

# Patronicity | CASE STUDY

## THE CROSWELL OPERA HOUSE

Public Spaces, Community Places | Adrian, Michigan



## THE PROJECT

Established in 1866, the Croswell Opera House is the oldest theater in Michigan and one of the oldest continuously operating theaters in the United States. The theater is a critical piece preserving Adrian's cultural heritage, a building that has played a pivotal role in the community's history, with programming that's in line with the building's original purpose.

The Croswell hosts professional-caliber productions in a comfortable community theater setting. The high-quality of the productions draws patrons from around southeast Michigan and northwest Ohio. The Croswell also provides educational experiences for area youth interested in the performing arts by exposing them to high standards and giving them an opportunity to work with accomplished professionals in the field.

The Croswell wanted to create a space within the theater to allow for regular community use, activating an underused space in the front façade, bringing the building back to its former use. Before The Croswell was a theater it functioned as the Union Hall, a multi-use gathering space in town for everything from political speeches to livestock auctions. The Union Hall hosted revolutionary speakers such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Frederick Douglass, Thomas Edison, and Elizabeth Kady Stanton.



**"Now people feel so invested in this space, which I think has helped contribute to its success. Donors take pride in coming in and saying, 'This is the place we donated to,' and that contributes to the success and use of our space."**

**Jere Righter, Artistic Director of the Croswell Opera House**



# THE IMPACT



**176  
PATRONS**



**\$54,047  
CROWDFUNDING  
RAISE**



**\$50,000  
CROWDGRANTING  
RAISE**



**\$193,288  
LEVERAGED  
FUNDING**



**\$293,388  
TOTAL PROJECT  
ESTIMATE**

This project was part of a much larger renovation to create a public facing façade and connect with to the existing streetscape of downtown Adrian. The organization came up with the idea for the Heritage Room, going back to its roots as Union Hall, providing a space to host regular public hours and weekly events, such as trivia, yoga, and live music. Using the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's (MEDC) Public Spaces, Community Places crowdgranting program, the gathering space was funded well above the project's goal with 176 patrons coming to support this project.

The Croswell renovation is an anchor that encouraged reinvestment in downtown Adrian, incentivizing restaurants and businesses to open up downtown that knew the space would bring engaged audiences to patronize the area.



**PUBLIC SPACES  
COMMUNITY PLACES**

Public Spaces Community Places (PSCP) is our crowdgranting partnership with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC). This crowdgranting initiative provides matching grant funds to eligible projects that improve public space in the state of Michigan. Projects can receive a matching grant of up to \$50,000 if they reach their crowdfunding goal. Learn more about the program and apply at [www.patronicity.com/puremichigan](http://www.patronicity.com/puremichigan).



**MICHIGAN ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

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