

# Economic Development Commission Item

July 8, 2025



|                    |                                                                                                                                            |                     |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Subject</b>     | Tamara Kangas Erickson, President and Artistic Director, and Joel Rainville, Director of Marketing and Sales - Chanhassen Dinner Theatres. |                     |
| <b>Section</b>     | <b><u>VISITOR PRESENTATIONS</u></b>                                                                                                        | <b>Item No:</b> D.1 |
| <b>Prepared By</b> | Sam DiMaggio, Economic Development Manager                                                                                                 | <b>File No:</b>     |

## **SUMMARY**

Tamara Kangas Erickson, President and Artistic Director, and Joel Rainville, Director of Marketing and Sales - Chanhassen Dinner Theatres (CDT), will give a presentation on the CDT, which is one of the oldest and largest employers in Chanhassen, and will then give a tour of the facility.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Tamara Kangas Erickson - President and Artistic Director**

Tamara Kangas Erickson is the newly named President and Artistic Director of Chanhassen Dinner Theatres. She has served as Resident Choreographer since 2004 and has proudly choreographed over 40 Main Stage productions. Tamara became part of the CDT family in 1981 when she appeared as Marta Von Trapp in The Sound of Music. Also at CDT - Fireside: Respect (Director/Choreographer), Altar Boyz (Choreographer); Playhouse: The Musical of Musicals: The Musical (Director/Choreographer). Off-Broadway: This One's for the Girls (Director/Choreographer); Artistry: Little Women, The Broadway Musical (Director/Choreographer); National Tour: Sesame Street Live Can't Stop Singing (Choreographer). Tamara was named "Outstanding Choreographer" (2005, 2006 and 2008) by the Star Tribune for Singin' in the Rain, West Side Story and 42nd Street and received an Ivey Award in 2008 for her choreography in 42nd Street.

### **Joel Rainville - Director of Marketing and Sales**

Joel Rainville is the Director of Marketing and Sales at Chanhassen Dinner Theatres (CDT), a position he has held since January 2013. He was promoted to this leadership role after joining CDT as Marketing Manager in May 2012. With over two decades of experience in strategic marketing, brand development, and audience engagement, Joel has played a key role in driving ticket sales and expanding community outreach for one of the nation's premier dinner theatre destinations. Prior to his time at CDT, he held progressive marketing roles at the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts in Saint Paul, MN. Joel is passionate about connecting audiences with unforgettable live entertainment experiences and continues to shape CDT's public presence and patron relationships. He is also active in the National

Dinner Theatre Association and the National Independent Venue Association, and serves on the boards of two Twin Cities nonprofit organizations.

## **Background – Chanhassen Dinner Theatres**

Chanhassen Dinner Theatres (CDT) is one of the City of Chanhassen's most significant cultural and economic assets. Founded in 1968 by Herbert and Carolyn Bloomberg, CDT was born from the couple's vision to bring "a little bit of Broadway to the Midwest." What began as a 90,000-square-foot entertainment complex in a rural town of fewer than 500 residents has since become the largest professional dinner theatre in the United States.

Today, CDT is a cornerstone of Chanhassen's identity and economy. The theatre draws approximately 300,000 annual visitors, making it a key driver of tourism and a major contributor to local commerce. CDT consistently ranks among the city's top employers and plays a vital role in supporting the hospitality, retail, and service sectors throughout the community. Its performances attract patrons from across the region, elevating Chanhassen's profile as a cultural destination and enhancing the overall quality of life for residents.

Beyond its economic contributions, CDT has a longstanding commitment to artistic excellence and community engagement. The theatre provides steady employment for performers, technicians, and hospitality professionals, and it supports a broad ecosystem of local businesses. CDT also serves as a hub for live entertainment, hosting not only Broadway-style musicals but also concerts, comedy shows, and private events.

For more than five decades, Chanhassen Dinner Theatres has embodied the spirit of its founders, offering world-class entertainment, fostering community pride, and helping shape Chanhassen into the vibrant city it is today.

## **DISCUSSION**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

As this is a visitor presentation, no formal action is required.

## **ATTACHMENTS**