

MEDIA RELEASE

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Extension packs a punch for Theatre shows

A big program of local and travelling productions means the show will go on, as a \$12.75 million extension of the Townsville Civic Theatre goes into full swing.

The theatre program will include 75 shows up to the end of this year, including OzOpera performances of *Madame Butterfly* on August 4-5.

However the show stealer is the major extension of the Civic Theatre which is being funded jointly by the Townsville City Council and the State Government through Queensland's 150th Legacy Infrastructure Program.

The extension will transform the theatre into a modern, multi-purpose arts centre that will encourage far greater community use.

New facilities include a new rehearsal space, function room, meeting room and kitchen, more space for technical staff, workshop, additional toilet facilities, lift access to the two upper doors, improved disability access and improved box office and administration area.

Lifestyle and Community Development Committee chair Cr Jenny Lane said the extensions would provide a higher level of support for the performing arts in Townsville.

"Arts groups, schools and theatre goers are greatly anticipating the new facilities," Cr Lane said.

"The Civic Theatre has a great history as one of the best venues in the State after 30 years of operation and thousands of shows.

"I'm delighted the extensions will give the theatre a new lease on life and importantly provide much needed additional facilities to complement the Riverway Arts Centre in supporting the performing arts in our local community."

The new facilities are expected to come online early next year.

More than 160 performances are held each year at the Townsville Civic Theatre, attracting a total of more than 120,000 patrons.

This year's public program uses the 1000-seat lyric-style auditorium at the theatre and the more intimate, flexible black-box space at Riverway Arts Centre which accommodates 300.

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