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memorandum report

to: Eileen Cabanel, City of Laconia
from: Webb Management Services
regarding: Colonial Theatre Needs Assessment
date: December 31, 2010

Webb Management Services is a management consulting practice for the development and operation of cultural facilities. We have been hired by the City of Laconia to assess the feasibility of revitalizing the Colonial Theatre, located on Main Street in downtown Laconia.

To complete our work, we considered the market for cultural events, existing local and regional arts and event facilities, potential uses and users, and community goals, benefits and impacts. We met with nearly 150 members of the community, including representatives of local arts organizations, promoters, educational institutions, downtown businesses, constituents, and elected officials. We also toured existing local arts, educational and cultural facilities, and then conducted research on comparable projects searching for precedents and other information that might inform the study.

1. Study Context

1.1 The Colonial Theatre

The Colonial Theatre originally opened its doors in 1914. Once the center of activity for the downtown, the Theatre operated as 1,250-seat venue and presented films, musical performances and vaudeville shows. In addition to the auditorium, the property includes four commercial storefront spaces and 18 apartments that are rented as affordable housing. Long-time Laconia residents reminisce about performing dance recitals on the stage, seeing beloved films for the first time in the theatre, or even having their first kiss in the balcony.

The current property owner, Patricia Baldi, purchased the property in the 1962 with her husband, Lawrence Baldi. Mr. and Mrs. Baldi operated the Colonial Theatre as a movie theater, presenting films until 2001. Mr. and Mrs. Baldi divided the auditorium into five individual screening rooms in the mid 1980s. In 2003, Karen and Gordon Brooks briefly reopened the Colonial Theatre as a venue for classic films, however their tenure ended after a few short weeks due to fire code violations. The code violations were never fully addressed and the theater has remained shuttered since that time.

In April 2010, the City of Laconia obtained an 18-month option to purchase the Colonial Theatre building for \$1.4 million with an eye towards revitalizing the theatre and finding the right public/private ownership structure to support a restoration and future operations.

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1.2 Bloom's Variety Store

Adjacent to the Colonial Theatre on Main Street is the site of the former Bloom's Variety Store. Founded in 1997 by Gary and Marty Bloom after the J. J. Newberry Variety Store closed on that site, Bloom's Variety Store was an anchor business in downtown Laconia until Mr. and Mrs. Bloom retired in July 2008. At the time, Mr. and Mrs. Bloom had a buyer ready to purchase the building, but when the economy soured, the purchase fell through. The 22,000 square foot building now stands vacant and is available for purchase or rent.

Having outgrown its present facilities, leadership at the Lakes Region Community College recently expressed interest in using part of the Bloom's Variety Store to expand its culinary program. The location would have particular appeal if the Colonial Theatre were to be reanimated. The major roadblock in this plan is the cost of renovation. Presently, representatives of the Lakes Region Community College are looking for a partner to share renovation costs.

1.3 The State of the Arts in the Lakes Region

Overall, arts and cultural programming, organizations and opportunities in Laconia are fairly limited. There are some community-based arts organizations that operate in Laconia, as well as a small number of professional groups spread throughout the Lakes Region, with some degree of concentration in Meredith and Plymouth. These groups provide opportunities to attend performances and participate in a variety of genres including vocal and instrumental music, theatre, and visual arts.

While there are no arts and cultural venues in Laconia that offer their own arts and cultural series, there is a fairly dense saturation of arts and cultural venues within a 30-mile radius or farther. Laconia and Lakes Region residents are very accustomed to driving to Manchester, Epping, Franklin, Gilford, Portsmouth, Claremont, Concord, Plymouth, Tilton and Wolfeboro to see a wide range of arts and cultural presentations.

2. Market Assessment

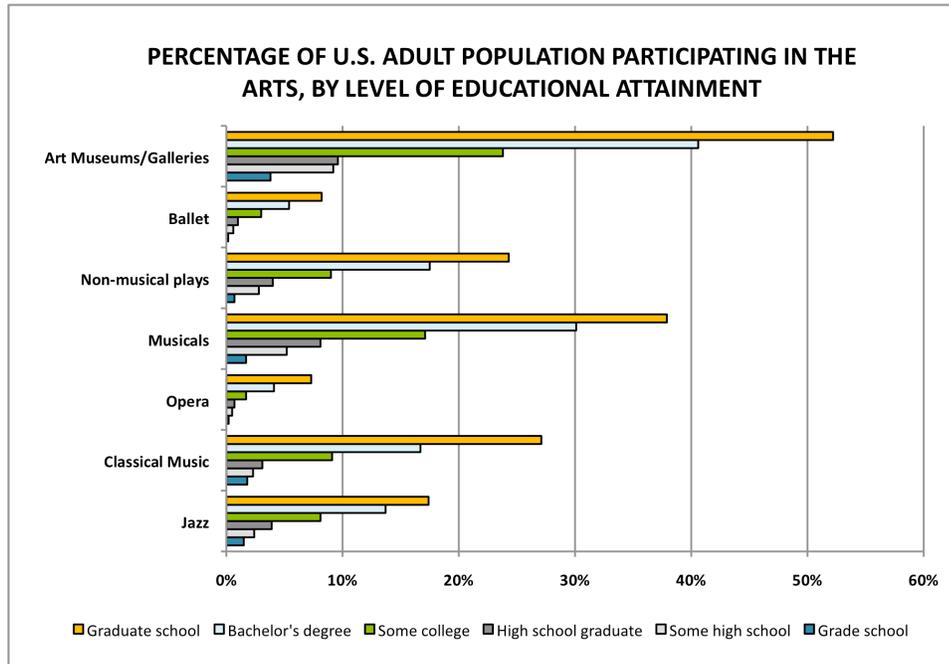
Before focusing more specifically on the situation and issues in Laconia and the Lakes Region, let's continue to set the stage with a look at some of the broader issues at play in the field.

2.1 National Characteristics and Trends on Arts Participation

Understanding who participates in the arts nationally and comparing that information to the defined market is critical to confirming the capacity in the market for arts attendance at new, improved, or expanded facilities. Studies conducted by the National Endowment for the Arts, Americans for the Arts and Urban Institute help us characterize arts attendees.

The National Endowment for the Arts ("NEA") conducts the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA) every five years. Survey results for 2008 were published in Fall 2009. The SPPA identifies the demographic characteristics of those who participate in the arts, both as audience members and as active participants in classes, performing groups and more. The following narrative highlights some of the key findings of the SPPA.

- * **Educational attainment is by far the best predictor of arts attendance.** As seen in the chart below, the propensity to attend arts events among those who have completed college is at least three times greater than for those who have finished only high school; with each advanced level of education there is an increased probability of arts attendance.



- * Income and age also matter, but not nearly as much; those with higher incomes and those who are over 45 are more likely to attend.

- * Race is not a predictor of whether a person is likely to attend the arts, but is a predictor of the genre of art likely to be attended.
- * A large and growing proportion of adults also participate in the arts. One-third of surveyed adults took music lessons or classes at some point in their lives. More adults take music classes than other types of lessons or classes.
- * Participation by young adults in the arts and sports, and in such activities as literary reading and listening to classical and jazz music, is declining, likely due to the ways in which new technology is changing how younger generations choose to spend their leisure time.
- * The most recent NEA survey results indicated that arts participation is declining. But, these conclusions are based on results of 2008 surveys, as the recession was beginning to have impact. Newer attendance data from a number of national cultural institutions indicates that participation has grown over the last year, likely due to an increase in 'stay-cations' and other audience behavior resulting from the economic decline.

2.2 Forces and Trends

We see a number of other factors at work in the Lakes Region and across the nation, which are valid as we consider demand and opportunity for the Colonial Theatre:

- * **Economic:** The nation is still in the midst of challenging economic times that continue to affect the arts. Nationwide, there is more sensitivity to ticket prices and less demand for touring shows given the proclivity to audiences and the downside of failure. As a result, planning work and related decisions must be conservative, at least for the short-term.
- * **Technology:** Emerging technologies are allowing audiences to see/hear/experience performances with a high level of quality through their home entertainment systems. Other technologies are allowing people to connect electronically through social networking sites. These represent huge threats to live performance, unless groups are able to stress the power of sharing a live experience with other people, and offer opportunities for audience members to talk about that experience with others. Another more positive element of technology is the emergence of the web as a marketing tool. This is critically important as a cost-effective means to build and sustain customer loyalty.
- * **The Environment:** Environmental issues (most significantly climate change) are becoming pervasive. Most significant is the new competition for funding that these issues and movements represent. Also significant is the need for arts groups and facilities to embrace green building and operating practices. One of the other effects concerns support for local culture, in the same way the local food movement has emerged.

- * **Social:** Finally, there are social issues. There is the challenge of cocooning, when people choose to isolate themselves from others, living in a virtual world (enabled by technology). But we also see that many more people still want to exist in a world with others. Recent research on the intrinsic values of the arts focuses on the importance of giving audiences the opportunity to talk about performances with other audience members as a way to process and find meaning in the experience. To us, the roots of cultural experiences relate to storytelling around a fire, and that primal experience remains valid.

2.3 The Future of Performing Arts Facilities

Recently within the arts industry there has been much discussion around changes taking place in audience behavior, technologies, live performance and more. All of these changes are influencing a number of trends in facility development and redevelopment, summarized below.

- * **Cultural Facilities as Destinations:** The next generation of arts facilities will likely be 24/7 buildings, open all the time with informal programming and an atmosphere that is buzzing and welcoming. One example is the South Bank Centre in London, home to four orchestras, including the London Philharmonic Orchestra, but also a major destination for strollers, lunch-time crowds and younger people who meet and watch and participate in a range of free and low-cost programs.

This is a major shift for performing arts venues that have historically come alive an hour before a performance. New spaces have enlarged lobbies where high quality food and drink are available for sale over longer periods of time. (The newly renovated Alice Tully Hall at New York City's Lincoln Center has a 50-foot bar that is open from breakfast until one hour past performance.) The next step—though it will certainly cause technical directors and operations managers a shudder—may be to open up a performance space as a place to meet and socialize even when a performance is not in progress.

- * **From Friday Night Lights to Community Living Rooms:** Arts facilities are increasingly functioning as places where people congregate; particularly young people. Young cosmopolitans (Yo-Co's) are turning modern and contemporary cultural institutions into hubs of social activity. Sixty-five percent of Yo-Co's participated in cultural activities last year, compared to 35% of the general population. This market segment is event-driven, fundamentally social and motivated by word of mouth. They are not making plans weeks or even days in advance, so venues must provide the place to meet and things to do—and that doesn't necessarily mean buying a ticket for a performance with a set start and end time.

New facilities must be informal but physically attractive too, in the ways they are designed, decorated and configured. They should be warm and inspirational, rather than cold and

institutional. And they should facilitate the interaction of artists and audiences, also allowing audiences and enthusiasts for different cultural genres to cross-pollinate and connect when possible.

- * **Facilitating Active Participation:** New facilities must also support a culture of more active participation including audience engagement before, during and after the experience (but perhaps not immediately on either end), whether it is an informal jazz combo in the lobby or a large-scale production on stage. The list of possibilities includes open rehearsals, political engagement, hands-on training, elevating the patron to the critic and even invitations to formally document an experience.
- * **From Cultural Palaces to Cultural Districts:** Large-scale, indoor, multi-venue cultural facilities are expensive to develop and expensive to maintain. The costs to construct and sustain these buildings, combined with trends in audience behavior that suggest demand for more social and active arts experiences, mean that large palaces for the arts are not as viable as they once were. Instead, smaller pockets of cultural activity and spaces are being woven through the fabric of communities in such a way that they function as an integral element of the life and future of that place.
- * **Re-cycling Facilities:** Another trend we are observing is a greater interest and inclination to re-use existing buildings rather than build new ones. Sometimes this is about the restoration of an historic gem of a theater, but it can also be a renovation or adaptive re-use of an older building towards a contemporary purpose. This is partly driven by cost, but also driven by recognition that the re-cycling of existing buildings is much more environmentally responsible than demolition and new construction. Residents of Keene should be particularly familiar with this theme as debate continues regarding the future use of the old Keene Middle School building on Washington Street.
- * **Multi-form and Multi-purpose:** Lobbies and public spaces are under the most pressure to serve multiple functions and complicated schedules. And increasing educational and public programming is creating the need for more advanced and flexible arts teaching space, labs and learning environments. With active boomers moving into retirement, educational spaces for older audiences pursuing lifelong learning is as paramount as those needed for schoolchildren.

Arts facilities are striving to provide more services for audiences and donors, increase earned income and provide events and activities that attract and serve broader communities. These goals are more often achieved by creating spaces that serve multiple functions with diverse technical requirements. Balancing the programmatic and spatial needs for these multi-use facilities is probably the most challenging of the emerging trends. These spaces pose new architectural, technological, security, operational, functional and image challenges as they

accommodate activity that ranges from experimental performance art installation to traditional performance to yoga classes to formal dinner events to community meetings.

- * **Operation of Multiple Sites:** Theaters and performing arts centers around the country have begun to avoid the capital costs involved in developing facilities by programming and/or operating additional sites. These efforts often create economies of scale that support operations and deliver programming into communities that are not as likely to visit formal venues.

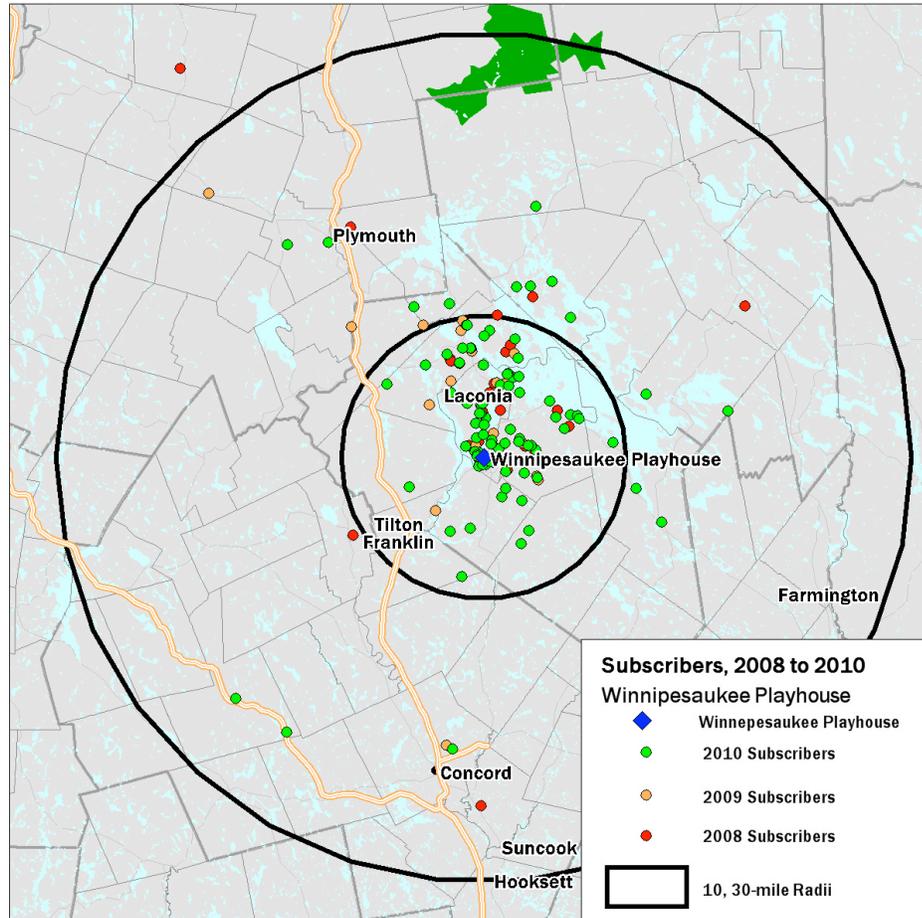
3. The Market for the Colonial Theatre

3.1 Resident Market Definition

A series of charts, attached to this document as Appendix B compare key characteristics of the market. Based on subscriber data obtained from the Winnepesaukee Playhouse, anecdotal information from local and regional arts groups, and our experience working in comparable markets, we have defined the market into the following segments:

1. The City of Laconia
2. Greater Laconia: a 10-mile Radius surrounding the Colonial Theatre including Gilford, Meredith, Belmont, and Sanbornton
3. The 30-mile Radius surrounding the Colonial Theatre and downtown Laconia
4. The State of New Hampshire
5. The US (when applicable) for context

The following map illustrates the market by showing Winnepesaukee Playhouse subscribers from 2008 to 2010 as well as 10 and 30-mile radii. Analysis of Winnepesaukee Playhouse subscribers indicated that in 2010, 81% of subscribers resided within a 30-mile radius, and 65% of subscribers resided within a 10-mile radius. We mapped and analyzed three years of subscribers (2008-2010) for a total 312 subscribers.



3.2 Resident Market Characteristics

The demographics and supporting research allow us to characterize the market as having the following characteristics:

- * **Small Communities and Slow Growth:** A small city, Laconia’s population is just over 17,000, however, more than 300,000 live within a 30-mile radius. The City’s population increased by 4% between 2000 and 2010, and is estimated to grow 0.83% between 2010 and 2015. This pattern of slow growth is also evident within the Greater Laconia area, 30-mile radius and in the state of New Hampshire.
- * **Disparate Levels of Educational Attainment and Income:** Comparatively, the average levels of educational attainment and household median income are higher in New Hampshire and the United States than in Laconia and the Greater Laconia area. Notably, New Hampshire residents are likely to have high educational attainment levels and household median

incomes, and one-third of the population has a bachelor's degree or higher. Comparatively, 21% of Laconia residents have a bachelor's degree or higher. Presently, the median income in Laconia is \$46,559 as compared to \$70,223 in New Hampshire and a national average of \$57,135.

- * **Low Levels of Home Ownership:** Just 59% of Laconia's housing stock is owner-occupied, which is quite a contrast to the New Hampshire and the surrounding area. Within the Greater Laconia area, 73% of the housing stock is owner-occupied and in New Hampshire as a whole, 75% of the housing stock is owner-occupied.

- * **Aging Population:** Nationwide the population of adults age 55+ is growing while the population under age 24 is shrinking. When comparing Laconia, the Greater Laconia area, the 30-mile radius and New Hampshire, the trend is most pronounced within the 30-mile radius with 28% of the population age 55+, although Laconia is not far behind with 27% of its population age 55+. Population projections indicate that the percentage of Laconia's population between the ages of 55 and 74 will grow from an estimated 20% in 2010 to an estimated 23% in 2015.

Although the population of people age 24 and younger decreased from 31% in 2000 to an estimated 27% in 2010, that number seems to be stabilizing. Within a 30-mile radius however, the population under the age of 24 of is estimated to decrease from 30% in 2010 to 29% in 2015.

- * **Racially and Ethnically Homogenous:** More than 94% of the residents of Laconia are white as compared to 64.7% of the US population. This is consistent with the population in Greater Laconia (96.7%), within a 30-mile radius (95.6%) and in New Hampshire (92.6%). The Hispanic and Latino, Asian, and Black or African American populations are growing, albeit very slowly.

3.3 The Second Home Market

Data on housing for seasonal, recreational or occasional use from the 1990 and 2000 censuses indicated that seasonal homes were slowly being converted to second homes between 1990 and 2000. As the 2010 Lakes Region Housing Needs Assessment from the Lakes Region Planning Commission reports, in 1990 the US Census reported that 34.5% of the total housing units in the Lakes Region were vacant seasonal units. The 2000 Census reported that 29.8% of the total housing units were vacant seasonal units. Anecdotal evidence suggests that these housing units were converted to second homes and that this is a continuing trend.

Although data on the characteristics of second-home owners is limited, national data suggests that the number of second-home owners has grown significantly over the last decade. In 2006, The National Association of Realtors (NAR) conducted a survey of vacation and investment property homeowners. The NAR then published a Profile of Second Home Owners that provides a detailed

snapshot of households that own one or more second homes. The findings suggest that second homeowners generally reside in the suburbs and are likely to be older, affluent and married. Vacation-home owners reported a median age of 59 and a median income of \$120,600. Additionally, vacation-home owners spend a median of 39 nights in their home each year, and on average, live within 220-miles of the owner's primary residence.

3.4 The Tourist Market

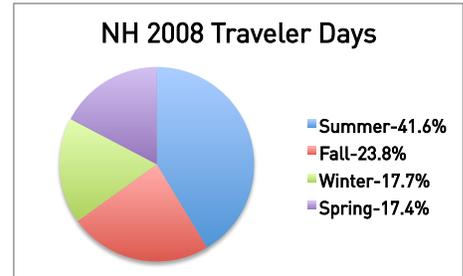
Despite the fact that tourism is one of the primary industries in the area, there is very little recent data specific to tourism in the Lakes Region currently available. State data suggests that tourism in Belknap County is growing; in fact it was one of the only state counties where visitors spent more money in 2009 than in 2008. In addition, hotel room rental revenue had increased slightly for two years prior to the economic downturn in 2008.

Additional data from the State Division of Travel and Tourism Development (DTTD) suggests that New Hampshire as a whole is a prominent New England destination, with an expanding tourism market, growing by 1% to 33.6 million trips in 2009, though those visitors spent less in 2008 likely due to the recession. Several studies conducted by the DTTD suggest that New Hampshire serves a few key visitor segments:

- * **Group Tours:** A 2009 survey of group tour operators and leaders suggests that this segment of the tourism market is significant, but that New Hampshire must work to meet the demands of tour groups by diversifying the types and timing of attractions and offerings. This data suggests that groups tend to stay an average of 2 nights, participate in concerts, fairs and festivals and are increasing their attendance to historic sites, museums and galleries. Nearly half of the groups surveyed consisted of 10 people or fewer.
- * **VFRs:** A recent survey of New Hampshire visitors suggested that approximately one quarter of New Hampshire visitors are visiting friends and relatives (VFRs.)
- * **Vacationers:** Couples and families visit New Hampshire for pleasure, primarily to shop, sightsee, enjoy fall foliage or take advantage of the state's plentiful recreation opportunities. A smaller proportion of vacationers participate in cultural activities. In a 2009 survey, 10% of responding visitors reported participating in concerts, fairs or festivals. In addition, overnight visitors from the Mid-Atlantic region were more likely to visit historic sites, museums and galleries.

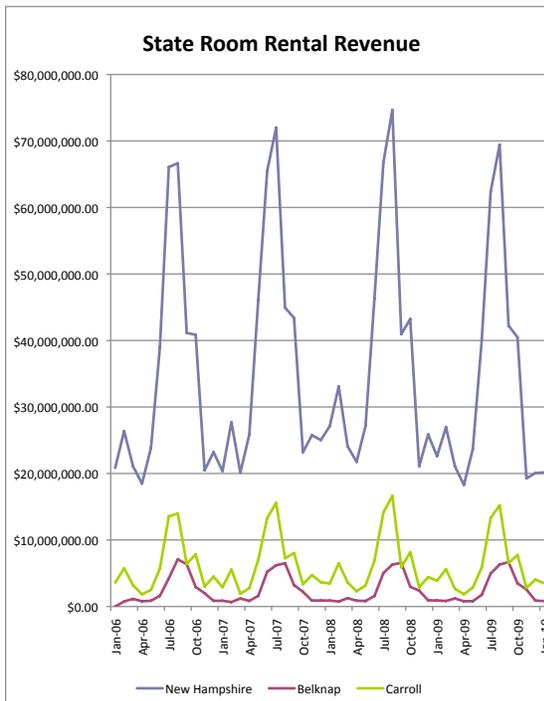
Most overnight visitors come from other parts of New England though a notable proportion also come from Mid-Atlantic States. While New Hampshire has historically been known as a destination for family vacations, recent data suggests that New Hampshire visitors are getting older (though this may be a 2009 anomaly related to the recession.)

* **Seasonal in Nature:** Like many New England states and communities, New Hampshire is a seasonal destination, as evidenced by hotel/motel room rental revenue on the charts below. This data, provided by the State Department of Revenue Administration, suggests that visitation in New Hampshire is highest in warm weather months and also rises during the fall, as visitors are drawn to fall foliage. The New Hampshire fiscal year 2008 Tourism Satellite Report provided by Plymouth State University confirms this seasonality, reporting that 41.6% of the days travelers spent in New Hampshire in 2008 occurred during the summer season.



Also according to Tourism Satellite Report, the Lakes Region had its highest percentage share of New Hampshire’s paid over-night travelers during the summer whereas winter visitors flock to the White Mountains, Great North Woods, and Dartmouth-Lake Sunapee regions and spring visitors spend the most time in the Merrimack Valley, Seacoast and Monadnock Regions.

An atypical peak in New Hampshire visitation also occurred in December 2007 and January 2008, potentially due to activity related to the New Hampshire primary election.



4. User Demand for the Colonial Theatre

Evaluating and understanding the need for the Colonial Theatre on the part of arts organizations and other potential users is key to this process. Following are brief notes on a number of local and regional producing and presenting organizations, as well as other educational and civic organizations, who have expressed an interest in using the Colonial Theatre. Information on potential facility usage was gathered through a series of one-on-one interviews with representatives of local arts organizations, nonprofits, community organizations and other potential users.

4.1 Arts and Education Users

Listed below is a description of each potential user, including comments on the frequency of use and the types of activity groups envision offering at the Colonial Theatre.

Interlakes Theatre: Based in Meredith, Interlakes Theatre is a nonprofit organization that produces summer stock and youth theatre. Interlakes Theatre currently utilizes the Inter-lakes Auditorium in the Inter-lakes High School in Meredith to produce five musicals and four youth theatre productions each year. Representatives from Interlakes Theatre are enthusiastic about the Colonial Theatre, but the productions require a smaller venue, and the organization's resources are limited.

Laconia Historical and Museum Society: Based in the Laconia Public Library, the Laconia Historical and Museum Society is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the heritage of Laconia and the Lakes Region. Currently, the Society utilizes the Library for exhibitions, lectures and events. Monthly events are held in the Library's Rotary Hall and attract 40 to 60 people. Notably, the Society receives frequent inquiries regarding the history and architecture of the Colonial Theatre. Representatives from the Society indicated an interest in the project and would, on occasion, utilize a renovated Colonial Theatre. Attendance at the Society's larger events varies due to the topic, however representatives felt that they could utilize the Theatre at any capacity up to 1,200 seats, with the ideal capacity being 300. Additionally, the Society could utilize a multi-purpose room if available.

Laconia School District: The Laconia School District operates a number of facilities, including the High School, Middle School and Huot Tech Center. Representatives from the District indicated a continuing interest in the Colonial Theatre, having been involved in the past. The District has considered utilizing the Colonial Theatre as the Laconia High School Auditorium. However, there is currently a freeze on state aid for school construction. Constructed in 1932, the Laconia High School auditorium has a capacity of 400 and is limiting. Representatives from the District indicated

that the school would potentially utilize the Colonia Theatre, depending on the facility characteristics and believe that there is potential to offer extended learning opportunities, offering credit for classes outside the classroom.

Lakes Region Community College: Located in Laconia, the Lakes Region Community College is one of seven community colleges in the state system. The College has already voiced an interest in relocating its culinary program to the site for the former Bloom's Variety Store. Representatives indicated that the College is open to discussions as to how they might also use the Colonial Theatre. Specifically, the College would be interested in establishing a theatre program and possibly a dance program.

Lakes Region Symphony Orchestra: Currently in its 35th year, the Lakes Region Symphony is a community orchestra that holds concerts in the Inter-lakes Auditorium in November, December, March and May. The orchestra typically draws crowds of around 300 to its performances. Although orchestra leadership expressed interest in use of the Colonial Theatre, the orchestra requires a stage that can accommodate 40 to 60 musicians along with large amounts of backstage space and other physical features that would likely not be met by the Colonial Theatre's current physical specifications. Rental cost is also a limiting factor for the organization.

Meadowbrook Performing Arts Center: The Meadowbrook Performing Arts Center operates a 6,651-capacity seasonal venue from May to October, presenting pop, rock and country concerts. Representatives from Meadowbrook indicated that they would be unlikely to use the Colonial Theatre, but might be willing to serve in an advisory capacity.

New Hampshire Music Festival- This organization, established in 1952, is a six-week summer music festival featuring traditional orchestra works and other classical music performed in the Silver Center for the Arts and the Gilford High School Auditorium. In 2001, the NHMF purchased the site of the former Red Hill in Center Harbor, relocating its administrative offices and beginning plans to build an attached concert hall with a 700-seat main stage and a 200-seat salon. NHMF was unable to raise enough money for the project, and the board is now considering a sale of the property. Representatives from the New Hampshire Music Festival will tour of the Colonial Theatre in January to determine whether the organization might use the renovated facility.

Putnam Fund: Founded in 1966 by Nellie Chamberlain and the Putnam Family, the Putnam Fund presents events around art, literature and drama in the City of Laconia. The Putnam Fund requires a space large enough for free performances, and currently presents four free events annually, with potential to add more events. Representatives from the Putnam Fund support the project and would utilize the Colonial Theatre.

The Streetcar Company: A nonprofit organization, the Street Car Company is a membership-based community theatre group. Representatives from Streetcar are interested in the Colonial

Theatre, if the venue was similar to the Gilford High School in that it could be closed off to reduce the capacity of the venue to make it comfortable for audiences of approximately 300. Additionally, Streetcar Company has limited financial resources, which would likely restrict their ability to rent the theatre.

4.2 Meeting and Event Users

Interviews conducted with business leadership and a number of Laconia restaurant owners and caterers suggest notable interest for a venue able to accommodate banquets, weddings, meetings fundraisers and other events. To that end, these users require the ability to host seated dinners, receptions and conferences and require a flexible seating configuration. Additionally, area caterers prefer access to a full kitchen but can usually serve at an event with at least a 'prep' kitchen and a staging area. There was a consensus among this group that existing meeting and event spaces, with the exception of Church Landing in Meredith, have limitations in terms of capacity and amenities.

4.3

Conclusions

Notably, a primary user or set of potential resident performing arts group did not immediately emerge from this exercise. Instead, input from potential users suggests that the Colonial Theatre would likely be utilized occasionally by a diverse set of users for education, entertainment and private events. Demand on the part of potential users and users indicates a need for improved access to facilities to provide:

- * Innovative and hands on learning experiences for high school and college students, in the performing and culinary arts.
- * Presenters and promoters of arts, heritage and entertainment events with occasional access to a performance and event venue.
- * Flexible and multi-purpose facilities, able to support a range of configurations, including flat floor, banquets, receptions and seated events.

5. Competitive Landscape

An examination of the current inventory of facilities and their use, condition and availability is also important. Interviews indicated demand and opportunity for many different types of space—as a result, we have compiled and closely examined two sets of facility inventories:

- Performance facilities in Laconia and a 30-mile Radius of the Colonial Theatre
- Meeting and event space in Laconia

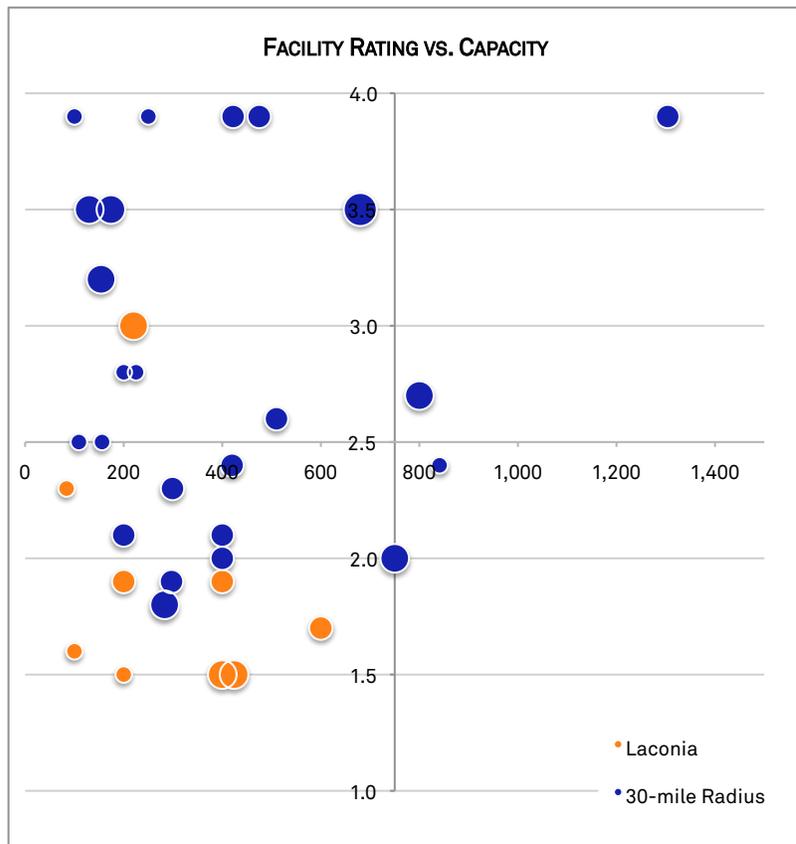
The performing arts inventory, included in Appendix C, considers the physical features and types of activity hosted within each space. The condition and functionality of each facility has been rated using eight variables. These include:

1. Facility condition
2. Staff and support
3. Theatrical functionality
4. Room acoustics
5. Customer amenities
6. Performer amenities
7. Atmosphere and character
8. Suitability for users

Variables are rated on a scale of 1 to 4, higher being best. Building condition and staff and support categories carry the most weight. Some facilities have been visited, most regional ratings are self-reported or based on anecdotal information and interview input.

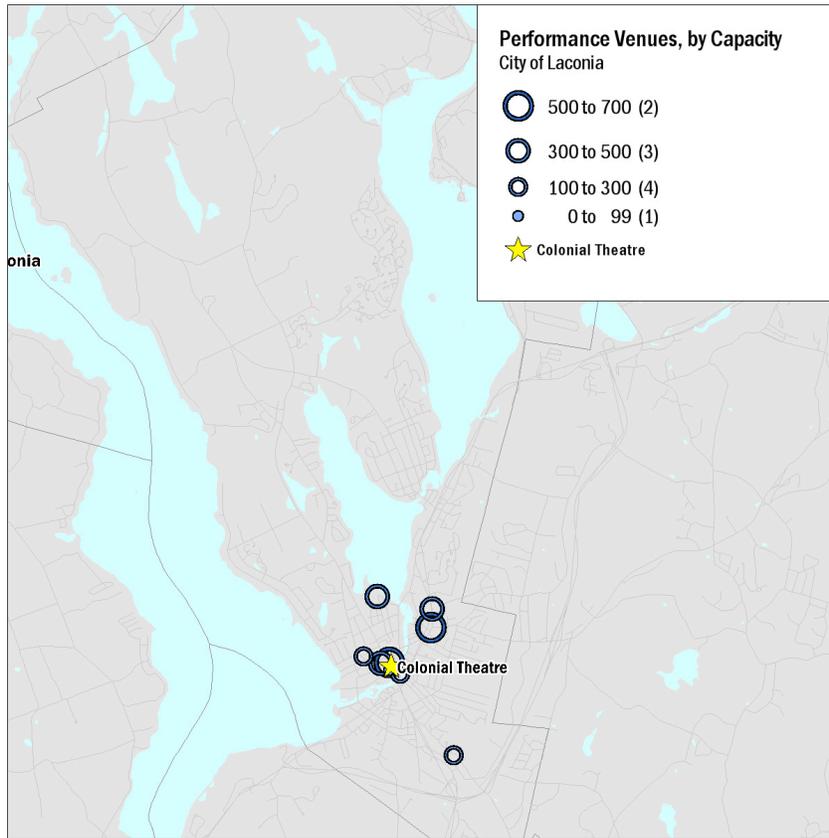
In Laconia, there are 10 venues that regularly accommodate live performance. In the 30-mile radius, there are an additional 23 venues. Their capacities, features, and types of activity are detailed in Appendix D. For the purpose of this analysis, we excluded outdoor areas occasionally used for events that lack a stage or infrastructure (i.e. parks) and informal venues located in restaurants.

The following matrix compares venues with capacities between 0 and 1,500 to relative facility ratings, suggesting that locally, there is a lack of suitable mid-scale and large-scale venues. Within the 30-mile radius, there are a number of highly rated mid-scale and large-scale venues.



5.1 Local Facilities

The following map details performance facilities in the City of Laconia:



The inventory indicates the following:

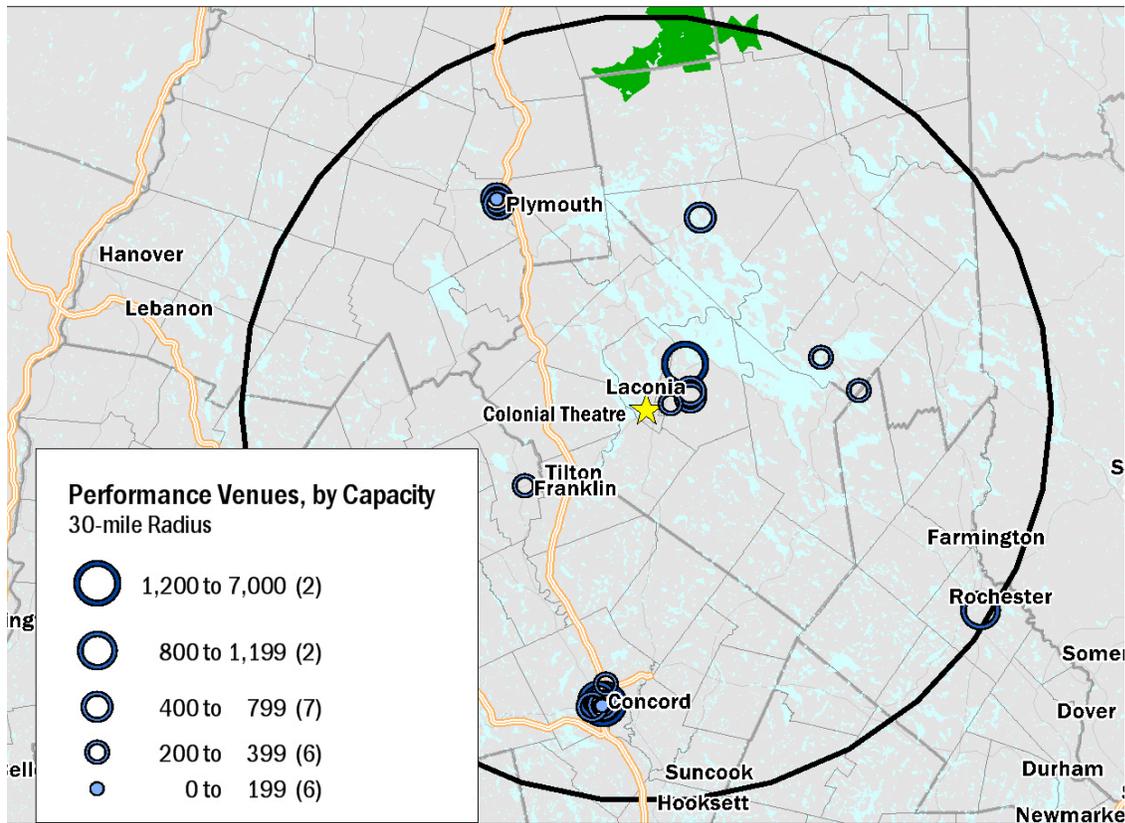
- * There exist two venues in Laconia that are inactive. Both the Colonial Theatre and the Garden Theatre are closed or no longer utilized as venues.
- * 6 (60%) facilities are located in houses of worship or educational institutions. Although nearly all of these facilities are available for rent to the community, these are facilities that tend to have limited availability and patron and backstage amenities.
- * The Winnepesaukee Playhouse, the home of a producing theatre company (which is currently in the process of converting the former Annalee Dolls complex into a new arts campus in

Meredith), and the Belknap Mill are the primary facilities that produce and present arts events in Laconia.

- * Sacred Heart Church, with a capacity of 600, is the largest venue used for performance in the City.

5.2 Regional Facilities

The following map details regional performance facilities operating within 30-miles of the Colonial Theatre, with the exception of the proposed venues that will be operated by the Winnepesaukee Playhouse and situated in Meredith.



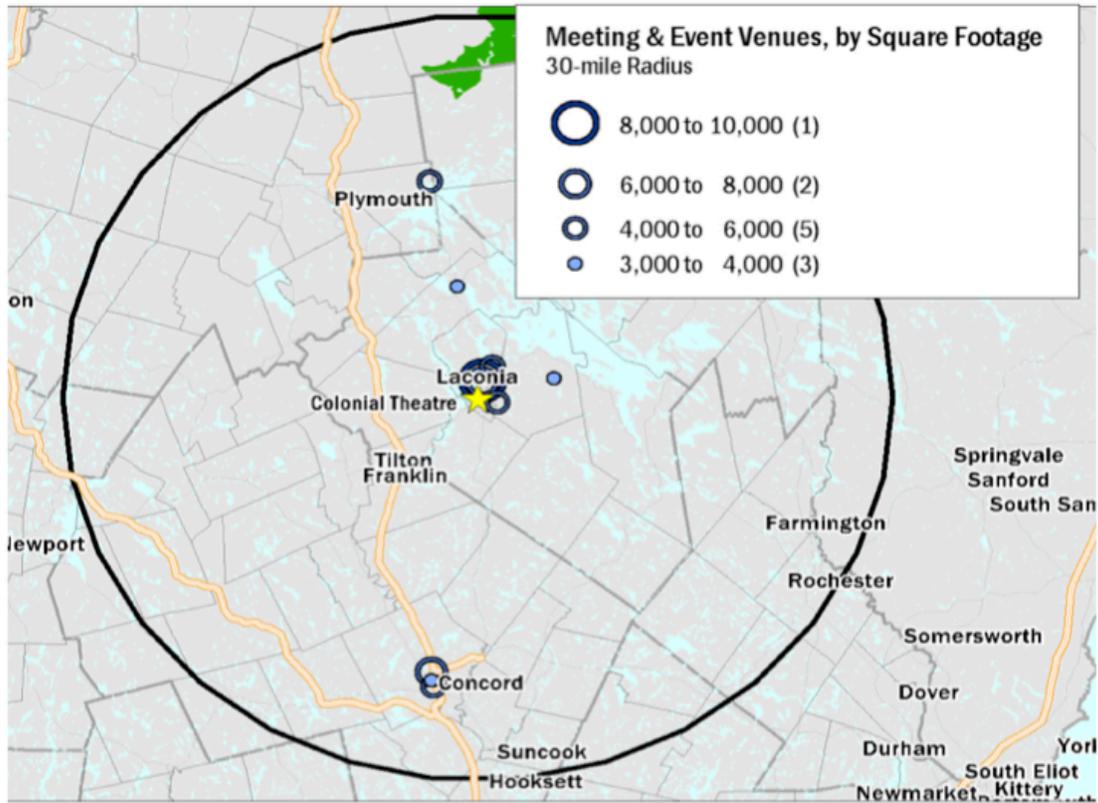
The inventory indicates the following:

- * Geographically, performance venues are clustered in Plymouth, Concord and east of Laconia, in Gilford and Meredith.
- * The Meadowbrook Performing Arts Center is the largest venue operating within the 30-mile radius and has a capacity of 6,651.
- * One-third of facilities present events, including concerts, film and touring acts. Primary presenters in the region include the Capitol Center for the Arts in Concord, which operates two theaters, the PSU Silver Center for the Arts, the Flying Monkey, Rochester Opera House and the Middle (The Franklin Opera House).
- * 20 (77%) facilities are available to rent to arts organizations for performances as well as private events.

5.3 Meeting and Event Facilities

Increasingly, theaters and other cultural facilities are utilized for meetings and events, and are attractive as unique venues for corporate gatherings, fundraisers, galas, weddings and other private events. As a result, we have examined and compiled a list of meeting and event venues within a 30-mile radius that offer a large meeting space or banquet hall over 3,000 square feet. The following map details large-scale meeting and event facilities operating within the market, indicating that a number of large-scale meeting and event facilities are located near the Colonial Theatre.

Meeting Facilities				
	Square Feet	Banquet Capacity	Total Square Feet of Meeting Space	Outdoor Event Space
Lakes Region				
Lake Opechee Inn and Spa - Winnisquam/Sunapee Room	9,438	350	29,600	
Lake Opechee Inn and Spa - Opechee Room	7,448	350	29,600	
Courtyard by Marriott - Granite Ballroom	6,550	500	9,500	
The Margate on Winnepesaukee - Ballroom	5,336	300	52,000	
Pheasant Ridge Country Club*	5,000	400	6,000	
Rockywold-Deephaven Camps - Rockywold Dining Room	4,432	275	15,000	
Rockywold-Deephaven Camps - Deephaven Dining Room	4,432	275	15,000	
Capitol Center for the Arts - Governor's Hall	4,400	300	4,400	
Gunstock Mountain Resort - Main Lodge	3,818	350	5,000	
Holiday Inn Concord - Ballroom	3,484	250	5,044	
Inn & Spa at Mill Falls - Winnepesaukee Ballroom	3,200	250	10,000	



Overall, there are 12 facilities with meeting and event spaces larger than 3,000 square feet. This inventory indicates that:

- * The largest event venues in the market are located at the Lake Opechee Inn and Spa in Lakeport. Both the Winnisquam/Sunapee Room and the Opechee Room can accommodate banquets of up to 350.
- * 8 (73%) facilities offer access to outdoor event space, which is particularly attractive for weddings and events in the warmer months. The Margate on Winnepesaukee, which has a 5,336 square foot ballroom, also offers access to a 43,000 square foot outdoor area that can be tented.
- * 9 (82%) facilities are associated with a hotel, resort, camp or inn, and provide access to on-site lodging.
- * Input from caterers and restaurants suggests that the Inn & Spa at Mill Falls (Church Landing) is the highest quality facility in the area, offering high-end meeting rooms and banquet facilities and a full kitchen.

5.4 Conclusions

Overall, this review found that:

- * The 30-mile radius and Lakes Region is a highly competitive market for presenting activity, with a number of well established nonprofit, commercial and university facilities offering a range of events and performances.
- * Locally, there is a gap in the inventory for mid-sized performance venues larger than 600 seats and the majority of Laconia's existing venues are located in a churches or public schools. Together, these characteristics suggest a lack of suitable mid-scale to large-scale venues in the market.
- * Geographically, there are a number of large-scale banquet halls and event spaces located near the Colonial Theatre. However, there is an opportunity for an event space that is unique, attractive and includes amenities such as a kitchen and ample staging areas, audio/visual capability and flexible seating capable of accommodating reception, theater, banquet and classroom configurations.

6. Touring Product Potential

In addition to understanding the competitive situation for facilities, it is also important to consider the potential for the Colonial Theatre to book and present touring product. As previously mentioned, there are three prominent presenters that have well developed audiences and regularly present artists and groups with an international or national reputation.

- * The Middle New Hampshire Arts & Entertainment Center, located in the historic Franklin Opera House, presents comedy, music, theatre, and other entertainment September through May. Upcoming events in 2011 include the Lakes Region Symphony Orchestra, the Acoustic Roots Festival, and the Franklin Footlight Theatre production of *Curtains*.
- * The Capitol Center for the Arts, now in its 19th year, offers a diverse presenting series, including music, lectures, comedy, theatre, the Met: HD and family and school events. Events at the Capitol include regional, national and international artists upcoming acts include Sarah McLachlan, Spring Awakening and a production of Hamlet by Shakespeare & Company (Lenox, MA). Generally, the Capitol Center for the Arts presents one or two-night events and programs a season from September to May as well as a Summer Season.
- * At the Meadowbrook US Cellular Pavilion, the Meadowbrook Performing Arts Center primarily presents pop and country music as well as family entertainment. A seasonal venue,

Meadowbrook presents events from June to early October. In 2010, events included Styx/Foreigner, Reba McEntire and YoGabbaGabba! Live.

- * The Silver Center for the Arts at Plymouth State University presents the 'Silver Series' and the 'Eagle Pond Authors Series'. The 'Silver Series' follows the academic year and includes theatre, classical and world music and the 'Eagle Pond Authors Series' presents discussions and lectures with internationally recognized writers and poets at the Smith Recital Hall, the Center's more intimate venue.

Clearly, the market is competitive, with a number of active presenters already operating within a 30-mile radius of the Colonial Theatre. From a presenter's perspective, we would consider the following issues:

- * Venues generally include a radius clause in contracts with artists, preventing those artists from appearing within a certain geographic radius in the near future.
- * Review of existing presenters in the market suggests that artists are booked for one to three performances. The population base certainly limits the quality and type of events, particularly traveling Broadway shows and family entertainment.
- * Existing presenting facilities are likely to have well developed relationships with agents.
- * The seating-capacity of the Colonial Theatre is potentially prohibitive for the scale and cost of many shows and artists.

7. Benefits and Impacts

Many communities that invest in art facilities and infrastructure experience numerous positive benefits and ripple effects. In order to assess how the renovated Colonial Theatre might impact Laconia and the Lakes Region, we reviewed a number of community planning documents including the City of Laconia Master Plan 2007, the 2007 US EPA Smart Growth Implementation Assistance Study, and the 2008 Colonial Cultural Arts Center Market Feasibility Study conducted by ArtsMarket Inc. We also gathered input from community leadership regarding other development initiatives such as the Downtown Riverwalk, the Laconia Public Library, the WOW Trail and the Beacon West condominiums located in the former Allen-Rogers factory.

Downtown Development: In the 2007 City of Laconia Master Plan, Laconia's greatest opportunity was seen as the potential for redevelopment and preservation of the historic infrastructure with the Colonial Theatre specifically cited as an example of a historic redevelopment opportunity in the heart of Downtown Laconia. These opportunities for redevelopment have potential not only to contribute to

the character and culture of the city of Laconia, but also to serve as economic drivers for the neighborhoods where the buildings are located.

Many long-time residents remember downtown as the heart of community activity in the earlier twentieth century. Over the last several decades, that level of activity has declined steadily, despite many efforts to inject energy and stimulate activity in the neighborhood. As the EPA study points out, downtown Laconia has some tremendous challenges to address before it can become a vibrant center of activity. Some of the key issues identified in the EPA study include deteriorating historic buildings (like the Colonial Theatre), insufficient office and housing options, uninviting streetscapes, a perception of safety problems, and traffic circulation issues. Some additional concerns expressed to us by the Lakes Region residents we interviewed include a lack of an overall vision for downtown, appropriateness of the current retail mix, presence of low-income housing, conditions not conducive to operating a small business (low levels of foot traffic, deteriorating building amenities, difficulty securing and maintaining affordable rent prices), perception of lack of convenient parking, and the fact that the Laconia Bypass routes traffic past downtown.

It is clear that there are many moving pieces that will be required to fulfill Laconia's dream of a vital downtown. Certainly some of the current and recent development projects such as the Riverwalk, Rotary Park, Laconia Millworks, and Belknap Mill all play a part in the reanimation of downtown. If redeveloped in a thoughtful way with the right mix of activity, the Colonial Theatre has the potential to become yet another piece of the larger puzzle by stimulating activity downtown and hopefully drawing both visitors and locals, creating additional downtown foot traffic.

Also, as many studies have shown, arts and cultural development can also attract employees and professionals who want to live and work near cultural programs and activities, enhancing the workforce and productivity of existing businesses and industries. Investment in the arts can also improve the city's attractiveness to other new businesses and industries considering relocation.

We do want to caution that in order for any sort of redevelopment project in the Colonial Theatre to be successful, it must be supported by other efforts downtown. The redevelopment of the Colonial Theatre alone cannot serve as a magic bullet to solve all of the problems downtown.

Fortunately the City of Laconia is moving forward with action steps outlined in the 2007 Master Plan by facilitating the redevelopment of the Colonial Theatre. Any further actions taken to secure funding and incentivize development would directly fulfill the actions listed in the Master Plan to revitalize and enhance the commercial and economic aspects of community centers (Lakeport, Weirs Beach, and downtown). Among the actions identified to achieve this objective are encouraging the development and expansion of "after hours" venues and events and encouraging restoration and reuse of historic properties by working with property owners to secure funding and develop incentive-based zoning and regulations.

Tourism: Another objective highlighted in the 2007 Master Plan is to enhance the City’s attraction as a tourist destination. One of the actions listed is to facilitate the creation of and expansion of day-trip destinations to extend tourism year round. The types of activity we suggest for the Colonial Theatre will provide entertainment options for locals and tourists alike and can supply a venue for indoor activities for visitors year round.

Not only can the reanimated Colonial Theatre support cultural tourism in Laconia, but it can also serve as a draw and attraction for visitors throughout the Lakes Region.

According to the 2009 Arts and Economic Prosperity Report III released by Americans for the Arts, nonlocal audiences for arts and cultural events spend twice as much as their local counterparts (\$40.19 vs. \$19.53).

Nonprofit Arts & Culture Attendee Spending			
Category	Resident Audiences	Nonresident Audiences	All Audiences
Meals/Refreshments	\$10.77	\$16.35	\$13.00
Gifts/Souvenirs	\$3.32	\$4.78	\$3.90
Lodging	\$1.08	\$10.91	\$5.01
Child Care	\$0.34	\$0.33	\$0.34
Transportation	\$1.62	\$4.37	\$2.72
Other	\$2.40	\$3.45	\$2.82
Total	\$19.53	\$40.19	\$27.79

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 All of this research has led to the following conclusions:

- * **Market:** Locally, the market for performing arts and cultural events is limited in terms of its size and quality. Laconia’s resident population is less likely to attend performing arts events given the disparate levels of educational attainment and income. Conversely, socioeconomic characteristics of regional populations within a 30-mile radius suggest a propensity to participate in arts and cultural activities. Research and empirical data indicates that the region is also home to a significant number of second homeowners and tourists, visitors that tend to be affluent and educated.
- * **User Demand:** There was limited demand on the part of local and regional arts groups to use the Colonial Theatre as a fully restored theater. However, a more diverse set of users emerged with potential to occasionally utilize the Colonial Theatre for a diverse set of uses, including classes, concerts and private events.

- * **Existing Facilities:** Locally the facilities are limited in terms of facility and size, but regionally the market for presenting is very competitive. Most meeting and banquet spaces are situated within hotels and inns, so there is an opportunity for an event space outside of a hotel that is attractive and unique for the area.
- * **Benefits and Impacts:** The strongest case for the renovation of the Colonial Theatre is the potential impact it could have on the revitalization of the downtown area. Many community members feel it is critically important to re-animate the theater for the future of downtown. However, a renovation motivated by downtown renewal must be part of a larger plan.

Fundamentally, we do not believe that the conditions currently exist to support a full-scale renovation of the Colonial Theater. At the same time, we believe that re-animating the theater is a key short-term step in the revitalization of downtown Laconia, and thus should be pursued in an incremental fashion.

8.2 Recommendations

A Phased Renovation

Our key recommendation is that the Colonial Theatre should be acquired and renovated in phases, starting with a partial renovation of the theater and its required support spaces. Critical to this is the presence of the Blooms property and the opportunity to incorporate some of these spaces and programs into the operation of the Colonial. In that regard, we believe that the involvement of the Community College and their desire to bring their Culinary Arts program to that building provides additional value and new opportunities.

The opportunity to incorporate the Blooms project and Lakes Community College

More specifically, we understand that the Culinary Arts program need not take up all of the Bloom property, leaving some of that space to be used as public space (lobbies, concessions, etc.) for the Colonial Theatre. This idea has already been discussed and in fact laid out earlier in 2010 by Laconia native Stephanie Wentworth in her interior design Master's thesis. To us, the most powerful opportunities would be to have the Community College program and students providing food and beverage services in the Colonial, and then to work with the College to identify and pursue other programs that would engage them in the program and operation of the building, from a technical theatre training program to a dance program.

In this report we've outlined three areas of focus that we identify as phases. These phases are not necessarily in chronological order. Phase One should certainly happen first, but the timing and specific content of Phase Two and Phase Three are very dependent upon identifying the right mix of activities to animate the Colonial Theatre after Phase II is complete as well as the other independent

redevelopment activities that occur downtown. As we have mentioned in our chapter on community benefits and impacts, the Colonial Theatre renovation must be a piece of a larger puzzle of downtown redevelopment. Therefore we hesitate to offer very specific and concrete activity plans as the needs of the downtown neighborhood and the larger community will likely shift as the operators of the Colonial Theatre experiment with their offerings and other redevelopment activities occur.

The First Phase

We would recommend a first phase of work that focuses on cleaning up and clearing out the Colonial to bring back the one auditorium as a usable space. We are not advocating a complete restoration here, but rather just enough work to re-create the space as a performance and event space. Specifically:

- * The orchestra level is renovated such that it can be configured in three ways – theater-style, tables and chairs or flat-floor.
- * The balcony is partially restored with fixed theater seating.
- * The stage is partially restored, with some limited capability for lighting, sound and a screen for film, but not the full fly tower.
- * Limited backstage accommodations are added for performer support and load-in.
- * The Blooms space is renovated to support the College’s culinary arts program and to become the main entrance into the renovated Colonial Theatre.
- * The Main Street storefronts and apartments are given a minimal upgrade in order to incrementally improve their revenue generating potential.
- * There is virtually no work done on the decorative aspects of the renovation, the idea being to focus limited resources on the functional attributes of the space.
- * Mechanical systems are all replaced and code issues (particularly life safety and accessibility) are addressed.

With this work, we would see the Colonial coming back to life with a wide variety of community events, including the following:

- * A limited program of live performing arts events in the theater, most likely focused on music - both classical and contemporary, but also other disciplines not requiring extensive staging.
- * Regular film screenings, including second-run, classic films and independent art-house films.
- * For live and film programming, the room could be configured in traditional theater-style or with tables and chairs for full or partial food service during the event.
- * Large community meetings and special events, from candidate debates to Town Hall sessions.
- * Private rentals, from weddings to corporate functions, with full food service and presentations and/or entertainment from the stage.
- * Small trade shows or exhibits, from a show of the work of community visual artists to a Christmas Fair.

- * The space could also be configured with a flat floor and some tables and chairs so as to have a dance floor for weddings and community dances.

We are attracted to this concept because it responds to the need that exists in the community today, it can be accomplished for a potentially reasonable capital investment and these activities have the revenue-generating potential to ease the burden of sustaining the theater.

The Second Phase

For the second phase of work, we would recommend the full renovation of the Main Street storefronts and apartments into a combination of uses that are synergistic with the Colonial Theatre and other ongoing downtown redevelopment projects. This might entail new arts-related retail such as a bookstore or arts supply store.

For the upstairs apartments, there are many different options the potential developer could pursue, again dependent upon the activities identified in Phase One and overall development trends downtown. Some options include:

- * **Artist live-work or work-sell space:** Live-work space is attractive because it creates a permanent community of working artists having some interaction with the public. Work-sell space (in which artists are creating their work and selling it directly to the public) is not as ambitious, but it is less expensive and attracts more shoppers into the downtown area. There are many communities across the US that have created affordable housing developments specifically for artists that incorporate live/work space. Examples include ARTLOFT in Peekskill, New York; the Artist Relocation Program in Paducah, KY; the Artspace Hiawatha Lofts in Seattle, and Mather Studios in Washington, DC.

Presently there is a pop-up version of this concept happening in Laconia under the auspices of the Laconia Design Collaborative. This pop-up work/sell space movement began in the summer of 2010 when four local artists approached downtown property owner Robert Sawyer about using an empty storefront as a gallery and studio. In exchange, the artists paid heat and electricity bills and painted the space. In an article in the Laconia Daily Sun, Mr. Sawyer credited the artists' work with attracting a new market-rate tenant. The artists have now taken up space in the former Sundial Shop and plan to move to another one of Mr. Sawyer's storefronts on Canal Street.

- * **Market-Rate Housing:** The success of the Beacon Street West project on the former Allen-Rogers factory property suggests that there may be a market for market-rate housing in the downtown area.

- * **Student Housing:** There are many cases where developers have converted historic buildings into student housing. Examples include the conversion of a former warehouse into dorms for the Erie County Community College in Buffalo, NY and the Paramount Center at Emerson College in Boston, MA, a mixed-use residential/academic and performance venue.

We like the idea of this work being undertaken as a second distinct phase for several reasons. First of all, this set of spaces is physically distinct from the theater, particularly if the Blooms property can be used to create a new entrance into the theater. Secondly, we believe that the case for these spaces will be easier to make after the partially renovated theater is up and running. And third, the funding for this round of work might best be pursued as a separate effort with a private sector partner who might ultimately take operating responsibility for this part of the project.

The Third Phase

For the third phase of work, we would propose the completion of the renovation of the Colonial Theatre, potentially including:

- * New light and sound systems for the theater, and a new counterweight rigging system that brings back the full fly tower.
- * Additional backstage accommodations for performers and other support functions.
- * The restoration of the decorative elements of the auditorium, from the murals to the proscenium arch decoration.
- * An automated system to adjust the orchestra level from theater-style to tables and chairs to flat-floor.

We should not be too precise about the nature and level of this final phase of work, as these choices should be influenced by the programming successes and failures of the Colonial Theatre after the first phase of work. That is to say that the theater should not be restored as a theatrical venue in the third phase if it works best as a music and banquet venue after the first phase. And we would again stress the fact that, nationally, most large, fixed-seating theaters are struggling to find the right programming mix and financial sustainability. So the choices made for the third round should be driven by what will make the theater busy and sustainable, not just a desire to return the Colonial to its former glory.

Overall, we believe that this direction is both prudent and creative. Smaller rounds of capital fundraising are required to get the theater re-opened and impacting downtown Laconia. The initial round of work will create a space that is absolutely unique in the region and thus in a strong position to attract audiences, programs and funding. And choices can be made along the way that increase the odds of success for the second and third rounds of work.

9. Next Steps

Having laid out a plan for the incremental renovation and re-animation of Laconia's Colonial Theatre, we would now offer some additional thoughts on how to move the project forward.

1. The first next step should be the sharing of these findings with the community, perhaps as a part of a presentation to the Laconia City Council. Ideally, all of the individuals and organizations that participated in the study so far could be invited to attend that presentation.
2. If there is general agreement with the plan and the direction it sets forth, we would suggest a preliminary structural review of the building to ensure that the condition of the building is to a level that would allow the project to proceed based on the assumptions we've made to date. Hopefully this review could be accomplished using City staff (including the Fire Department).
3. As a next step, we would encourage the City Council to create an Advisory Committee that can advance the project on behalf of the community and raise the funds necessary for its further development. We see this structure as being appropriate given the importance of bringing the private sector (and private sector funding) to the project while still recognizing the importance of the City to this effort – sponsoring the effort to raise funds through other levels of government and working on the other elements of the revitalization of downtown Laconia. This structure will also provide a mechanism to advance key partnerships with groups such as the School District and the Community College, and an ongoing means for the public to participate in the planning effort.
4. That new leadership group should be charged with raising outside funds for the next round of work, which should include the further development of physical plans, the creation of a business plan for the renovated theater and a fundraising study to set goals and strategies to raise the funds necessary to complete the phased renovation and sustain the operation through each of those stages.

Appendix A: List of Study Participants

List of Study Participants

- * Harry Accornero, Candidate for New Hampshire Legislature
- * Joseph Adrignola, Martin, Lord & Osman
- * Ryan Aquilina, Vista Volunteer and Assistant Director, the Middle New Hampshire Arts & Entertainment Center
- * Joel Arsenault, Edward Jones Investments
- * Brenda Baer, City Council
- * Warren Bailey, Account Executive, Comcast Spotlight
- * Patricia Baldi, Owner, the Colonial Theater
- * Kathy Barger, Fundraising Consultant
- * Dwight Barton, Downtown Property Owner/Package Plus Copy Center
- * Nancy Barry, Interlakes Theatre
- * Rueben Bassett, Burrito Me
- * Alan Beetle, Patrick's Pub and the WOW Trail
- * Linda Bitzer, Beacon Street West Condominiums resident
- * Steve Beals, Laconia High School Principal
- * Russell Beane, Wilkinson-Beane Funeral Home
- * Gary and Marty Bloom, Bloom's Variety Store
- * Armand Bolduc, City Council
- * Jan Boudreau, Labelle's Shoe Repair
- * Reverend Warren Bouton, Laconia Congregational Church
- * David Bownes, Attorney
- * Charles Bradley, Putnam Fund Advisory Board
- * Richard Breton, Wells Fargo Advisors
- * Peter Brunette, Attorney, Social Media Advocate
- * Randy and Susan Bullerwell, All My Life Jewelers
- * Timothy Cameron, Achber Studio
- * Bernard Campbell, Laconia High School
- * Jenna Carroll-Plante, Laconia Historical Society
- * Robert Champlin, Laconia School Superintendent
- * Tom Clairmont, Lakes Region General Hospital
- * Pamela Clark, City of Laconia Heritage Commission
- * Fred and Maureen Clausen, Proctor's Lake House Cottages
- * Warren Clement, Colonial Theatre Committee
- * William Contardo, Lakes Region Planning Board, BCC Productions
- * Diane Cooper, Laconia Airport Authority
- * Ava Doyle, City Council

- * Martha Cruz, City of Laconia Human Relations Committee
- * Lynn Dadian, Streetcar Company
- * Debbie Drake, Laconia Historical Society
- * Devi Dahal, City of Laconia Human Relations Committee
- * Charlotte Dubois, Laconia Housing Authority
- * Father Mark Drouin, St. Andre Bessette Parish
- * Rodney Dyer, Attorney and Colonial Theatre Committee
- * Dorothy Duffy, City of Laconia Heritage Commission
- * Kevin Dunleavy, City of Laconia Parks and Recreation
- * Scott Dunn, Town Administrator of Gilford
- * Mark Edelstein, President, Lakes Region Community College
- * John C. Edgar, Community Development Director, Town of Meredith
- * Edward Engler, Laconia Daily Sun
- * Kenneth Erickson, Chief, City of Laconia Fire Department
- * Paul Fitzgerald, Attorney and Former Mayer of Laconia
- * Larry and Joan Frates, Frates Creative Arts Center
- * Thomas Garfield, Laconia Savings Bank
- * Dr. Andrew Garfinkle, Laconia Eye & Laser Center
- * Orry Gibbs, Zoning Board of Adjustment
- * Debbie Gibson, Laconia High School
- * Ana Gourlay, Sunflower Natural Foods
- * Malik Haig, Sustain Ability
- * David Haley, Munsey & Brazil Insurance Company, Belknap County Economic Development Council
- * Bryan Halperin, Winnepesaukee Playhouse
- * Diane Hanley, WOW Trail
- * RJ Harding, Meadowbrook Performing Arts Center
- * Kevin Halligan, Laconia Village Bakery
- * Robert Hamel, City Council
- * Jane Harmon, Awakenings Espresso Cafe
- * Robert Harrington, Laconia Housing Authority
- * Claire Hebert, Melcher & Prescott Insurance Group
- * Robert Holbrook, Putnam Fund Advisory Board
- * Warren and Mary Hutchins, Laconia Planning Board
- * Debbie Irwin, Manor on Golden Pond
- * Peter Irwin, Irwin Motors
- * Deborah Jordan, Northway Bank
- * Kimon Koulet, Director, Lake Region Planning Commission
- * Matthew Lahey, City Council
- * John Leahy, Former Planning Board Member
- * Eliza Leadbetter, Belknap County Economic Development Council

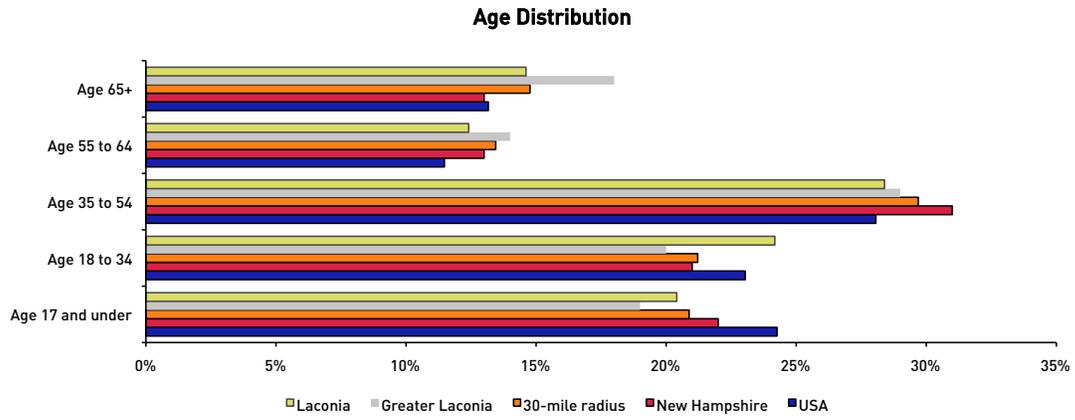
- * Nancy Leroy, Realtor
- * Henry Lipman, City Council
- * Marilyn Lynch, Library Trustee
- * John Malm, Meredith Village Savings Bank
- * Tim Martin, Taylor Community
- * Scott McGuffin, Attorney
- * Rusty McLear, Hampshire Hospitality Holdings
- * Chris Mega, Lakes Region Symphony Orchestra
- * Sonya Misiaszek, Misiaszek Turpin Architecture and Planning
- * Kyril Mitchell, Laconia Planning Board
- * John Moriarty, Belknap Mill
- * Jim Morash, Mount Washington Cruises
- * Michael Moyer, Chief, Laconia Police Department
- * Alvin Nix, Attorney
- * John O'Brien, Selectman, Gilford
- * Neil Pankhurst, Winnepesaukee Playhouse
- * Carla Peterson, Hector's Fine Food and Spirits
- * Edward Philpot, Belknap County Commission
- * Scott Piddington, Gilford High School
- * Carol Pierce, City of Laconia Human Relations Committee
- * Penny Pitou, Penny Pitou Travel
- * Jack Polidoro, Musician and Author
- * Robert Powers, Engraving, Awards and Gifts
- * Tom and Linda Pucci, Grand View Motel
- * Alex Ray, The Common Man Family of Restaurants
- * Ian Raymond, Raymond Photography
- * Alan Robichaud, Lakes Region United Way
- * Jennifer and Ted Roy, Water Street Cafe
- * Shanna Saunders, City of Laconia Planning Director
- * Robert Sawyer, Sawyers Jewelry
- * Elaine Scott, City of Laconia Heritage Commission
- * Sandy Oullette Scott, O Steak and Seafood Restaurant
- * William Seed, Realtor
- * Bob Selig, Colonial Theatre Committee
- * Michael Seymour, Mayor of Laconia
- * Hari Sharma, City of Laconia Human Relations Committee
- * Susan and Bruce Shumway, Rist-Frost-Shumway Engineering and New Hampshire Charitable Foundation
- * Ray Simoneau, Coldwell Banker Commercial Weeks Associates
- * Steven Smith, Steven J. Smith & Associates
- * Thomas Smith, Depot Antiques and Toys, Laconia Antique Center

- * Matthew Soza, Laconia Resident
- * David Stamps, Community Volunteer
- * Peter Stewart, Peter Stewart Consultancy/Architect
- * Kevin Sullivan, Coldwell Banker Commercial Weeks Associates
- * Thomas Tardif, Former Laconia Mayor
- * Jack Terrill, Lakes Region United Way
- * Russ Thibeault, Economist
- * Wanda Tibbetts, Lakeport Community Association
- * Robert Turpin, Misiaszek Turpin Architecture and Planning
- * Don Vachon, American Legion
- * Stephen Weeks Jr., Coldwell Banker Commercial Weeks Associates
- * Stephanie Wentworth, Decorative Interiors
- * Chris Williams, Christopher P. Williams Architects
- * Rachel Witkovsky, Interlakes Theatre
- * Jane and Patrick Wood, Patrick Wood Law Office
- * Niel Young- WEZS Radio Station

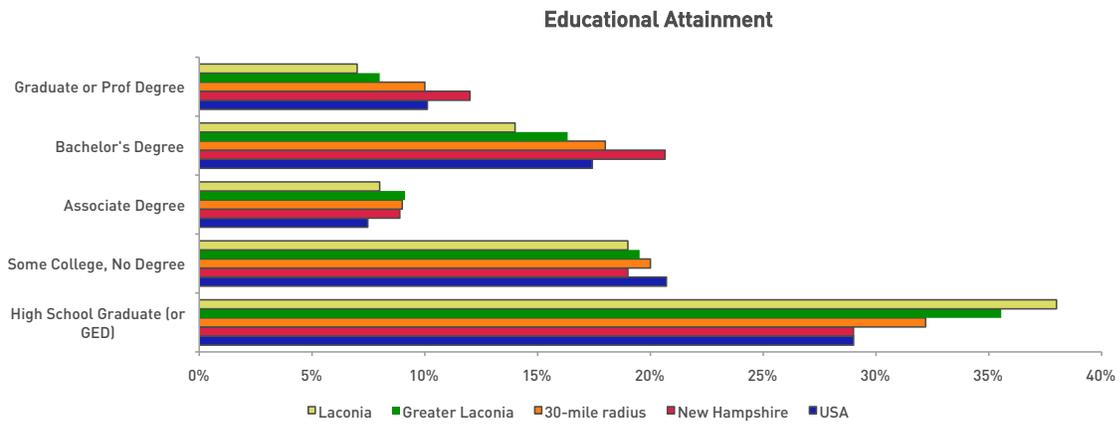
Appendix B: Market Definition and Characteristics

1. Market Characteristics

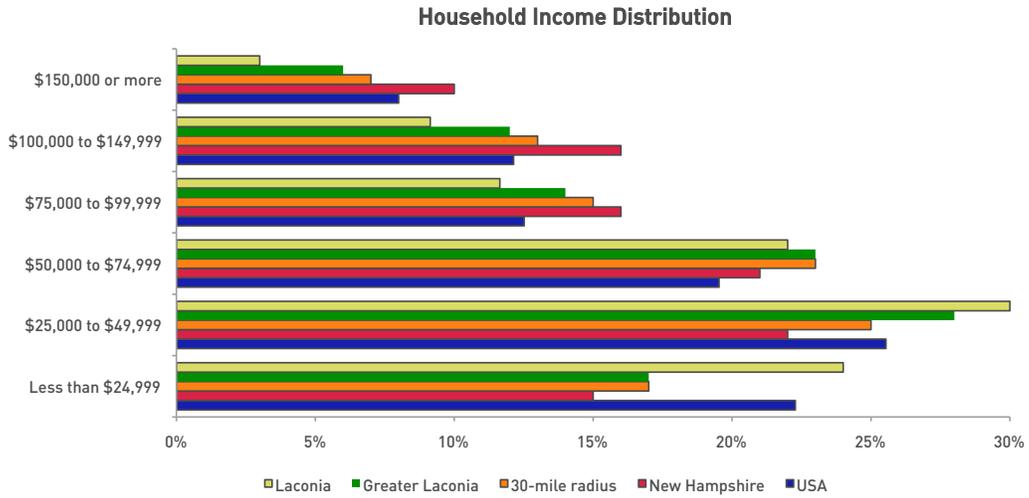
A. Age



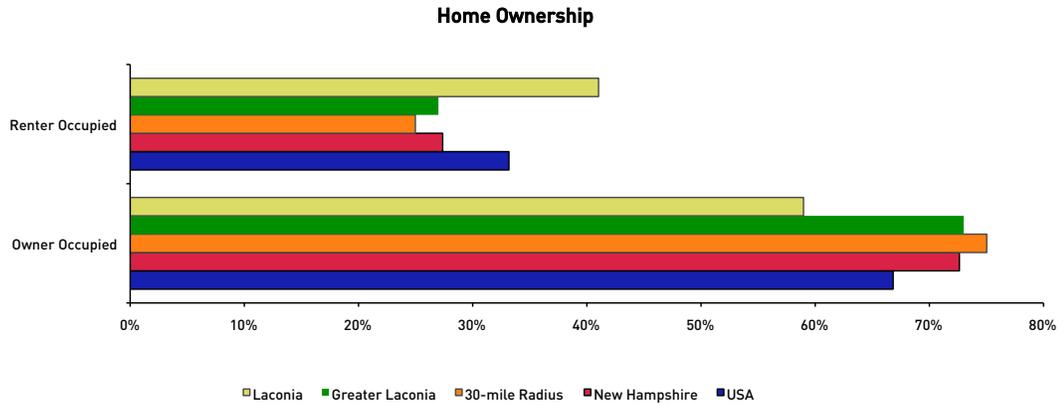
B. Education



C. Income

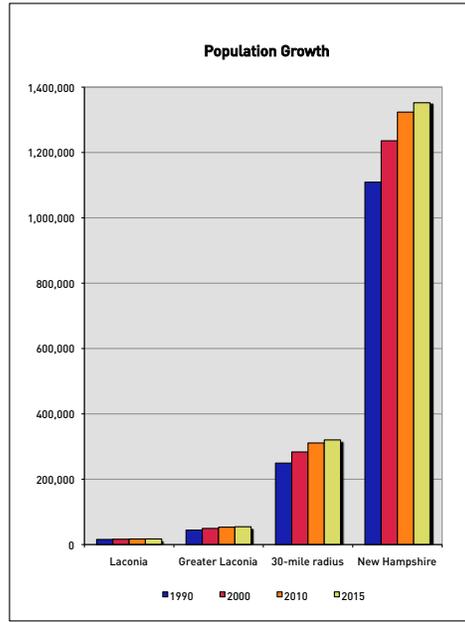


D. Home Ownership

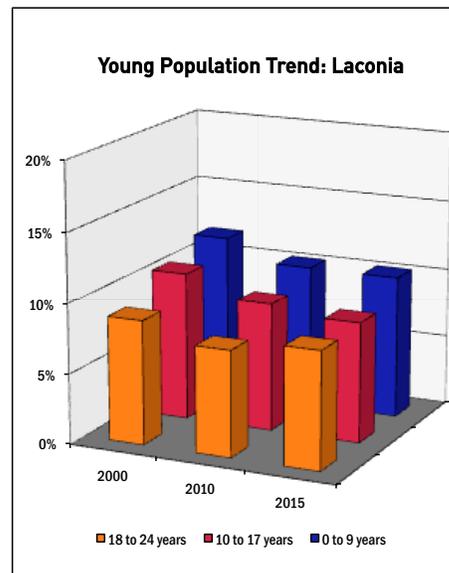
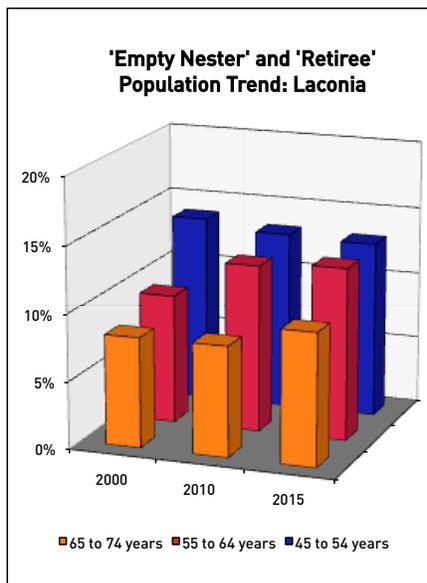


2. Market Trends

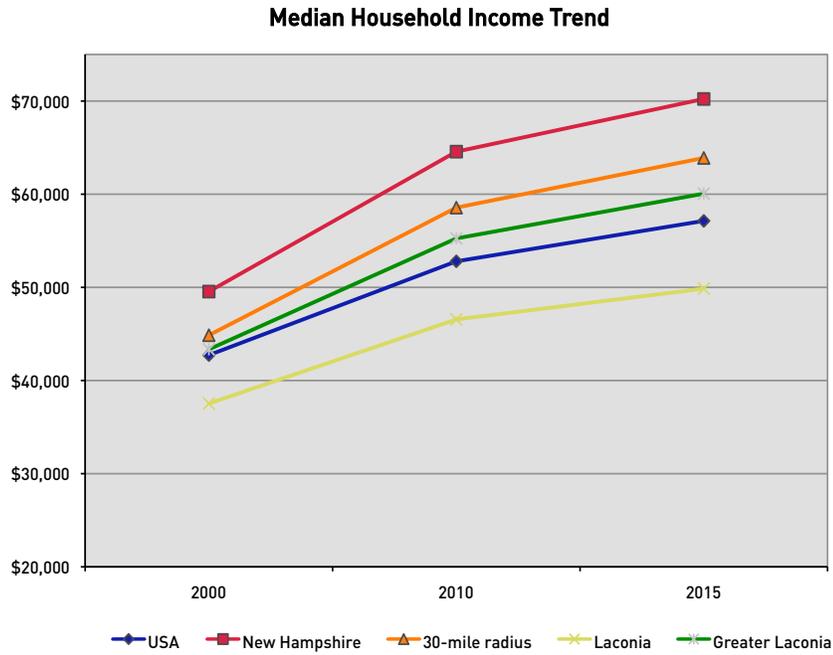
A. Population Growth



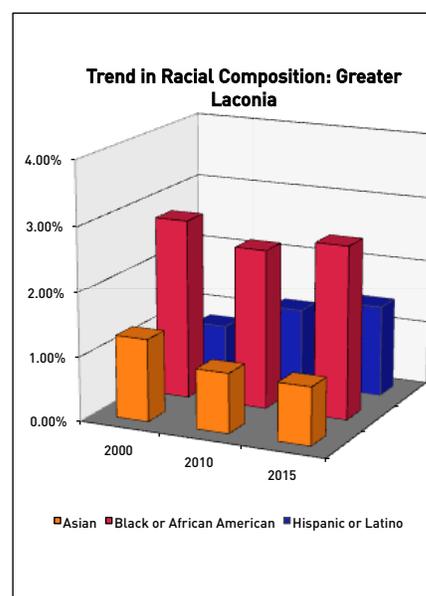
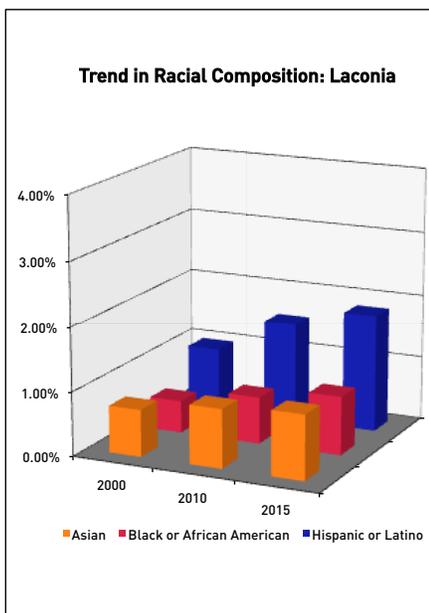
B. Age



C. Income

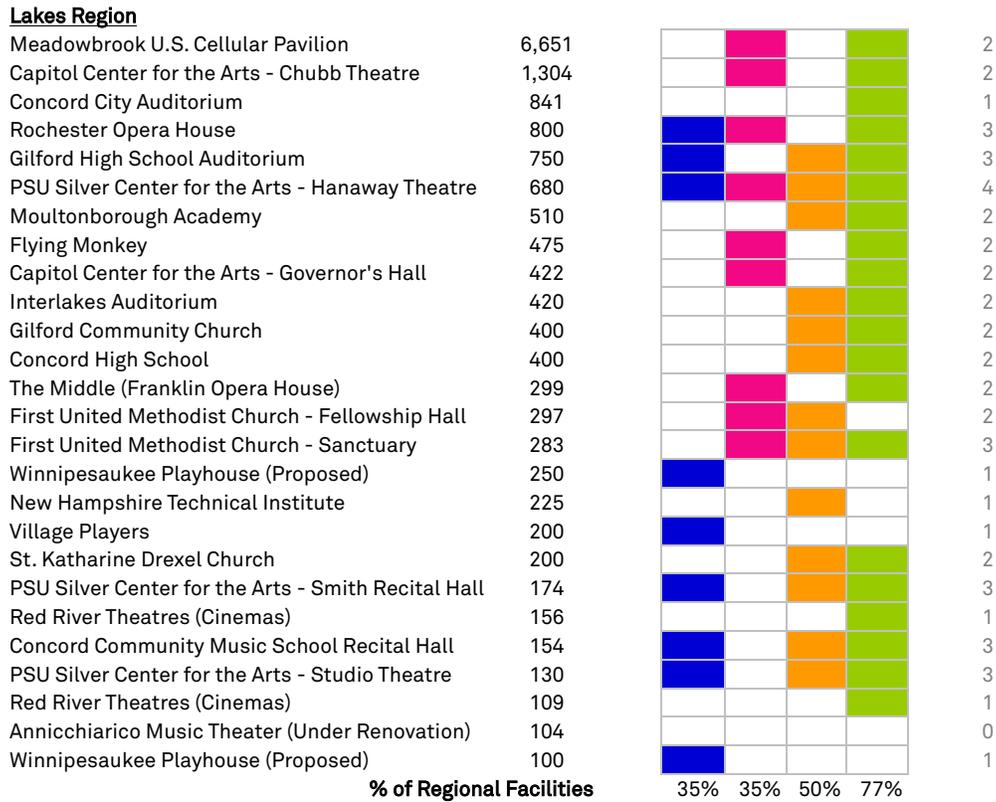
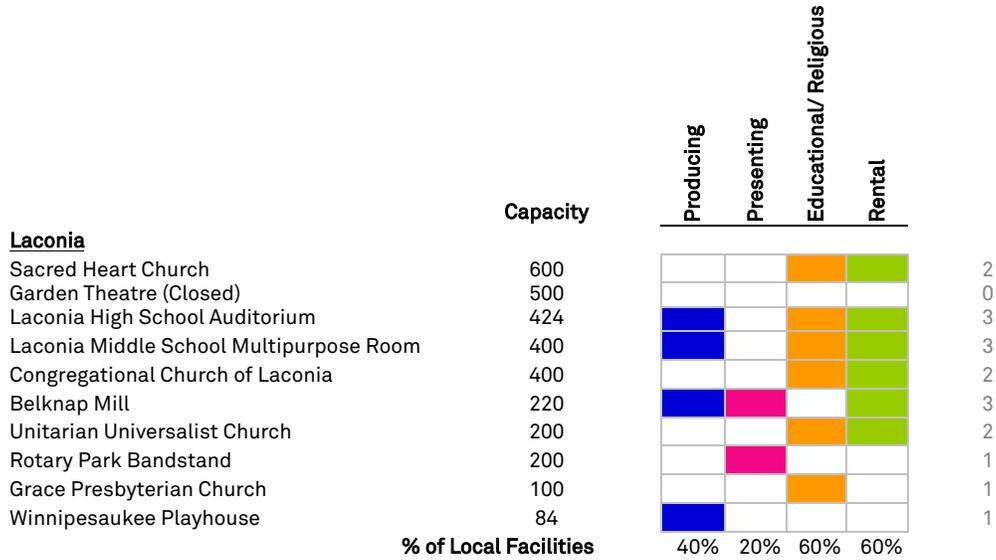


D. Race and Ethnicity



Appendix C: Facilities Inventory

Performance Venues: Activity



Performance Venues: Facility Rating

	Capacity	Types of Activity	Building Condition	Staff and Support	Functional	Room Acoustics	Customer Amenities	Performer Amenities	Atmosphere/Character	Suitability for Users	Rating
Laconia											
Sacred Heart Church	600	2	2	1	2	3	1	1	2	2	1.7
Garden Theatre (closed)	500	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.0
Laconia High School Auditorium	424	3	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	1.5
Laconia Middle School Multipurpose Room	400	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1.5
Congregational Church of Laconia	400	2	3	1	2	3	1	1	2	2	1.9
Belknap Mill	220	3	4	3	2	3	2	2	4	3	3.0
Unitarian Universalist Church	200	2	3	1	2	3	1	1	2	2	1.9
Rotary Park Bandstand	200	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	2	1.5
Grace Presbyterian Church	100	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	1.6
Winnepesaukee Playhouse	84	1	2	4	2	1	2	2	2	2	2.3
30-mile Radius											
Meadowbrook U.S. Cellular Pavilion	6,651	2	3	4	3	2	4	4	4	3	3.4
Capitol Center for the Arts - Chubb Theatre	1,304	2	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	3.9
Concord City Auditorium	841	1	2	2	2	2	3	2	4	3	2.4
Rochester Opera House	800	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	3	2.7
Gilford High School Auditorium	750	3	2	2	3	2	1	1	2	3	2.0
PSU Silver Center for the Arts - Hanaway Theatre	680	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	4	3.5
Moultonborough Academy	510	2	3	2	2	2	3	2	4	3	2.6
Flying Monkey	475	2	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	3.9
Capitol Center for the Arts - Governor's Hall	422	2	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	3.9
Interlakes Auditorium	420	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2.4
Gilford Community Church	400	2	4	1	2	3	1	1	2	2	2.1
Concord High School	400	2	2	2	3	2	1	1	2	3	2.0
The Middle (Frankling Opera House)	299	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	3	2.3
First United Methodist Church - Sanctuary	297	2	3	1	2	3	1	1	2	2	1.9
First United Methodist Church - Fellowship Hall	283	3	3	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	1.8
Winnepesaukee Playhouse (proposed)	250	1	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	3.9
New Hampshire Technical Institute	225	1	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	4	2.8
Village Players	200	1	2	4	2	2	3	3	2	4	2.8
St. Katharine Drexel Church - Hall	200	2	4	1	2	3	1	1	2	2	2.1
PSU Silver Center for the Arts - Smith Recital Hall	174	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	4	3.5
Red River Theatres (Cinemas)	156	1	3	2	3	2	4	1	3	2	2.5
Concord Community Music School Recital Hall	154	3	2	4	3	4	3	3	3	4	3.2
PSU Silver Center for the Arts - Studio Theatre	130	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	4	3.5
Red River Theatres (Cinemas)	109	1	3	2	3	2	4	1	3	2	2.5
Annicchiarico Music Theater (Under Renovation)	104	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.0
Winnepesaukee Playhouse (proposed)	100	1	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	3.9

Appendix D: Comparable Projects

Adler Theatre, Davenport, IA: Phased Renovation including residential element

The 2,400-seat Adler Theatre in downtown Davenport was originally constructed in 1930 along with the Mississippi Hotel, a connected building that featured 200 hotel rooms, 50 apartments and some retail space on the first floor. Originally used as a venue for vaudeville, the Adler Theatre (then called the RKO Theatre) was later converted to a first-run movie theater and operated as a cinema until it closed its doors in 1973.



Gifted to the non-profit River Center for the Performing Arts in 1981, the Adler Theatre was renovated in two phases.

The first phase of work, completed in the 1980s, restored the Adler Theatre's public spaces, but did not modernize the stage, backstage, or theater support areas. In this first cosmetic phase the total budget was \$4.25 million. The chandeliers and original seats were fully restored and new carpeting was reproduced to match the original carpeting. The theater reopened in 1986 and operated as a performing arts center for the next twenty years while the Mississippi Hotel continued to operate as a hotel.

In 2004, the City of Davenport purchased the Mississippi Hotel and began work on a \$15.5 million renovation project. This project was composed of two separate plans. The first plan included a rehabilitation of the backstage and theater support areas by increasing the stage depth, enhancing the sound system, improving the lighting and rigging systems, increasing storage space, installing a new freight elevator, and replacing the heating and cooling systems for \$9 million. The second \$8.5 million plan created 56 new apartments, called the Mississippi Lofts, out of part of old Mississippi Hotel (the remainder of the former hotel was used to expand the Adler Theatre). Of the 56 apartments, there are 52 income-restricted units and four market-rate units. Although original plans called for a restaurant, mini-theater and exercise room, those amenities were dropped from the plan in favor of in-apartment amenities such as washers, dryers and laminate floors.

The final piece of work, expected to be completed in the next two or three years involves replacing the old marquee.

Latchis Theater, Brattleboro, VT- Phased Renovation including hotel and commercial space

The Latchis Theater was originally constructed in 1938 to house a 1,200-seat movie palace, grand ballroom, hotel, coffee shop, dining room and gift shop. The Latchis family owned the Latchis building until the non-profit Brattleboro Arts Initiative purchased the building for \$1.6 million in 2003. In its current incarnation, the complex is home to the original theater, two small movie theaters, a pub/microbrewery, 30-room hotel, restaurant and three retail storefronts.



Although the Latchis family had done some restoration work beginning in the 1980s that included restoration of the hotel, restoration of some of the original paintings and friezes in the theater, and the addition of some restaurants, much restoration and renovation still needed to be done when the BAI purchased the building.

The BAI is currently pursuing a phased renovation plan. During the first phase of renovations, which cost approximately \$400,000, the roof was replaced, new sconces were installed, and the hotel was renovated. The building was also upgraded for fire safety.

A second phase of renovation is now underway. This phase includes the design and installation of Latchis 4, restoring and upgrading the marquee, improving exterior lighting and restoring some of the architectural details. Most recently in June 2010, Latchis 4, a 99-seat multi-purpose space opened. The total cost of phase two is expected to be \$930,000.

During the third and final phase, BAI hopes to pay off the loans that helped finance the purchase.

Flushing Town Hall, Queens, NY- Phased Renovation including meeting and event space

Flushing Town Hall is a well-known cultural landmark in Flushing. Originally opened two years after the start of the Civil War, the building has been “a mustering site for Union soldiers, a bank, jail, grand ballroom, a public assembly hall, a setting for light opera and traveling theatrical productions, and housed civic offices.”



The Flushing Council on Culture and the Arts won a bid to renovate and occupy the building in the early 1990s. After a phased \$8 million renovation, Flushing Town Hall was completed in 1999. The building now includes an extensive first-floor gallery with rotating exhibits of regional, national and international works of arts; a new partnership with the Smithsonian Museum will continue to expand the already prestigious work.

A theater is located upstairs, with 340 removable seats on risers that convert to a flat-floor configuration. The space is quite beautiful, with hardwood floors and high ceilings, as well as state-of-the-art technology. Programming includes classical music, family events, and the facility's specialty-jazz.

In addition, the theater, galleries, green room and adjacent gardens are frequently rented by local arts and cultural groups as well as private individuals and companies for weddings, retreats and meetings. These rentals are a very important source of revenue. The upstairs theater seats slightly more than 300 for a banquet dinner, the green room holds 40 for a small reception, corporate meeting or presentation, and galleries have capacities of 75 to 100. With a deck and shaded gardens, the garden hosts up to 250 for cocktail parties, luncheons, outdoor weddings and concerts. The Council even operates a Trolley, available for rental to facilitate tours or as transport for weddings or special event guests.

Lyric Theatre, Stuart, FL, Full Restoration

Built as a silent movie house in 1925, the Lyric Theatre was sold to a group of community minded individuals called the Friends of the Lyric Theatre in 1988. This group wanted to contribute to a downtown redevelopment effort that was already underway in Stuart. The 500-seat theater continued operating as a performing arts venue until major renovations began in 1994 as part of a \$3 million, long-term plan.



In 1994, 1995, and 1997, the Lyric Theater closed during the summer months for structural renovations and upgrades. In 1997, the façade was restored to its original 1926 design and dressing rooms were built in the basement. In 1999, the Friends of the Lyric purchased the adjacent property and embarked on an expansion. In 2001, the renovation was completed after closing for the summer to allow for the installation of an elevator and new balcony seats. In 2004, the Theater closed from August to September for \$750,000 stage expansion, adding 12 feet to the depth of the stage, as well as a fly loft, orchestra pit, offices, bathrooms, and dressing rooms.

University of North Carolina Chapel Hill Historic Playmakers Theatre-

The historic Playmakers Theatre, located on the campus of the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill was completed in 1851 for use as a library and ballroom. Later occupied by the law school and agricultural chemistry programs, the building came into use



as a theater in 1925. The Playmakers Theatre currently houses the Playmakers Reparatory Company, a professional theatre in residence at the University, as well as lectures, concerts and special events.

In 2005, an architectural firm began design work on an \$8 million full interior restoration project to restore the theatre to the proscenium format. Work on phase one began in 2006 with a new coat of exterior paint. In 2008, financial difficulties put the full restoration on hold and the University decided to focus on smaller-scale improvements with a budget of \$225,000.

The scaled-down project included new interior paint, carpeting and seating, as well as updates to make the theater ADA compliant. The theater also received a new curtain and sound and lighting system. No restoration work was done, although none of the historical elements were removed. The theater also still lacks restrooms for the audience and has very limited backstage space.

Temporarily reopened for student use in November 2010, the University hopes to continue the full restoration project when more funds become available.