

MIDWEST THEATER

STRATEGIC PLAN

2024-2028



MIDWEST THEATER

MISSION

To enhance the arts community within the Nebraska Panhandle by preserving the historic Midwest Theater for present and future generations and nurturing a lively community through the presentation of:

- Mainstream and specialty films
- Performing and visual arts
- School, humanities, cultural and community educational programming

VISION

To foster and drive a thriving, diverse arts and culture community for all residents of the greater Nebraska Panhandle via four core priorities:

- Instilling building pride
- Extending beyond the walls of the Midwest Theater
- Increasing access for youth
- Promoting the arts

STAFF MEMBERS

- Tina Worthman, Executive Director
- Jeff Johnson, General Manager
- Krista Baird, Community Development Manager
- Kam Belden, Digital Media Specialist
- Abby Torres, Volunteer Coordinator
- Hunter Allred, Office & Membership Coordinator
- Brittany Charles, Projectionist

BOARD MEMBERS

- Mary Robinson, President
- Troy Cowan, Vice President
- Laurie Alkire, Secretary
- Sharyn Wohlers, Treasurer
- Jeff Tracy, Ex Officio Officer
- Shirley Burford
- Kim Ferguson
- Steve Gonzalez
- Phil Kelly
- Lorin King
- Dick Meyer
- Bill Peters
- Marilyn Rahmig
- Stew Rusch
- Tracy Steele
- Allen Taylor
- LaRita Van Boskirk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONSULTANT'S REPORT

From September through December of 2023, the Midwest Theater partnered with JNW Consulting to create a comprehensive Strategic Plan that aims to support the Theater's Vision and Mission for the next three to five years.

To accommodate the time availability and capacity of the Executive Director, Staff, and Board, the process was split into four phases that were to be executed over a four-month period. These phases were executed as follows:

Phase One: September, 2023, Intro to Strategy. Presentation of National Community Theater Trends and Data, with the Board and Executive Director participating in the vision exercise, "Envisioning the Future of the Midwest Theater"

Phase Two: October 25th, The Board and Executive Director reconvened to complete a current-state SWOT Analysis of the Midwest Theater, with purpose to establish organizational strengths that should be sustained and maximized, in addition to critical opportunities for improvement over the next one to five years. An exercise to identify and articulate the core values of the Midwest Theater was also completed in this session, with the following elements identified as core organizational values:

1. Education
2. Pride
3. Diversity
4. Community
5. Support and Recognition for the Individual

It may be of importance to mention the sentiment of meaning behind each core value, shared through the viewpoint of facilitator Jamie Weingart of JNW Consulting, below:

1. **Education:** the Midwest Theater's mission and vision encompasses the core component of educating its stakeholders in the Arts arena.
2. **Pride:** The Midwest Theater aims to uphold its legacy and pride for generations to come, specifically in relationship to its historical building and inspiring programs and services.
3. **Diversity:** The Midwest Theater commits itself to representing a diverse array of voices, stories, programs, events, and movies.
4. **Community:** The Midwest Theater considers itself a "community within a community", lending itself to the region as a welcoming, fun, safe place for patrons, visitors, volunteers, staff, students, and citizens.
5. **Support and Recognition:** The Midwest Theater aims to acknowledge and celebrate the contributions of all who commit themselves to the success and sustainability of the Theater.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

Phase Three: November 20th, JNW Consulting presented the Midwest Theater with a comprehensive report of the Current State Analysis completed by the Board, as well as data offered via two community focus groups and one online survey. The Theater's Board, Staff, and Leadership utilized these data points to identify and articulate long-term Strategic Priorities and Defining Objectives. The Strategic Pillars that resulted from the group's dialogue are as follows:

1. Ensure Financial Security
2. Maximize Marketing and Communication
3. Develop and Nurture Partnerships
4. Enhance Recruitment, Training, and Recognition
5. Create the Midwest Theater Experience

Phase Four: December 11th. In this session, JNW Consulting presented the Theater's Planning Team with a first-draft of their Strategy, which was modified, revised, and added to throughout the meeting. Results from these efforts established a complete Strategic Plan with clearly defined Mission, Vision, Values, Vision for the Future, Strategic Priorities, Goals, and a flexible Plan for Action.

JNW Consulting would like to share a message of gratitude for Tina Worthman, the Executive Director of the Midwest Theater, the Midwest Theater staff (Kam, Jeff, Krista, and Hunter), and all Board Members who participated in this process.

As a shining point in our community, the Midwest Theater serves not only as a landmark of the past, but also as a pillar of hope for the future. Through your passion and commitment to the Theater's growth and long-term success, you are making a true, positive difference that will have a positive ripple effect far beyond the theater's walls, and will instill joy and belonging in the hearts of your patrons for years to come.

Thank you for inviting JNW Consulting to support you in your strategy initiatives. It has truly been a pleasure to work with you throughout the past few months, and I wish you all the best as you continue building the legacy of the Midwest Theater.



Jamie Weingart

Jamie Weingart

Principal Consultant

JNW Consulting

STRATEGIC PILLAR #1

THE MIDWEST THEATER WILL PRIORITIZE FINANCIAL SECURITY FOR THE PURPOSE OF LONG-TERM SUCCESS AND SUSTAINABILITY

MEASURES OF SUCCESS:

- An Annual Increase in Dollars Raised for the Theater
- The Existence of Sound Financial Processes
- The Existence of a Balanced, Realistic, and Sustainable Budget with Reduced Debt
- The Existence of a Long-Term Maintenance Schedule for Building, Operations, and Equipment

STRATEGY	ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES		TIMELINE
		EMPLOYEE	BOARD	
1. Grow and Increase Donor/Sponsor Fundraising Dollars	1. Create a plan to develop interest and excitement around donor opportunities	Executive Director with 2024 Staff Lead Community Development Manager	Finance Committee	Fundraiser Events in March, October, and December Quarterly Progress Updates
	a. Consider and decide on fundraising opportunities			Revisit for 2025 Planning in October Board Meeting
	2. Review and revise sponsorship levels and opportunities	Executive Director and 2024 Staff Lead Membership Coordinator	Membership Committee	Meet with Decisions Made by August 31, 2024
	3. Attract Sponsors and Donors a. Create a list of potential donors	Executive Director and 2024 Staff Lead Community Development Manager	Finance Committee	By 12/31/2025
	b. Make businesses aware of opportunities for sponsorships through increased outreach 1. Educate the community on our nonprofit status 2. Create the 'ask' / approach people or companies to become partners	Executive Director	Board of Directors	Report Progress by 12/31/2025
	c. Expand reach to Eastern Nebraska (ads, donations, etc.)	Executive Director	Board Chair/ President and Selected Team	Begin Outreach in 2026
	4. Create a process/strategy for recognizing current sponsors in a meaningful way 1. create more value 2. Consistent communication on a timeline	Midwest Theater Staff: 2024 Team Lead Community Development Manager	Finance Committee and Selected Board Team	Discuss Gratitude Opportunities and Execute Monthly. Revisit strategic approach semi-annually in June and November
	5. Create a plan for growing Planned Giving	Executive Director	Finance Committee	Create plan by 12/31/2024

STRATEGIC PILLAR #1 (CONTINUED)

STRATEGY	ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES		TIMELINE
		EMPLOYEE	BOARD	
2. Create a clear understanding of revenue, expenses, and other financial data	1. Create and maintain financial processes for AR and AP	Executive Director, Staff: 2024 Staff Lead Office Manager	Finance Committee and Consultant	Ongoing, Review Monthly and Present to Staff. Board Review with Monthly Financials
	2. Create and maintain financial reporting processes	Executive Director	Finance Committee and Consultant	Formal Process in Place by the end of Q1, 2024. Executive Director Present Financial Processes to the Board Monthly
	3. Create an annual budget that reflects reasonable expectations for revenue and expenses	Executive Director	Finance Committee and Consultant	Annually, Due December 1st
3. Ensure Sustainability through Programs and Services	1. Maintain a review of ticket and snack pricing to maximize affordability while covering costs to maintain operations	Midwest Theater Staff. 2024 Lead Abigail Torres	Finance Committee and Consultant	Ongoing, Review Annually in December
4. Maintain Assets	1. Create a maintenance schedule a. Contract with an asset management specialist 1. Evaluate equipment and building to identify needs 2. Create and implement a repair and replacement schedule	Midwest Theater Staff, Volunteer Coordinator	Finance Committee and Consultant	Maintenance schedule in place by end of Q2, 2024
	b. Keep electronic and computer equipment updated and operational	Midwest Theater Staff. 2024 Lead: General Manager and Office Manager	Board Building Committee	Ongoing, Create Process by end of Q2, 2024
	c. Complete inventory and organization of all equipment for theater operations	Midwest Theater Staff and 2024 Lead: General Manager	Board Member TBD	By 12/31/2024
	2. Budget for capital improvements	Executive Director	Finance Committee	Ongoing, Review Annually at November Board Meeting

STRATEGIC PILLAR #2

THE MIDWEST THEATER COMMITS TO CONSISTENT MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION PLANNING IN EFFORTS TO ENHANCE BRAND CONTINUITY AND AWARENESS

MEASURES OF SUCCESS:

- The Existence of a Marketing Plan
- Annual Creation and Distribution of Annual Report
- Successful Execution of an Annual Meeting
- Marketing has a Line Item in Annual Budget

STRATEGY	ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES		TIMELINE
		EMPLOYEE	BOARD	
1. Expand Reach and Increase Exposure	1. Create a Marketing Plan <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Solidify a consistent brand Diversify Marketing Channels and Mediums (i.e. social media) Set up a standard protocol for every movie and event <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (so that the consumer knows what to expect) Create specific marketing for showcasing the theater Create specific marketing for showcasing performances Increase audience demographics 	Executive Director and Staff.	Board President	First-Draft of Plan Due by end of Q3, 2024
	2. Create and Maintain Budget for marketing strategy	Executive Director and Staff.	Board President	First-Draft of Plan Due by end of Q3, 2024
	3. Through Annual Meeting and Annual Report, Educate and Inform Our Stakeholders <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Change the perception of who in the community supports the theater / how the community is supported 	Executive Director with Staff	Board of Directors	Annual Meeting Held Annually in March - High-Level Report Sent out in April 2024. Formal Processes and Reporting in Place by end of Q1, 2025

STRATEGIC PILLAR #3

THE MIDWEST THEATER WILL INVEST IN, DEVELOP, AND NURTURE PARTNERSHIPS IN OUR REGIONAL COMMUNITY FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAXIMIZING CULTURAL EXPERIENCES AND EDUCATION IN PERFORMING ARTS

MEASURES OF SUCCESS:

- A Comprehensive Understanding of Current and Potential Educational Partners
- A Measurable Increase in the Diversity of Programs Offered; Measurable Growth in Attendance to These Events

STRATEGY	ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES		TIMELINE
		EMPLOYEE	BOARD	
1. Nurture educational partnerships	1. Create a list of existing local educational partners, as well as a list of potential future partners a. Public Schools b. College c. Pre-K d. Private Schools e. Other	All Theater Staff	Education Committee	List in Place by August 31, 2024
	2. Coordinate and partner with nonlocal universities and educational systems a. UNL Performing Arts and Lied Center b. Front Range	Executive Director with 2024 Lead General Manager	Board Chair and Education Committee	Begin January, 2025
	3. Increase communication regarding partnership opportunities	Executive Director and Community Development Manager	Education and Membership Committees	Begin formal communication by October, 2024
2. Seek opportunities to partner with diverse populations	1. Create a list of groups and populations to interact with the Theater a. Board Members Are Expected to Introduce At Least One New Sponsor/Donor/Member to the Theater	Midwest Theater Staff	Board of Directors	Ongoing, Review Quarterly Annually, Formal Report to Board in November, 2024
	2. Create new opportunities to increase interaction with the Theater (i.e. Job Fairs, Booths, etc.)	Midwest Theater Staff	Board of Directors	Create a list of opportunities and commitments by Q2, 2025
	3. Increase communication regarding opportunities to partner with us	Executive Director	Board President	Review Quarterly

STRATEGIC PILLAR #3 (CONTINUED)

STRATEGY	ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES		TIMELINE
		EMPLOYEE	BOARD	
3. Deepen relationships with community leaders and organizations	1. Create our contact list of partners a. City b. County c. Nonprofits d. Tourism e. Adult Clubs	Executive Director with Office Manager	Board President	Due Q2, 2025
	2. Create outreach plan a. Increase communication regarding opportunities	Executive Director with Office Manager	Board President	Due Q2, 2025
4. Partner with businesses beyond sponsorships	1. Create alternative options for sponsorship and partnership options a. In-Kind b. Service c. Marketing and Exposure	Executive Director with Community Development Manager	Board Marketing Committee	Due Q2, 2025
	2. Increase communication regarding opportunities	Executive Director with Community Development Manager	Board Marketing Committee	Due Q2, 2025

STRATEGIC PILLAR #4

THE MIDWEST THEATER AIMS TO ENHANCE RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND RECOGNITION FOR THE BOARD, STAFF, AND VOLUNTEERS

MEASURES OF SUCCESS:

- A comprehensive list of active volunteers.
- Creation of job descriptions, work schedules and cross-training for all staff members.
- Board composition that is demographically diverse.
- Creation of a board document with clear board expectations and duties.

STRATEGY	ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES		TIMELINE
		EMPLOYEE	BOARD	
1. Rebuild/ Revitalize Volunteer Base	1. Create a comprehensive volunteer recruitment and retention plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Create a plan to recruit a diverse group of people as volunteers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Identify groups to make them aware of volunteer opportunities (ex: schools) b. Create a helping/chore board for those whom may be able to donate time for random needs 	Executive Director with Volunteer Coordinator	Board Volunteer Committee	Due Q3 - 2024
	2. Create a plan on how we welcome volunteers and make them feel special <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ex: Create excitement for volunteer team • ex: Create friendly competition and make it fun 	Executive Director & Volunteer Coordinator	Board Volunteer Committee	Due Q4 - 2024
	3. Create an inservice training for all new volunteers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Create a FAQ list with updates, notes, communication, 'what to do', etc. 	Executive Director & Volunteer Coordinator	Board Volunteer Committee	Due Q2 - 2025
2. Support Staff Engagement and Retention	1. Create a plan to facilitate/support work-life balance	Executive Director	Board President	Due Q2 - 2024
	2. Define and document job descriptions with an annual review of each description <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Create process consistencies within job roles b. Define and Document Work Processes c. Create Cross-Training and a Communication Plan d. Complete annual performance reviews 	Executive Director	Board President	Due Q3 - 2024

STRATEGIC PILLAR #4 (CONTINUED)

STRATEGY	ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES		TIMELINE
		EMPLOYEE	BOARD	
3. Support Board Engagement and Involvement	1. Create a document that defines Board expectations and terms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Review and Modify Board Expectations b. Facilitate an annual review of board expectations and modify as necessary c. Create Board Committees 	Executive Director	Board Executive Committee	Due Q2 - 2025
	2. Create a plan to identify strengths needed from the board, as well as a balanced demographic composition of the board	Executive Director	Board Executive Committee	Due Q2 - 2025
	3. Create a process to assess board involvement and create freedom to exit when necessary	Executive Director	Board Executive Committee	Due Q2 - 2025

STRATEGIC PILLAR #5

THE MIDWEST THEATER ASPIRES TO CREATE AN ENGAGING, MAGICAL, AND MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS:

- Programming that includes local talent, regional partnerships and appeals to diverse populations in our community.
- Expand our reach to outside our region to include partnering with other theaters and performing arts organizations.
- Create both print and digital information that engage new audiences on the historical significance and interesting stories of the Midwest Theater.
- Embrace a welcoming atmosphere both inside and outside of the theater with engaging stories, people and the history of the theater to all visitors.

STRATEGY	ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES		TIMELINE
		EMPLOYEE	BOARD	
1. Programming	1. Utilize local talent in the community and the panhandle	Executive Director and General Manager	Board Programming Committee	Due Q3, 2025
	2. Afford diverse opportunities a. Age b. Culture c. Ethnicity d. Movies e. Performing Arts f. Other	Executive Director and Staff	DEI and Programming Committee	Due Q4, 2025
	3. Expand our presence in the schools	Executive Director and Community Development Manager	Board Education Committee	Due Q1, 2025
	4. Create the optimal experience for date night/ family night / historical tour/ themed night	Executive Director and Community Development Manager	Board Programming Committee	Due Q4, 2025
	5. Coordinate with other entities in the state and region a. Service Organizations b. Arts c. Speech teams, etc. d. LIED e. UN f. Front Range g. WNCC h. EWC	Executive Director, General Manager, and Community Development Manager	Board Education and Programming Committees	Due Q1, 2026

STRATEGIC PILLAR #5 (CONTINUED)

STRATEGY	ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES		TIMELINE
		EMPLOYEE	BOARD	
2. Historical Building	1. Tell the Midwest story to patrons and visitors a. Tours, docent program, etc b. Rack cards c. Add a preview before movies (historic education) i. Keep the theater clean	Executive Director and Volunteer Coordinator	Board Members	Due Q3, 2025
	2. Continue efforts to create a welcoming atmosphere within the theater	Executive Director and Staff	Board Members	Due Q4, 2025
	3. Continue efforts to improve the 'wow factor' through design, building aesthetics, etc.	Executive Director and Community Development Manager	Executive Committee	Due Q4, 2024
	4. Create budget line for maintaining historical integrity	Executive Director	Board Finance and Building Committees	Due Q4, 2024

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

In efforts to ensure successful execution of strategic priorities, the following future opportunities for action are recommended by JNW Consulting:

1. Add Strategic Plan Progress Updates and Discussion Items to Monthly Board and Staff Meeting Agendas
2. Hold an Annual Strategy Review Retreat (1/2 Day) with Board and Staff to Share Strategy Successes, Challenges, Revised Goals, and New Opportunities
3. Track and Update Strategy Action Items in an Excel Dashboard or Similar Format

TIMELINES AND STATUS UPDATES

A Potential 2025 Revised Strategy Table May Look Similar to the Following:

Strategic Priority #1								
Measures of Success:								
	Action Item	Responsible Party Leader	Responsible Party Members	Deadline	Status 2024-2025	Status 2025-2026	Status 2026-2027	Status 2027-2028
Defining Objective #1								
Defining Objective #2								



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Let's explore what you do well so that you can do more of it.