

**2008 “Excellence in Downtown Revitalization” Award Winner****Princess Theater renovation transforms downtown Prosser****Project Overview**

Built in 1919, the Princess Theatre is a historical landmark for the City of Prosser. It began as a modest venue that lured crowds downtown with events ranging from boxing matches, to Vaudeville acts, to motion pictures. However, like many small town theatres across the country, the Princess struggled to survive with the arrival of multiplex cinemas. The owners finally closed their doors in the 1980’s and foot traffic declined in the downtown district.

After sitting vacant for nearly 20 years, a long-time Prosser family purchased the Princess Theatre with a noble goal in mind — to spark new investment and pride in downtown. The owners decided to turn the theatre into an art deco style performing arts center after an extensive business planning and community input process.

The first step was to stabilize the building and remove debris from the facility and layers of tin from the former projection room. New HVAC, fire alarm, and fire suppression systems were installed. The owners opened the former projection room to create a private box seating area, added stadium seating, removed a wall to create a functional concession area, and modified the former men’s room for use as a “tap” room. They focused on “green” building practices and kept as much original material as possible.

**Funding**

The renovation project was accomplished in eight and a half months on a budget of \$350,000. Volunteers worked extensively during the renovation to encourage community ownership of the project.

**The Result**

Since reopening, the Princess has hosted a wide variety of live performances and films. Downtown foot traffic is also on the upswing. Two new restaurants opened, other property owners are renovating their buildings, and existing businesses are showing increased profits.



*Princess Theater’s art-deco interior*

*Contact the Historic Downtown Prosser Association at 509-786-3600 for more information.*