

Section 1. Project Description - a.

1. Cultural Institution: The Opera House, built in the 1890's, has, since its inception, been used for promoting cultural and recreational activities. Many years ago Slout Players, Chautauquas, musical groups, and little theater groups, performed in the Opera House. The Slout Players was a local tent show group that was based in Vermontville and provided considerable entertainment for areas not only in Michigan, but other states as well. There is memorabilia concerning tent shows that can be housed in the Opera House. A resource center for tent shows would be a valuable asset for researchers of early theatrical history. Our motive is to make the building more functional for the community so that once more it can be used as a cultural, educational and historical center. The Syrup Festival Association promotes the Vermontville Syrup Festival on the last weekend in April and there is a real need for the association to use this building at that time to help accommodate the very large crowds that congregate from all corners of this state and adjoining states. A Fine Arts Council will be established to help provide coordination for the above activities. This council will be made up of individuals from various organizations.
2. Historical Projects: The Opera House is a Michigan Historical Site and it is felt that restoration of the Opera House is both valid and valuable as it would serve our area well as a cultural, educational and historical meeting place. Memorabilia from Slout Players and other activities related to the Opera House would be exhibited in this building under the direction of a Fine Arts Council.
3. Tourism Facilities: The interest in Maple Syrup production and related activities, such as the Vermontville Syrup Festival, brings many visitors from the entire state and its surrounding area to Vermontville. The visitors are very interested in the Opera House and place it on their agenda. Home talent plays are presented during the festival for tourist enjoyment.
4. Libraries: The first floor of the Opera House contains the Vermontville Township Public Library. This library serves both Vermontville and Kalamo Townships.