



BUILD OUR FUTURE

The Campaign for MPAC

FAQs

MPAC is embarking on a transformative expansion, renovation and restoration initiative, titled **Build Our Future**. The largest in our organization's history, this \$65 million project will significantly expand arts access, elevate educational programming, and preserve one of northern New Jersey's most important cultural landmarks.

More details about this project can be found below.

What does the project involve?

The project includes an estimated 31,000 square feet of interior and exterior expanded space combined. Our expansion and renovation plan creates a modest additional footprint, while strategically enlarging and upgrading our existing facility.

- At the heart of this project is the new **Ilene and Bruce Jacobs Arts & Education Center**, the future home of MPAC's Education programs. This new building will feature 7 education studios and classrooms and a 150-capacity rehearsal/performance space.
- Our beloved performing arts school program will become the **Jacobs Performing Arts School**, with expanded enrollment to reach significantly more children each year. It may have a new name, but expect the same great experience!
- Major upgrades to MPAC's **backstage and technical infrastructure** including an additional loading bay, new freight elevator, new dressing rooms and backstage amenities, enabling us to host more complex productions while enhancing the experience for visiting artists.
- **A comprehensive restoration of our historic 1937 theater**, a treasured community landmark. This restoration will preserve its architectural character while introducing modern improvements including 1,300 new seats, restored interior detailing and plaster, accessibility updates and renovated lobby and plaza.

- **New gathering and meeting areas**, including **The Starlight Veranda** reception space and additional art galleries.
- **Additional administrative space** and a modest two-level parking deck for staff.

Why is MPAC expanding now?

For more than 30 years, MPAC has served as a regional cultural hub, welcoming over 250,000 patrons annually and generating approximately \$18 million in local economic activity. As demand for our programs continues to grow, our current facilities have reached capacity. Hundreds of children are on waiting lists for our performing arts school programs each year.

Are you tearing down the theatre?

No. MPAC's Community Theatre Auditorium on South Street has been a community landmark since 1937, and it's not going anywhere! The theatre will undergo a restoration and renovation project, in conjunction with the expansion planned behind the theatre on Pine Street. We're keeping our historic charm and adding modern conveniences.

Are you enlarging the theatre?

No. The Main Stage auditorium will have the same total capacity of 1,319, but with all-new seats for the comfort of our patrons.

How much will the project cost and how is it funded?

The project is expected to cost approximately \$65 million.

Build Our Future: The Campaign for MPAC is a \$22.5 million campaign to support the overall project. To date, \$19.8 million has been raised.

In addition to the lead gift from Ilene and Bruce Jacobs, major lead support has been received from the F. M. Kirby Foundation, the Paragano Family Foundation, The John and Margaret Post Foundation and The State of New Jersey.

In November 2025, the Mayo Performing Arts Center was awarded tax credits through the New Jersey Economic Development Authority's Cultural Arts Facility Expansion (CAFE) program.

How can I contribute?

Patrons and community members are invited to donate to the campaign through our website, MayoArts.org/BuildOurFuture

For naming opportunities, gifts of stock or any other questions, please contact BuildOurFuture@mayoarts.org.

What is the project timeline?

MPAC will break ground on this historic expansion and renovation project in May 2026, with an anticipated construction timeline of 18-24 months.

Where is the new building?

The new Ilene and Bruce Jacobs Arts & Education Center will be built on property acquired by MPAC that is located directly behind the theatre, at the corner of Pine Street and King Place.

Will the Theatre be closed during renovation?

We hope that the impact on our schedule will be minimal, but that has yet to be determined.

Will the performing arts school be closed during construction?

No, classes will continue to be held in current locations and satellite locations if necessary.

As a patron, will I be able to park at your lot on show nights?

No, this lot will be for MPAC staff only.

Are you replacing your current Performing Arts School?

No, we are growing! Our beloved performing arts school program will be renamed the Jacobs Performing Arts School, with expanded enrollment to reach significantly more children each year. MPAC's Education Director, Cathy Roy, continues to oversee the program.

Who is designing the project?

The expansion project has been designed by F.J. Rawding Architecture and Planning.

The restoration phase of the project will be overseen by Connolly & Hickey Historical Architects, LLC in accordance with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Who is the MPAC campaign leadership team?

Build Our Future: The Campaign for MPAC Cabinet includes: Honorary Co-Chairs Ilene P. and Bruce I. Jacobs, Co-Chairs Jefferson W. Kirby and Mary Jane Robertson and members William Conger, Anne DeLaney, James E. Hanson II, Marylyn McLaughlin, Eileen Paragano, and MPAC Chairman of the Board of Trustees Gregory Supron.