

Admiral Theater Upgrades & Improvements Set To Begin

Historic West Seattle Art Deco Gem Will Remain Open With A Facelift, Expansion & Cinema Technology Improvements

An agreement in principle has been reached between Far Away Entertainment and the owners of the Admiral Theater building in West Seattle to remodel and expand one of Seattle's oldest vintage movie theaters. With planned improvements to begin this fall, the upgrades will protect and preserve the historic heritage and unique interiors of the building that first opened as the Portola Theater in 1919.

Plans for the new theater include an immediate conversion from 35mm film to state-of-the-art digital cinema and Dolby ® Surround Sound plus phased in revisions of the interior floor plan adding two auditoriums (with elevated stadium seating), all-new chairs with cup holders, new carpeting and curtains, new screens (including 3D capability) and improved heating, air conditioning and ventilation.

Additional improvements will also be evident in the restrooms, concessions area and upstairs Crow's Nest Lounge.

According to Jeff Brein, Managing Partner of Bainbridge Island-based Far Away Entertainment, the improvements will be carefully implemented to seamlessly blend into the historically protected building.

"The Admiral is a virtual treasure trove of early Seattle history. The existing architectural features, nautical theme, original artwork of captains and explorers and unique lighting fixtures will be retained. Additionally, and perhaps most exciting, hand-painted historic murals hidden behind curtains for over 35 years will be uncovered and with financial support from grants and the community restored to their original condition," Brein said.

Far Away Entertainment plans to continue working closely with the Southwest Seattle Historical Society on all preservation aspects of the project. The Society led the successful campaign to secure landmark status for the theater 26 years ago.

"We are thrilled by these developments," says Clay Eals, executive director of the Southwest Seattle Historical Society.

"We deeply appreciate the crucial steps that will serve to enhance and revitalize the building's infrastructure and make it possible for this art-deco gem to have a bright future for the community of West Seattle and beyond", said Eals.

Far Away Entertainment will begin the permitting and approval process with City and neighborhood entities and plans a phased opening of new auditoriums in August or September.

“We recognize our responsibility as caretakers of this one-of-a-kind theater and want to be as inclusive as possible to the multiple stakeholders who have helped us along the way with wonderful suggestions on how to preserve and protect the Admiral Theater,” said Dinah Brein who has managed the theater since Far Away Entertainment entered into it’s original lease in 2008.

Plans are to keep the theater open and operating during the upgrades with minimal disruptions to moviegoers.

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Far Away Entertainment owns, manages and leases theaters in Western Washington including The Varsity, The Historic Admiral Theater, Bainbridge Cinemas, The Historic Lynwood Theater (Bainbridge Island), Olympic Cinemas, Stanwood Cinemas, Oak Harbor Cinemas, Anacortes Cinemas and Ocean Shores Cinemas.