoming Shows



Questions?

Mike Reid

Economic Development Director

360.753.8591