



Since 1904

CONCORD
City Auditorium

THE FRIENDS OF THE
CONCORD CITY AUDITORIUM

PO Box 652 • Concord, NH 03302-0652

February 25, 2026

To Mayor Byron Champlin and City Councilors:

The Friends of The Concord City Auditorium are pleased to continue our unique public-private partnership with the City of Concord as we renew our Memorandum of Understanding, fully agreeing with its terms and our mutual decision to increase the rental rates of all Auditorium users in the 2026-2027 season by 7%, rounded up to the next 0 or 5.

Since 1904, Concord City Auditorium – “The Audi” – has been Concord’s Arts Park, managed by the Parks and Recreation and General Services Departments and serving as the home of the capital area’s community-based arts and entertainment. The Friends formed in 1991, in response to a threat of closure, as a 501(c)(3) umbrella over all the theatre’s users -- presenters, performers, and audience -- with a founding mission “to preserve and maintain our historic municipal stage and to foster its affordable and accessible use by everyone in our community.” For 35 years, The Friends have followed three founding principles: to be 100% volunteer, limit feasibility studies, and spend all funds possible in the local economy.

In this 2025-2026 season-to-date, The Friends have restored the City’s Mason & Hamlin Grand Piano, installed a showcase for historical exhibits, purchased a microphone bundle and lobby water fountain at a total cost of \$18,800. The current project is an upgrade of the 2002 Bose Sound System.

Since 1991, the Friends of the Audi have raised and invested over \$2,000,000 to restore and upgrade all areas of the theatre, done completely with committed volunteers, donations, and grants, and in a cooperative partnership with Concord’s Parks & Recreation and General Services Departments via the Memo of Understanding between the City of Concord and The Friends of the Audi.

Beginning in 1991, with volunteers restoring the original interior decoration and the historic murals, The Friends upgrades have included:

- Auditorium: second staircase to fully open the balcony, air conditioning system, technical booth with sound and light equipment, and restoration of 850 original seats, the oak flooring, and the entrance lobby plasterwork.
- Stage Area; Mechanical fly system replacing the 1904 ropes, “Tower” staircase to all four floors, dressing room renovations, Source 4 and LED lighting equipment, ADA ramp, and loading access doors, Stage Velvets and Zetex fire curtains.

- The Reception Lobby (\$350,000 in 1994 dollars) with ADA compliant bathrooms, expanding the hospitality and uses of the theatre, with 3,500 families participating in the “One \$10 Brick at a Time” fund-raising.

Working with City Departments, Friends volunteers contribute time, talent, and effort every year to support the mission:

- Pitch In volunteers clean and polish the house, House Managers and Techs offer trainings, Bakers and Servers provide refreshments with donations supporting upgrades, Co-op mailings with shared costs support all performances. Over 1,000 volunteer hours have been recorded season-to-date, valued by the U.S. Department of Labor at \$35,760.

As a result of this public-private partnership, the list of Auditorium users has grown beyond the traditional Community Players, Community Concerts, Walker Lectures, Barbershop Chorus, etc. to include the Perennial Exchange with General Services and UNH Law School, Fire Departments, Civics programs, Historical Societies, pageants, school programs, etc.

We look forward to continuing our special relationship with the City of Concord under the long-standing Memorandum of Understanding.

Sincerely yours,



David C. Murdo

President