



Starlight improves access for ADA

Posted by Bob Evans

Starlight Undergoes Major ADA Improvements at the Historic Theatre in the Off-Season

The \$3.55 million project, funded through the City of Kansas City, has an expected completion date just in time for the return of live entertainment under the stars.

<https://vimeo.com/507733428/d149d89291>

While the coronavirus pandemic kept audiences away from Starlight for the majority of 2020, construction crews, the Starlight operations department, and the City of Kansas City, Missouri (KCMO), have been busy in this extended off-season. When audiences return to the theatre this summer, they'll notice a number of much-needed Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements throughout the venue identified following a Department of Justice inspection. Starlight strives to be an accessible venue for all audiences, and these upgrades will improve accessibility and the visitor experience for all patrons at Kansas City's oldest and largest performing arts venue.

The fast-tracked, six-month construction project began off-season in October 2020 and will continue through the winter for an anticipated completion date in mid-April 2021, just in

time for next season's shows. This summer, audiences will notice numerous walkways leveled throughout the venue, an increase in the number of ADA and ADA companion seats in Starlight's Producers Circle and Box sections, elevation of the outer Terrace sections to improve sightlines over the Plaza ADA seating, and elevated ADA seating at the Terrace level. New, accessible informational, directional and weather shelter signage will be installed throughout the venue.

The project also includes upgrades to the front of house theatre with an accessibility lift option for production staff. This allows for lowering the equipment to improve visibility and opens more seating in the Terrace section behind the former sound booth. The video booth will also move to be centered within the venue.

"The Starlight ADA improvements project is a great example of using voter-approved GO Bond funds to improve a true community asset," said City Manager Brian Platt. "This investment will not only provide much-needed upgrades to Starlight Theatre but more importantly, make one of our key performing arts centers more accessible for all Kansas Citians."

In April 2017, Kansas City voters overwhelmingly supported an \$800 million capital improvements program to remake the city's infrastructure and invest in public buildings over the next 20 years. KCMO funded the \$3.55 million Starlight ADA improvements project entirely through the General Obligation (GO) Bond Program, GO KC. GO KC also funded the construction of the City's new Kansas City Campus for Animal Care, located just down the street from Starlight in Swope Park. Turner Construction Company is the general contractor on the project for Starlight. For more information and updates about GO KC infrastructure improvements, please visit www.kcmo.gov/gokc.

With construction scheduled for completion in mid-April, Starlight leadership and staff plan to present a safe summer under the stars in 2021. While a number of changes have

occurred to touring Broadway productions, Starlight's President & CEO, Rich Baker, is working with numerous professional venues across the country to bring Broadway to Kansas City this summer. The new 2021 Broadway season is set to be announced soon.

Visit kcstarlight.com or call 816-363-7827 for more information or to purchase tickets to live or streaming shows. Check out Starlight@Home for a number of digital show offerings, streaming suggestions, and educational content. Follow Starlight on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter @kcstarlight.

About Starlight

Opened as a theatre in 1950 and a nonprofit organization in 1951, Starlight is the largest and oldest performing arts institution in Kansas City and provides inspiring, one-of-a-kind experiences to its patrons. Starlight presents and produces Broadway musicals, concerts, and Indoors shows in addition to offering extensive community outreach and educational programming, including classes, scholarships, and Starlight's Blue Star Awards, one of the largest high school musical theatre award programs in the nation.

Located on 16 acres in Swope Park, Starlight's historic, city-owned venue is the second-largest outdoor producing theatre in the country and includes rehearsal halls, a museum, club area for dining, concessions, gardens, fountains, and a 10-story, climate-controlled stage. For more information, visit kcstarlight.com.

About The City of Kansas City, Missouri

The City of Kansas City, Missouri, is the city of fountains, boulevards, jazz, and barbeque with world-class arts and world champion teams. Strong neighborhoods are home to a half-million residents across more than 300 square miles. We are a UNESCO Creative City of Music, we are expanding the most

successful modern streetcar system in the country, and a new airport terminal is under construction. Our elected officials and professional staff work together to provide approximately 400 city services through nationally-certified and award-winning departments and programs.