

# THE GRIOT CENTER

REIMAGINING A NEW, INCLUSIVE FUTURE FOR  
OUR BUILDING *IN DOWNTOWN CLARKSDALE, MS*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1 ————— 3  
INTRO

Section 2 ————— 4  
THE TEAM

Section 3 ————— 8  
HISTORY

Section 4 ————— 10  
EXISTING CONDITIONS

Section 5 ————— 14  
A COMMUNITY VISION

Section 6 ————— 18  
BUILDING PROGRAM  
*HOW GRIOT WILL SERVE THE COMMUNITY*

Section 7 ————— 28  
SCHEDULE & BUDGET

Section 8 ————— 30  
PARTNERSHIPS

## SECTION 1

# INTRO

## How We Got Here

In Coahoma County, Mississippi, where 35% of residents reside below the federal poverty line, Griot Arts is a beacon of progress, unity, and community development. This local arts organization empowers local youth by leveraging art as an avenue for personal growth, empowerment, enhancement, as well as overall community enrichment. For the past decade, Griot's programs, Mosaic and Meraki, have provided access to opportunities in music, art, education, and workforce development in a rural region, where access to these opportunities is extremely limited. Already impacting the lives of over 1,300 students, Griot is at maximum physical capacity within its current location of 5,000 square feet. Despite proven interest and growing demand within the community, Griot will have limited outreach potential for arts and economic impact without more space.

In 2020, Griot Arts was deeded 32,000 square feet of historic infrastructure within historic downtown Clarksdale, the county seat for Coahoma County in the Mississippi Delta and the home of "The Crossroads," where blues legend Robert Johnson sold his soul to play guitar. Included in the donation of property is the historic Paramount Theater, which in times past served as the center for cultural events in the region, but it also is a direct representation of southern segregation with a separate entrance for African Americans that is still visible today. The current condition of the Paramount is unfortunately decrepit; without immediate stabilization work, the community could lose the structure forever.

Rehabilitating this structure and transforming it into The Griot Center means that the organization will have more space for arts programming, education and research, creative business incubation, performances, lectures, and films, which will inspire tomorrow's creative influencers and provide an opportunity to build community. The central location will allow residents of all socio-economic backgrounds to access this programming.

To undertake this monumental effort to bring The Griot Center to life, Griot Arts has engaged an interdisciplinary team of design professionals to assess and document the existing facility, develop a concept for the building's future use, and create a financial strategy for the necessary capital expenses associated with the construction. This document represents an important initial step in Griot's plan to preserve, rehabilitate, and transform these spaces from dilapidated eyesores and societal scars into a beacon of arts and culture for the region. Contained in the following pages are a concise history of the site, summary of existing conditions, documentation of the project's community engagement initiative, the building program and initial concepts developed by the design team, a preliminary schedule and budget, and an acknowledgment of the key partnerships that have made this effort possible.

Published on August 23, 2022

## SECTION 2

# THE TEAM

Griot Arts has thoughtfully assembled an internal leadership team to champion the effort to construct The Griot Center. Executive Director Rebekah Pleasant- Patterson is joined by Development Director Ben Lewis, and board members Brenda Lockett, Leonette Henderson, and Cali Noland, to form a steering committee that is actively engaging the community and stakeholders to ensure the new facility is positioned to effectively serve the youth and families of Clarksdale.

Griot's board of directors selected an interdisciplinary design team, specializing in historic preservation, commercial interiors, graphic design and branding strategy, and landscape design. Led by Architect Ryan Biles, AIA of Kudzu Collective and Architect Ngozi (Nome) Brown, AIA, ASID, NOMA, M. Ed., the team also includes Interior Designers Natalie Biles, ASID and Stacey Breezeel, ASID of Shine Interior Design Studio, Brantley Snipes, ASLA, Landscape Architect and Historic Real Estate Finance Consultant, and Graphic Designers and Branding Strategists Sarah Melby and Will Staley of Thrive, Inc. Together, these professionals have collaborated to guide Griot's steering committee in a process of assessment, discovery, and concept development, which is described in the pages of this document. The design team has been retained to continue the process of schematic design, development, construction documents, bidding, and construction administration as funding comes available.



# THE TEAM Griot Development Team



**REBEKAH PLEASANT-PATTERSON**  
Executive Director



**BEN LEWIS**  
Development Director



**CALI NOLAND**  
Board President & Founder



**LEONETTE  
HENDERSON**  
Board Member



**BRENDA LUCKETT**  
Board Member

# THE TEAM

## Design Team



**RYAN BILES, AIA**  
Architect



**NGOZI (NOME) BROWN, AIA,**  
ASID, NOMA, M. ED., NCARB, NCIDQ,  
CEDAC, LEED® AP ND, GPC  
Architect, Interior Designer, Principal & Owner



**BRANTLEY SNIPES, ASLA**  
Landscape Architect  
Historic Real Estate Finance Consultant



**NATALIE BILES, ASID, IIDA**  
Owner & Lead Designer  
Interior Design



**STACEY BREEZEEL, ASID, LEED-AP**  
Owner & Lead Designer  
Interior Design



**WILL STALEY**  
Founder & Executive Director  
Graphic Design



**SARAH MELBY**  
Associate Creative Director  
Graphic Design



## SECTION 3

# HISTORY

The property at 250-256 Yazoo Avenue, originally a department store when it was constructed in 1918, and the Theatre Marion, at 258 Yazoo Avenue was designed by Memphis Architect John Gaisford. Gaisford also designed the adjacent McWilliams building, which is not part of this project. Each structure includes similar classical detailing, brick, and fenestration details. These buildings are located within the Clarksdale Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2009, and are considered contributing structures to the district.

The Department Store was believed to be purchased in 1938 when it became JC Penney Store 1540, and served as the company's Clarksdale location until the opening of a more modern, smaller store further up the block on Yazoo Avenue.

The department store space was subsequently subdivided on the ground floor, serving as retail space for a number of decades before abandonment in the last several years.

Theatre Marion is thought to be one of the first theaters in the region for the showing of motion pictures, as it was designed both with a fly loft and stage to accommodate theater performances and a projection room for movies. In the 1930's the theater was purchased by Saenger Amusements and renamed the Paramount Theater, for which the iconic blue and orange marquee projecting toward Yazoo Avenue was constructed.

In the mid 1980's, an effort to renovate the theater into the Larry Thompson Center for the Arts was begun, and concept drawings were developed to position the theater's entry toward the municipal parking lot on the east side of the theater.

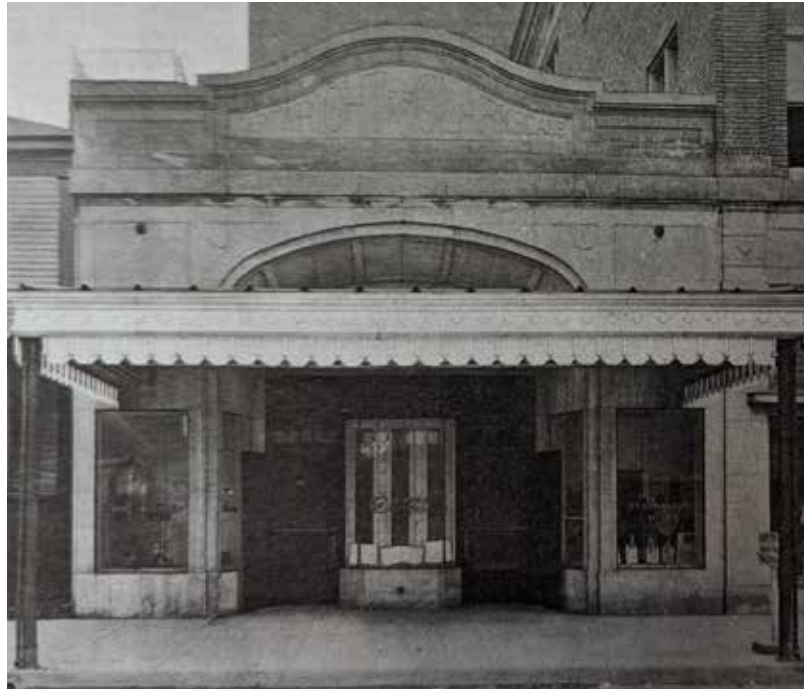


J.C. PENNEY YAZOO AVENUE FACADE  
WITH MCWILLIAMS BUILDING IN THE  
BACKGROUND

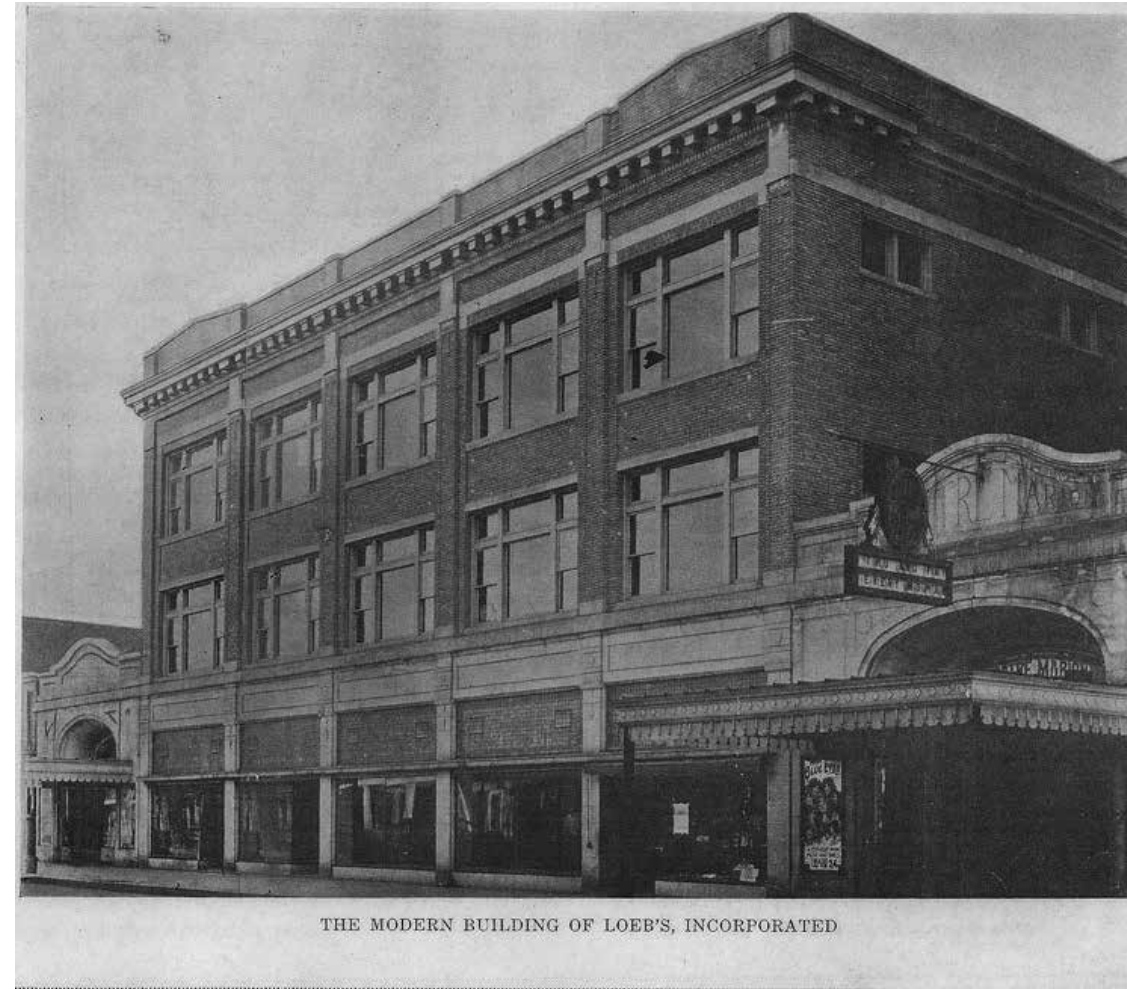
CIRCA EARLY 1940'S



# HISTORY



ABOVE: CARTWRIGHT OF CLARKSDALE STOREFRONT CIRCA 1920, DEPICTING EARLY CONDITION OF FACADE TO THE LEFT OF THE DEPARTMENT STORE, WITH A TWIN CANOPY TO THE MARION THEATER TO THE RIGHT



ABOVE: MANIPULATED PHOTO / BUILDING ILLUSTRATION THIS IMAGE FROM A CIRCA 1920'S PUBLICATION PROMOTING CLARKSDALE CURIOUSLY DEPICTS THE "LOEB'S BUILDING" (THOUGHT TO BE THE ORIGINAL TENANT OF THE LOCATION PRIOR TO J.C. PENNEY OPENING IN THE 1930'S), WITH ONE ADDITIONAL BAY OF WINDOWS (THE ACTUAL BUILDING HAS FOUR BAYS). AND THE "MARION THEATER" CLEARLY SHOWN IN THE RIGHT HAND SIDE OF THE IMAGE.

RIGHT: INTERIOR OF THE MARION THEATER CIRCA 1920'S, PRIOR TO BECOMING THE PARAMOUNT THEATER



ABOVE: J.C. PENNEY MAIN FACADE FOLLOWING "MODERNIZATION" CIRCA EARLY-MID 1950'S, PRIOR TO THE STORE'S RELOCATION FURTHER DOWN THE BLOCK ON YAZOO AVENUE





# HISTORY



Those efforts never came to fruition, and in recent years, the theater has sustained the complete collapse of the auditorium roof and balcony structure, the partial collapse of the back wall and proscenium wall, and the exposure of the stage area to the weather and elements.

Theatre Marion and its successor the Paramount originated during the era of Jim Crow laws and racial segregation. The scars of this era remain on this building, and in the community. In a powerful New York Times photo essay, the segregated ticket booth, stairway, and entry into the segregated balcony seating at the Paramount are documented alongside other remaining architectural relics of this period. These elements are not just separate, but they are relegated to the alley behind the grand theater entry, in a clear affront to the African American citizens who were relegated to second class status throughout many decades of the theater's operation.

The next chapter of this facility's story is positioned to redeem the narrative of the past. The creative path that Griot and the design team are pursuing in this project will result in a center that is a beacon for opportunity, inclusion, and belonging.

**THE SEGREGATED STAIRCASE ON THE BACKSIDE OF THE PARAMOUNT**

*PHOTO BY RICHARD FRISHMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES*



VISIT THE QR CODE OR  
CLICK THIS LINK IN THE PDF  
DOCUMENT TO READ THE *NEW  
YORK TIMES* PHOTO ESSAY  
"HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT"



## SECTION 4

# EXISTING CONDITIONS

Age, water intrusion, and the elements have not been kind to these buildings in recent years. The building envelope has been compromised after years of deferred maintenance. The entire roof above the Paramount Auditorium has collapsed, taking with it the balcony floor, the decorative interior elements, and much of the proscenium wall's plaster detail.

The department store area is in better condition, but continual water intrusion from a major roof leak (so severe that the basement level of the building is routinely flooded to the ceiling) has also caused the collapse of the monumental stair between the first and second floors of the department store space. Upper floor window glass is broken, allowing wildlife and weather to contribute to the gradual deterioration of the built fabric.



OVERHEAD VIEW OF 250 YAZOO AVENUE

In 2021, the design team, along with the team's structural engineer performed a visual inspection of the facility, focusing particularly on the exterior wall of the auditorium, where the roof collapse has also caused the partial collapse of the masonry parapet. While the condition at the time was not one of imminent concern, the passage of time and weather conditions now necessitate the team's re-evaluation of the condition and the issuing of a new, updated report.

Stabilization of existing structure, water and hazardous material mitigation, and the weather tightness of building envelope (both permanent and temporary measures) are an immediate priority.



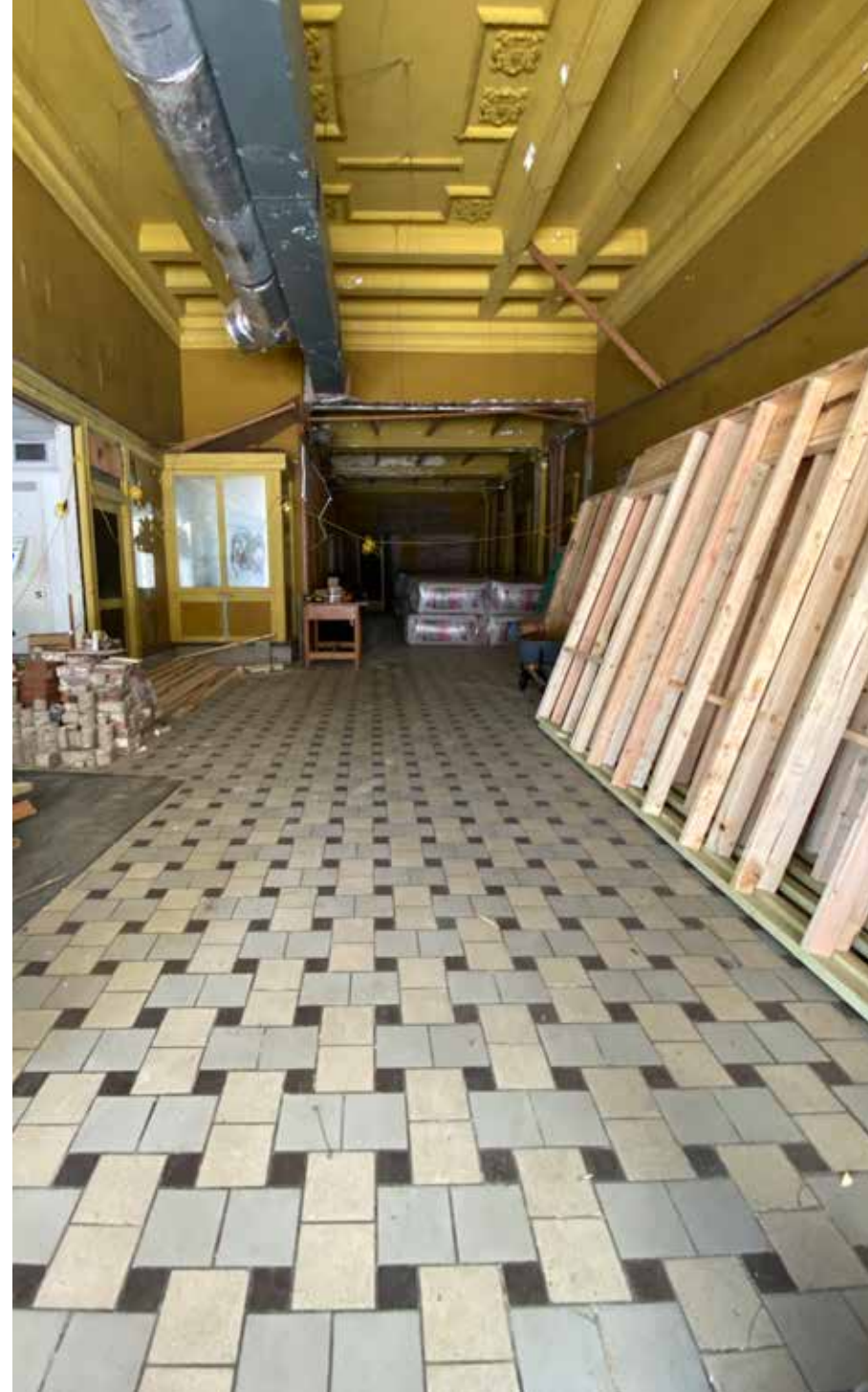
TEAM ON SITE SURVEYING EXISTING CONDITIONS



# EXISTING CONDITIONS



GROUND FLOOR



HISTORIC THEATER ENTRY



EXISTING SECOND FLOOR STAIR



# EXISTING CONDITIONS



SECOND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR

## AREAS OF CONCERN

### Department Store Building

- DAMAGED ROOF IN NORTHEAST CORNER

### Theater

- ALLEY WALL
- BACK WALL
- COLLAPSED ROOF RUBBLE OVER AUDITORIUM FLOOR



COLLAPSED ROOF OVER THEATER AUDITORIUM



ROOF ABOVE EXISTING THEATER ENTRANCE TO BECOME ROOFTOP GARDEN



# EXISTING CONDITIONS



CURRENT CONDITION OF ICONIC PARAMOUNT THEATER MARQUEE, WITH ADJACENT DEPARTMENT STORE WINDOWS IN DISREPAIR

## ONGOING ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

### Hazardous Materials Remediation:

- ASBESTOS-CONTAINING MATERIALS
- LEAD-BASED PAINT
- MOLD / MILDEW

### Water Damage / Building Envelope:

- MINOR STRUCTURAL STABILIZATION
- NEW ROOF
- REMOVE WATER FROM BASEMENT
- TEMPORARILY ENCLOSE UPPER STORY WINDOWS ON MAIN FACADE OF DEPARTMENT STORE





# A COMMUNITY VISION



COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS PARTICIPATE IN A DESIGN TEAM LED VISIONING SESSION



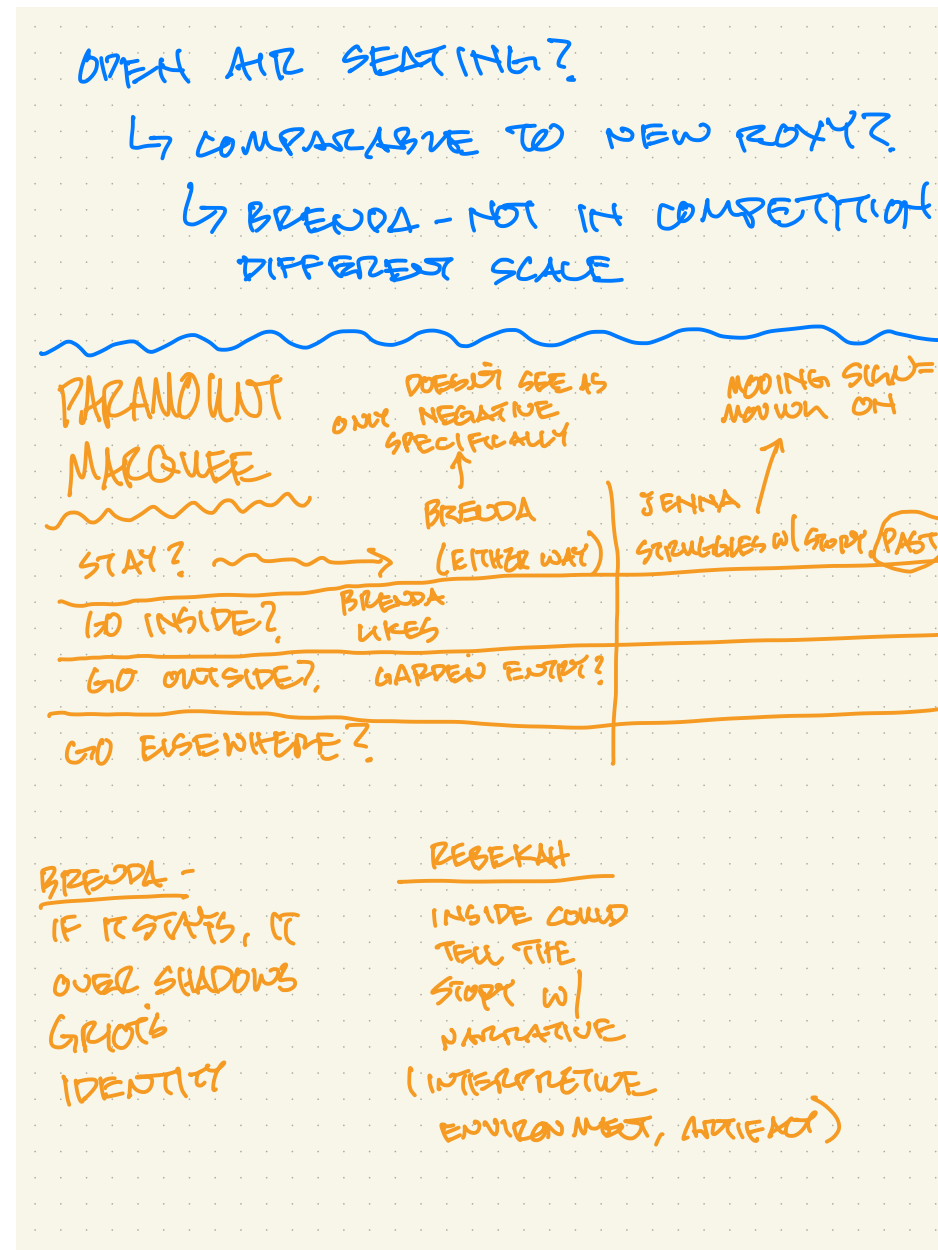
NOME BROWN & RYAN BILES PRESENT CONCEPTS DURING THE SECOND COMMUNITY VISIONING SESSION



# A COMMUNITY VISION

Visioning Session #2 focused on “The Body” and the physical attributes of the facility that may accommodate functional requirements of expanded arts programming to be offered by Griot in the new center. This session explored the value of creativity, and what Griot’s offerings to the community are, will be, and should be.

Nearly 50 community members attended over the two sessions, providing essential feedback and reflection on proposed project specifics, the history of the site, and how the story of the site’s segregated past might be documented and interpreted for future users. The Visioning Sessions also provided an opportunity for community members to walk to the site, where local youth performed original raps, provoking thought and providing a fitting backdrop for the serious consideration of the issues and opportunities contained within the project.



NOTES FROM COMMUNITY VISIONING SESSION



COMMUNITY MEMBERS OBSERVE THE SEGREGATED STAIRCASE ON THE BACKSIDE OF THE PARAMOUNT



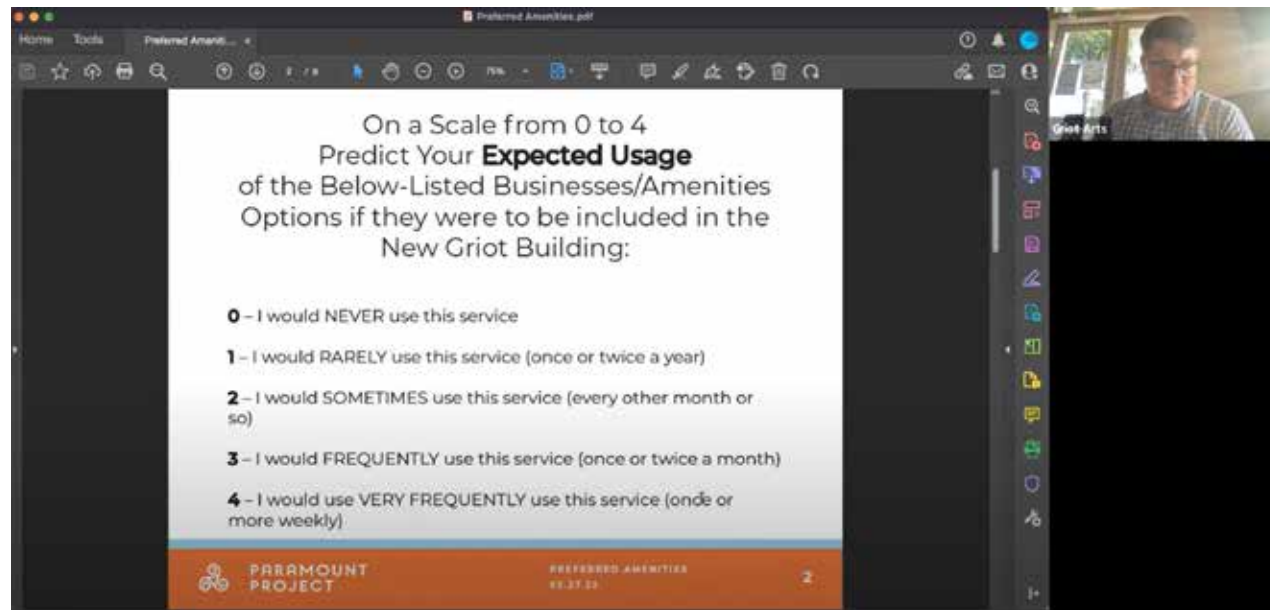
# A COMMUNITY VISION

YOU CAN JOIN THE CONVERSATION!

REVIEW THE  
VISIONING  
SESSION 1  
CONCEPT BOARD  
WITH COMMUNITY  
CONTRIBUTIONS:



SHARE YOUR  
PERSPECTIVES  
VIA OUR ONLINE  
SURVEY!



COMMUNITY MEMBERS ATTENDED VISIONING SESSIONS IN PERSON AND ONLINE VIA ZOOM, TO MAXIMIZE ACCESSIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION.



VISIONING SESSIONS INCLUDED SITE VISITS AND INTERPRETIVE PERFORMANCES BY LOCAL ARTISTS TO EXPLORE IMPORTANT ISSUES RELATED TO THE COMMUNITY'S MEMORY OF THE FACILITY.



AUDIO AND VIDEO RECORDINGS DOCUMENTED VISIONING SESSIONS CONVERSATIONS

REVIEW THE  
VISIONING  
SESSION 2  
CONCEPT BOARD  
WITH COMMUNITY  
CONTRIBUTIONS:



SHARE YOUR  
PERSPECTIVES  
VIA OUR ONLINE  
SURVEY!





## SECTION 6

# BUILDING PROGRAM

The revitalization of this facility will create the opportunity to expand enrollment in Griot's current programming, and to add new offerings in organization's MOSAIC and MERAKI student programs. The following list of functions and spaces was presented to the community during the Visioning Sessions, during which the design team tested assumptions with local stakeholders. The design team, led by Shine Interior Design Studio, further developed a conceptual layout within the existing boundaries of the facility to establish areas and capacities for each of the listed functions, assign locations within the facility layout, and illustrate spatial relationships between these functional areas.

The floor plans included in this document illustrate these spaces, locations, and relationships, establishing a data-driven preliminary concept on which Griot Arts may continue to establish a strategy for expansion.

## THESE FUNCTIONS WILL BE LOCATED IN THE GRIOT CENTER FACILITY:

- Meraki Coffee space
- Ceramics studio
- Photography studio / darkroom
- Dance practice and performance space
- Recording studio
- Art (various)
- Music (Instrumental rehearsal & recital)
- Commercial Kitchen
- Digital arts / computer lab
- Theater / musical theater
- Digital projection movie theater
- Greenhouse / rooftop space
- Rooftop Activity
- Co-working space (general public)
- Co-working / office (Griot Arts staff)
- Individual staff offices
- Meeting / presentation spaces
- Large meeting / event / multipurpose spaces (community / rental)
- Business Incubator Spaces

# BUILDING PROGRAM



CONCEPT SKETCH OF GRIOT CENTER EXTERIOR

# BUILDING PROGRAM

Programmed Areas by Use Category		
USE	AREA	
GRIOT OFFICES	1,450	SF
ART/ PERFORMANCE/ INSTRUCTION /CLASSROOM	9,203	SF
BUSINESS INCUBATOR SPACE	16,902	SF
LEASABLE TENANT SPACE	1,411	SF
MERAKI COFFEE / GATHERING SPACE	1,038	SF
THEATER / FILM	3,650	SF
GREENSPACE / OUTDOORS	10,646	SF
OPEN / CIRCULATION	3,935	SF
MECHANICAL / BACK OF HOUSE /RESTROOMS	2,805	SF
<b>TOTAL SQUARE FOOTAGE</b>	<b>52,185</b>	<b>SF</b>

Programmed Areas by Floor		
FLOOR	AREA	
FIRST FLOOR	17,128	SF
MEZZANINE	2,680	SF
SECOND FLOOR	9,680	SF
THIRD FLOOR	12,365	SF
FOURTH FLOOR	10,332	SF
<b>TOTAL SQUARE FOOTAGE</b>	<b>52,185</b>	<b>SF</b>

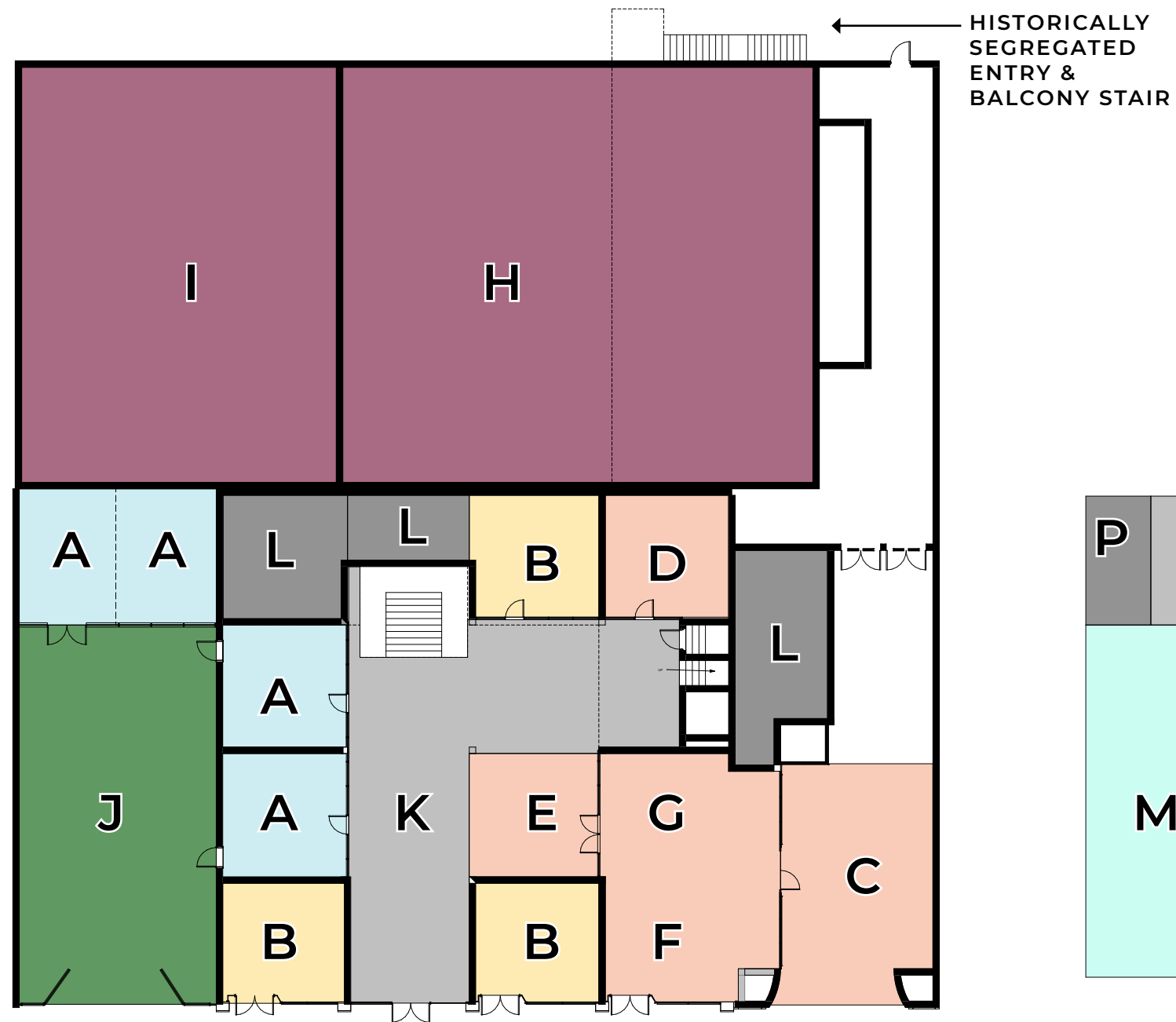


# BUILDING PROGRAM

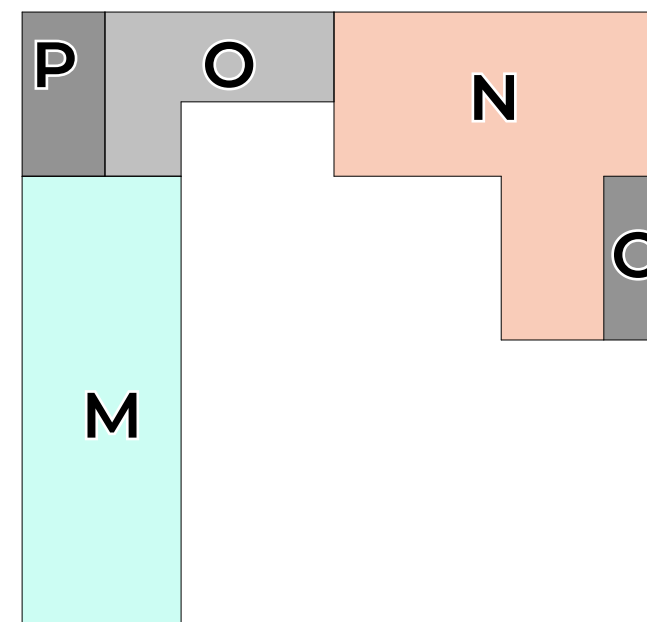


CONCEPT SKETCH OF MERAKI COFFEE OUTDOOR PORCH

# BUILDING PROGRAM



First Floor Plan  
NOT TO SCALE



Mezzanine



# BUILDING PROGRAM

First Floor Program			
KEY	SPACE	AREA	
<b>BUSINESS INCUBATOR SPACE</b>			
A	CUMULATIVE	1,411	SF
<b>LEASABLE TENANT SPACE</b>			
B	CUMULATIVE	1,038	SF
<b>MERAKI COFFEE / GATHERING SPACE</b>			
C	MERAKI - OUTDOOR PORCH SEATING	680	SF
D	MERAKI - ROASTERY	380	SF
E	MERAKI - OPEN SEATING/ TEEN SPACE	370	SF
F	MERAKI - COFFEE SHOP	586	SF
G	MERAKI - FOOD PREP	584	SF
<b>THEATER / FILM</b>			
H	AUDITORIUM	4,640	SF
I	STAGE	3,100	SF
<b>GREENSPACE / OUTDOORS</b>			
J	GATHERING / OPEN SEATING	1,829	SF
<b>OPEN / CIRCULATION</b>			
K	CIRCULATION / LOUNGE	1,570	SF
<b>MECHANICAL / BACK OF HOUSE / RESTROOMS</b>			
L	CUMULATIVE	940	SF
<b>TOTAL FIRST FLOOR</b>		<b>17,128</b>	<b>SF</b>

Mezzanine Program			
KEY	SPACE	AREA	
<b>GRIOT STAFF</b>			
M	MEETING / CONFERENCE / OFFICE STAFF	1,050	SF
<b>MERAKI COFFEE / GATHERING SPACE</b>			
N	OPEN MEETING SPACE / ART GALLERY	1,050	SF
<b>OPEN / CIRCULATION</b>			
O	CIRCULATION / SERVICE	380	SF
<b>MECHANICAL / BACK OF HOUSE / RESTROOMS</b>			
P	MECHANICAL	200	SF
<b>TOTAL MEZZANINE</b>		<b>2,680</b>	<b>SF</b>

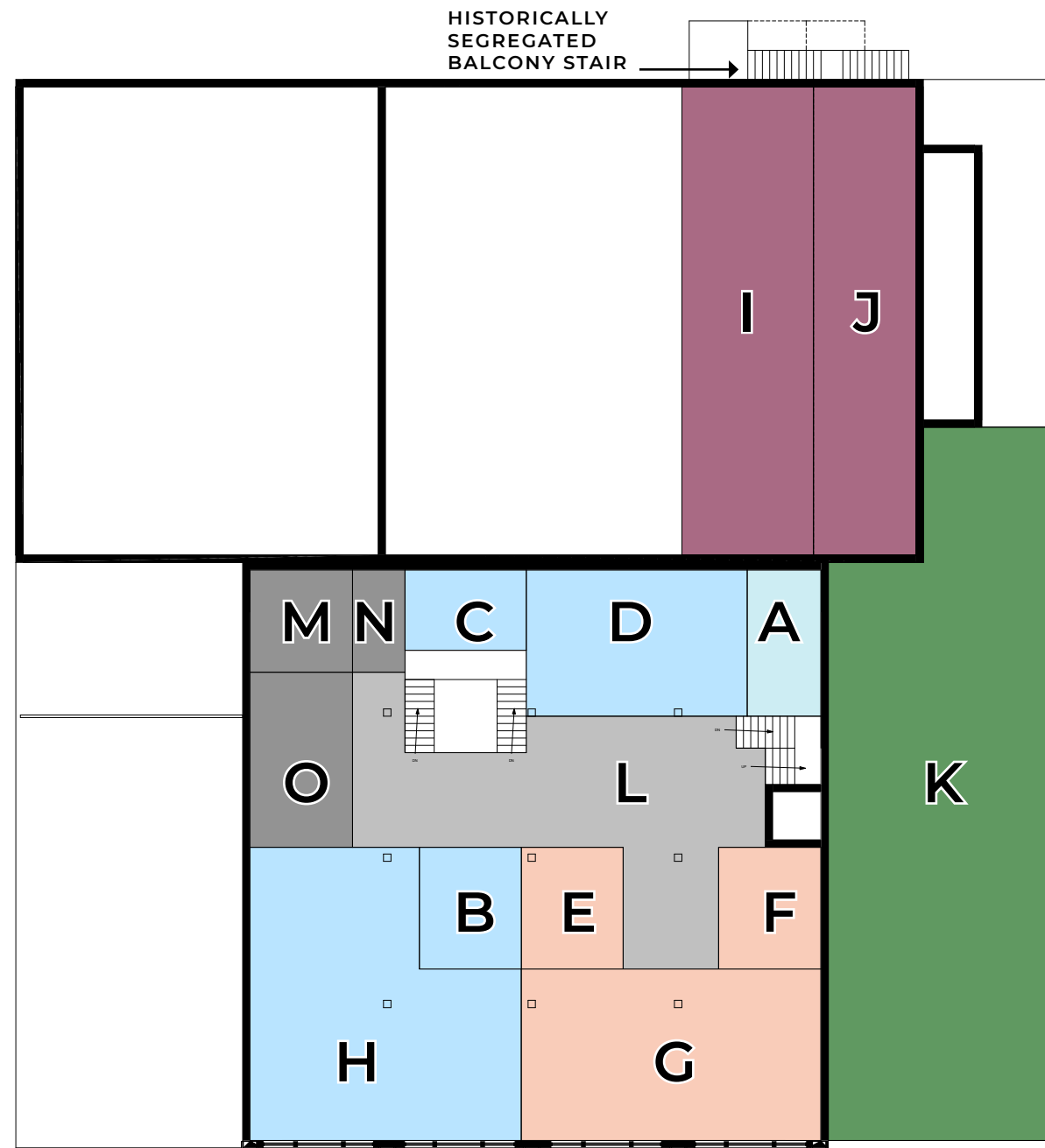
# BUILDING PROGRAM



CONCEPT SKETCH OF FIRST FLOOR AND MEZZANINE INTERIOR



# BUILDING PROGRAM



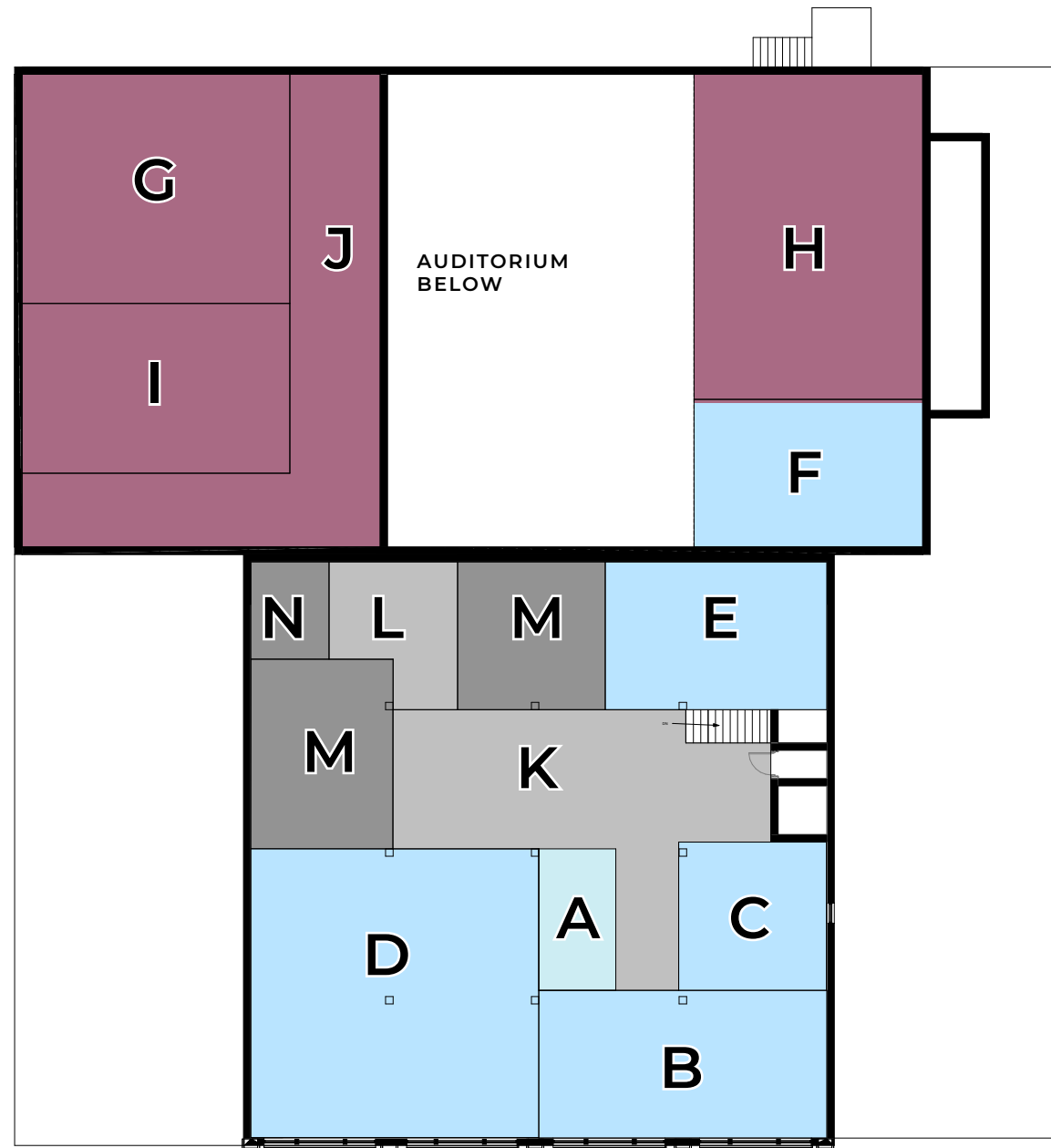
Second Floor Plan

NOT TO SCALE



Second Floor Program			
KEY	SPACE	AREA	
<b>GRIOT OFFICES</b>			
A	BREAK ROOM	200	SF
<b>ART/ PERFORMANCE/INSTRUCTION/ CLASSROOM</b>			
B	PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO	230	SF
C	ART SUPPLY STORE	180	SF
D	LIBRARY/ RESOURCE/ COMPUTER LAB/ DIGITAL LAB	600	SF
E	RECORDING STUDIO	230	SF
F	PRACTICE SPACE	230	SF
G	MULTIPURPOSE REHEARSAL	960	SF
H	ART STUDIOS	1,254	SF
<b>THEATER / FILM</b>			
I	AUDITORIUM BALCONY	1,152	SF
J	PROJECTION/ A/V / CONTROLS	896	SF
<b>GREENSPACE / OUTDOORS</b>			
K	ROOFTOP OUTDOOR HANGOUT / EVENT SPACE	2,733	SF
<b>OPEN / CIRCULATION</b>			
L	CIRCULATION / SERVICE	1,570	SF
<b>MECHANICAL / BACK OF HOUSE / RESTROOMS</b>			
M	MECHANICAL	200	SF
N	STORAGE	100	SF
O	RESTROOMS	335	SF
<b>TOTAL SECOND FLOOR</b>		<b>9,680</b>	<b>SF</b>

# BUILDING PROGRAM



Third Floor Program			
KEY	SPACE	AREA	
<b>GRIOT OFFICES</b>			
A	BREAK ROOM	200	SF
<b>ART/ PERFORMANCE/INSTRUCTION/ CLASSROOM</b>			
B	MEDIUM-SIZED DANCE STUDIO	780	SF
C	SMALL DANCE STUDIO	400	SF
D	LARGE DANCE STUDIO	1,520	SF
E	MEDIUM-SIZED DANCE STUDIO	600	SF
F	COMPUTER LAB/ DIGITAL LAB	619	SF
<b>THEATER / FILM</b>			
G	SET/ DANCE STUDIO	1,503	SF
H	FILM PRODUCTION	1,363	SF
I	DRESSING ROOMS	1,600	SF
J	FLYLOFT/ CATWALK	1,145	SF
<b>OPEN / CIRCULATION</b>			
K	CIRCULATION / LOUNGE SPACE	1,315	
L	STORAGE/ CIRCULATION	290	SF
<b>MECHANICAL / BACK OF HOUSE /RESTROOMS</b>			
M	RESTROOMS /SHOWERS/ CHANGING ROOMS	890	SF
N	MECHANICAL	140	
<b>TOTAL THIRD FLOOR</b>		<b>12,365</b>	<b>SF</b>

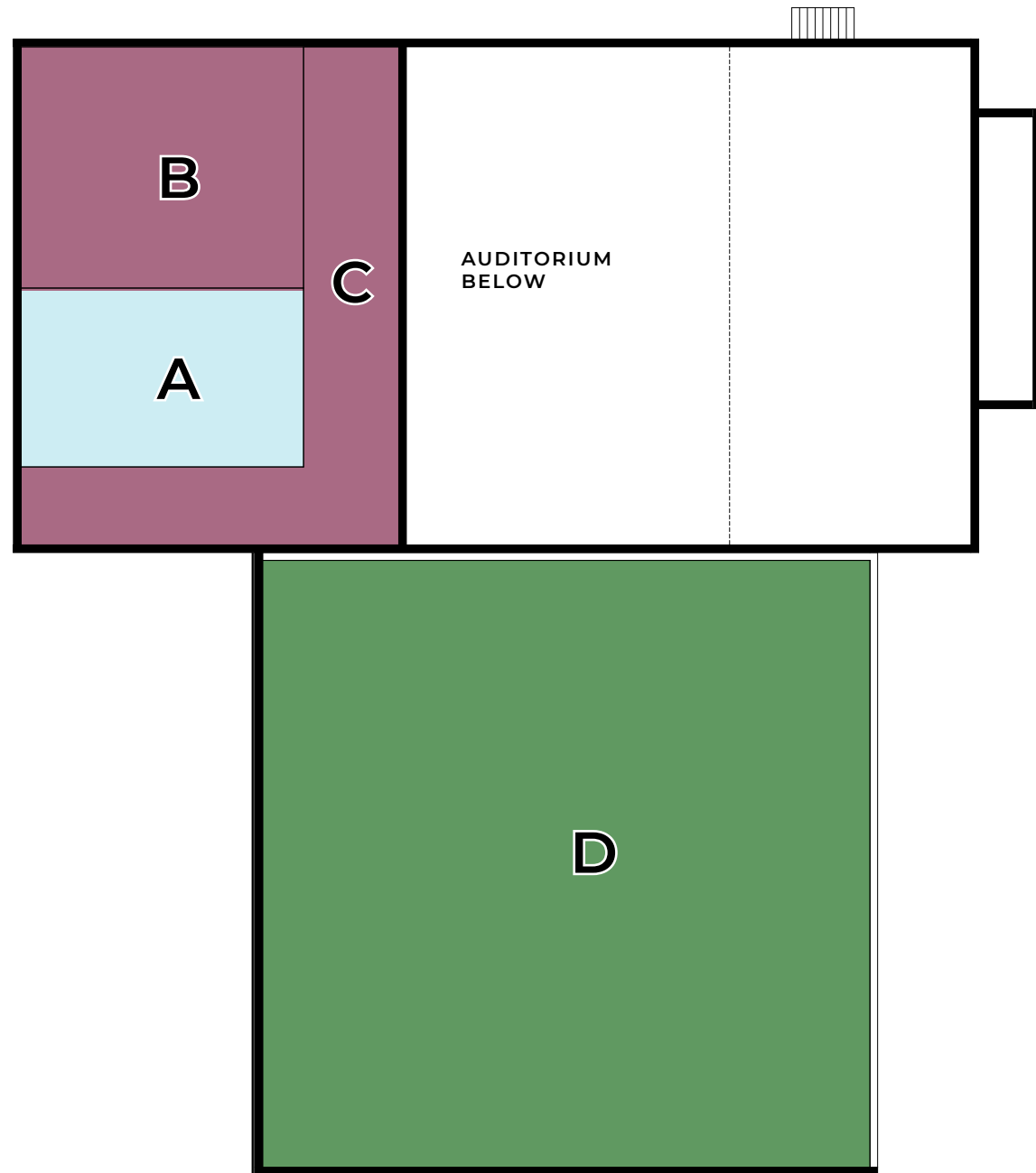
## Third Floor Plan

NOT TO SCALE





# BUILDING PROGRAM



**Fourth Floor Plan**

NOT TO SCALE



Fourth Floor Program			
KEY	SPACE	AREA	
ART/ PERFORMANCE/INSTRUCTION/ CLASSROOM			
A	FUTURE STUDIO EXPANSION	1,600	SF
THEATER / FILM			
B	SET WORKSHOP	1,503	SF
C	FLYLOFT/ CATWALK	1,145	SF
GREENSPACE / OUTDOORS			
D	ROOFTOP OUTDOOR HANGOUT / EVENT SPACE	6,084	SF
<b>TOTAL FOURTH FLOOR</b>		<b>10,332</b>	<b>SF</b>

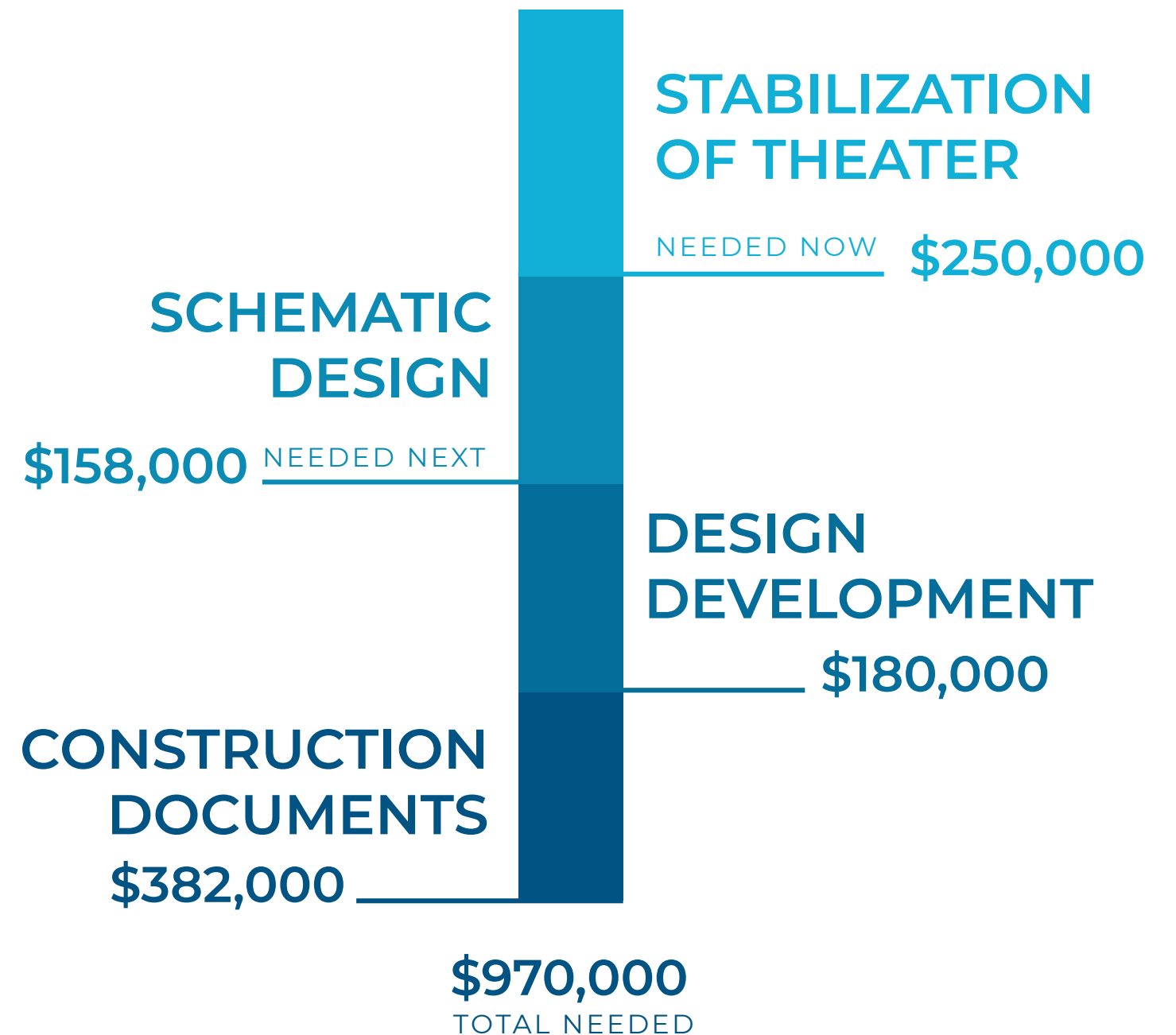
## SECTION 7

# SCHEDULE & BUDGET

Working with the project architects, Griot Arts has identified a preliminary project construction budget of approximately \$17 million, with an additional approximately \$3 million for outfitting the facility for use (furniture, fixtures, and equipment). Current preliminary numbers are based on cost per square foot estimates, and are periodically updated based on the most current information available to the design team. Griot Arts is also in the process of evaluating qualifications of Construction Manager candidates, and anticipates identifying that team in 2022. Once engaged, the Construction Manager team will play a major role in establishing milestone budget updates at the conclusion of each phase of design.

The next phases of design (schematic, design development, and construction documents) are expected to require an 8-12 month time period, once begun. Bidding and Construction are expected to require a 12-24 month time period, once begun.

## PHASE 1 PROJECT & FUNDING TIMELINE





# SCHEDULE & BUDGET

## Construction Costs

FLOOR	AREA		PROJECTED CONSTRUCTION BUDGET
FIRST FLOOR	17,128	SF	\$5,502,712
MEZZANINE	2,680	SF	\$861,003
SECOND FLOOR	9,680	SF	\$3,109,893
THIRD FLOOR	12,365	SF	\$3,972,503
FOURTH FLOOR	10,332	SF	\$3,319,539
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52,185</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>\$16,765,650</b>

## Project Costs

ITEM	PROJECTED BUDGET
CONSTRUCTION BUDGET	\$16,765,650
FURNITURE, FIXTURES, & EQUIPMENT BUDGET	\$3,000,000
SOFT COSTS (DESIGN FEES)*	\$1,123,500
PROPERTY ACQUISITION	\$150,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$21,039,150</b>

## Funding Model

<b>HISTORIC TAX CREDITS</b> <b>\$8.1 MILLION</b> (45% OF PROJECT COSTS, EXCLUDING FFE)	<b>NEW MARKET TAX CREDITS</b> <b>\$8.4 MILLION</b> (EST. 40% OF PROJECT COSTS)	<b>GRANTS</b> <b>\$3 MILLION</b>
		<b>FUNDRAISING</b> <b>\$1.5 MILLION</b>

## SECTION 8

# PARTNERSHIPS

Griot Arts, Inc. is working with historic real estate finance consultant Brantley Snipes to build a pro forma and plan the capital stack that will fund this rehabilitation project. With an initial grant to launch this initiative, Griot Arts has funded the essential first steps of design, including the property inventory, historical research, and community visioning sessions summarized in this document, accounting for approximately 5% of the total effort. The construction of the Griot Center will be funded through a collaboration of sources, including Historic Tax Credits and New Market Tax Credits. However, the use of tax credits will only fund approximately 80% of the project. Griot must raise an estimated \$3 million dollars to supplement the tax credits and move the project forward.

Importantly, immediate funding is needed to stabilize the theater and move forward in the design process, as well as give the hope of progress to a community. As part of the overall budget, Griot Arts needs \$250,000 to undertake the initial steps of building stabilization along with \$720,000 to undertake the design process through construction documents.

Numerous partners have been identified and engaged to assist in planning and funding





# PARTNERSHIPS

for some of these project-related costs. In February 2022, various agency directors and board members from [Mississippi Arts Commission](#), [Mississippi Heritage Trust](#), [Mississippi Department of Archives and History](#), and [Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area](#) gathered at Griot Arts to collaborate on how each organization may work to advance the project's objectives. In subsequent months, additional partnering opportunities with [Delta Regional Authority](#), [USDA Rural Development](#), and others have emerged.







—  —  
**GRIOT**  
— ARTS INC —

 **KUDZU**  
COLLECTIVE

**BRANTLEY SNIPES**  
LANDSCAPE & DESIGN

**thrive**  
INC

**shine**  
INTERIOR DESIGN STUDIO

**nob**  
atd

The  
**Phil Hardin**  
FOUNDATION

*This study was funded by the generous support of The Phil Hardin Foundation*

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