

Theater District Improvement, Inc. 2018 Accomplishments

- Starting the day after Hurricane Harvey, Theater District engaged in frequent meetings, which occurred daily for the first three months. These meetings were daily construction updates in various phases. The first three months were a period of strictly discovery, learning the extent of the damage and actions required for repair. Following the discovery period, the conversations were on FEMA regulations, timelines in which reconstruction was planned, and often had to revise these plans due to the discovery of more damage as construction began. Theater District kept the resident organizations informed of the status of the theaters, especially Wortham Theater Center, which took over a year to reopen, as well as the visiting organizations who typically perform in the Theater District venues. Theater District also monitored this progress closely, attending not only the construction meetings, but Houston First Board meetings and our own Theater District meetings to develop plans and strategies for a successful return for Theater District Open House and the 2018-2019 season. The resident organizations worked at various individual's homes and whenever needed, whether that was night or weekends, to not only help with their own losses and the losses of those around them, but also rearranged a successful 2017-2018 season. Everyone's season needed to be rearranged, some marketed a Hometown Tour, and others had to build a new theater, the Resilience Theater, inside the George R. Brown Convention Center, while moving their office locations multiple times. It was important for Theater District to continue operations, despite the setbacks, to provide comfort and entertainment to their patrons and continue to show resilience and strength of the Houston Community.
- Celebrated the 25th Annual Theater District Open House ("TDOH") and the first time the public could enter all the Theater District venues since Hurricane Harvey in 2017. A new website, logo and digital marketing plan was launched so Theater District Open House could reach more individuals and provide a more comprehensive and user-friendly website for day of plans. Theater District Houston also completed the first audience survey of attendees in the history of Open House. With the findings from 1,200 surveys, Theater District can identify the needs of the attendees and strategically develop plans to continue evolving the free community event that offers short performances, back stage tours, meet and greets, and hands on educational experiences, such as the Houston Symphony's Instrument Petting Zoo. The 2018 Theater District Open House also exceeded \$500,000 in combined ticket and subscription sales, an eleven percent increase, which provides entertainment to individuals and families, but also revenue that will strengthen our own local economy. Additionally, local food trucks reported revenue over \$45,000 that went to support their operations.
- Theater District approached, discussed and sponsored the side walk piano art installation outside of Jones Hall that was up during August and September. This art installation, which helped launch the 25th Theater District Open House, created vibrancy and encouraged activity outside of Jones Hall. It was so well received, that the installation's timeframe was extended to the opening night of the Houston Symphony's 2018-2019 season.
- Launched a new and independent Theater District Houston website, which will educate visitors on our mission and role as a cultural district, in addition to promoting the seven resident organizations with descriptions and direct links to their pages. This website will continue to evolve based on the needs of the public, as well as providing more insight on the impact of the cultural district and the businesses and organizations within the 17- block Theater District. This will be an additional resource to the district's informational page on downtownhouston.org, which highlights information on the venues and overall performance calendars.
- Emphasized social media content to focus on the accomplishments of the resident organizations as we continued to update the public on the various efforts the organizations pursued to continue their 2017-2018 seasons. Highlighted the news stories on the Theater District, individuals that work within the district, and our community partners. Continued to create content for the Downtown Magazine that aligned with the initiatives our organizations pursued that impact the surrounding Houston area and introduce the new members of the Theater District on a more personal basis.
- Participated on the Jones Plaza Redevelopment committee. This committee was responsible for surveying, drafting, and selecting a firm that identified the vision of Jones Plaza. The committee reviewed and scored 27 RFPs, interviewed the top 5 firms, and selected the design firm responsible for the redevelopment of Jones Plaza. After the selection, the committee worked with the firm to expand the proposal, highlighting details such as the parking garage, accessibility into and throughout the plaza, and creating performance space for performing arts, community events, preconcert shows, and temporary public art.