



THEATRE AURORA

Annual General Meeting – VP Operations Report

June 25, 2026

As the President has stated, this year has been one of the most successful and eventful in our recent history. There have been two major initiatives to improve the theatre facilities this year.

New Lobby Bathrooms (Scheduled for Fall 2027)

We have commenced a major project to remodel the lobby bathrooms which have been seen as substandard for a long time. The Board determined that the best use of the available space was to combine the current ladies and men's bathrooms into a single universal facility. This plan would keep the accessible washroom largely unchanged.

During a visit to the theatre to review other issues by Robin McDougall (Town of Aurora Director of Community Services) we discussed our plan for lobby bathroom remodeling. Robin committed to helping us present a package to Council in 2026 for 2027 funding. She also strongly backed a shift toward a single gender-neutral bathroom layout and recommended expanding the project to include new front doors and an enclosed lobby vestibule to block winter drafts. Following this meeting we met with the Mayor, Tom Mrakas, to discuss this project and he committed to provide funding once we had produced an architectural package. We are also intending to apply for a Trillium grant to assist in the funding.

We subsequently evaluated three architectural quotes for the bathroom renovation and selected an architect for the remodelling. The architect is compiling the final bathroom design drawings for municipal submission by August.

We are very excited about this development and feel sure that the new bathrooms will significantly improve everyone's experience when visiting our theatre.

Accessibility (2027 to coincide with the work in the lobby)

The Board is committed to improving the accessibility of our facility for all users. In addition to the relatively minor improvements we have already made (chairlift to the stage, improved side door access, larger wheelchair spaces and T-Coil hearing loop), we have applied for the 2026 Provincial EASE Grant (\$30,000) to fund a new stage door accessibility ramp. If successful, this ramp will link the lobby to the lower auditorium internally with no steps. This will allow the entire front row to be designated as accessible seating. The funding decision regarding the EASE ramp grant is expected this fall.

Other Issues

The theatre building has long had a problem with seasonal flooding under the stage. This prevents us making substantial use of the room under the stage and has, over the years, caused damage to various set items we have stored there.

We have installed dehumidifiers under the stage and activated the costume room unit to successfully resolve dampness and air quality issues, but this does not solve the root problem. We met with Town officials Robin McDougall (Director of Community Services) and Phil Rose at the theatre to review basement flooding. As a result, Town staff and contractors cleared roof downspouts, added longer ground tail pipes, and sealed foundation cracks with concrete to mitigate seasonal water issues. The Town brought in specialized drainage contractors to inspect the under-stage room for seasonal flooding solutions. We are currently waiting for word from the Town on next steps.

We have performed a number of minor facility upgrades and have scheduled the renovation of the props room to repair damage from a leaky toilet and improve lighting later this month. We have painted the walls under the stage and replaced the old mirrors in the overflow dressing room area to improve its functionality.

These minor improvements will help to make our theatre a more welcoming space and, after completion of our major projects, will position us well for the future.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Ward, VP Operations