

State Of Maryland

2026 Bond Initiative Fact Sheet

1. Name Of Project		
Arena Players, Inc - API Capital Renovation		
2. Senate Sponsor	3. House Sponsor	
Hayes	Conaway	
4. Jurisdiction (County or Baltimore City)	5. Requested Amount	
Baltimore City	\$300,000	
6. Purpose of Bond Initiative		
the acquisition, planning, design, construction, expansion, repair, renovation, reconstruction, site improvement, and capital equipping of the Arena Players, Inc. (API) Capital Renovation project		
7. Matching Fund		
Requirements:	Type:	
Grant		
8. Special Provisions		
<input type="checkbox"/> Historical Easement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Sectarian	
9. Contact Name and Title	Contact Ph#	Email Address
Catherine Orange		443-825-5508
10. Description and Purpose of Organization (Limit length to visible area)		
<p>Arena Players, Inc. (API) is the oldest continuously operating African-American community theater in the US. From its humble beginnings in 1953, by a small group of ambitious fledgling actors, API has a proud history of community service and outstanding dramatic achievements. APIs mission is to entertain, educate, and serve the Baltimore community. We nurture and give growth to new and established artists while boldly illuminating the African-American experience through the performing arts. API produces 6 - 10 mainstage productions per year, provides a youth theater program for those 4.5 - 18 years old, and provides support and training to new playwrights and aspiring performers. Through our work, API broadens opportunities for Baltimore youth to participate in the dramatic arts and provides cultural enrichment for both the Black community and the overall community.</p>		

11. Description and Purpose of Project (Limit length to visible area)

Since 1962, API has made its home at 801 McCulloh St. In 1969, API purchased the building, and in the 1970s, API made masonry additions to the north, three stories, and the south, one story. Since that time, there has been no holistic capital investment in the space. Through the API Capital Renovation project, the facility will be holistically renovated for the first time in 50+ years, dramatically increasing the quality and accessibility of the facility and maximizing flexibility to enhance performance, education, community, and administrative uses. Notable project outcomes will include significant accessibility upgrades, modernizations to A/V and lighting technology, more efficient and versatile instructional and rehearsal spaces, and reduced operational costs.

Round all amounts to the nearest \$1,000. The totals in Items 12 (Estimated Capital Costs) and 13 (Proposed Funding Sources) must match. The proposed funding sources must not include the value of real property unless an equivalent value is shown under Estimated Capital Costs.

12. Estimated Capital Costs

Acquisition	\$0
Design	\$765,000
Construction	\$6,241,000
Equipment	\$100,000
Total	\$7,106,000

13. Proposed Funding Sources - (List all funding sources and amounts.)

Maryland State Legislative Bond Initiative - Pending	\$300,000
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (H	\$4,000,000
Maryland Consolidated Capital Bond Loan - 2019 - Awar	\$300,000
Maryland Consolidated Capital Bond Loan - 2020 - Awar	\$100,000
Maryland Consolidated Capital Bond Loan - 2022 - Awar	\$1,200,000
Abell Foundation - Awarded	\$250,000
Maryland State Arts Council Capital Project Funding - Re	\$300,000
France-Merrick Foundation - Pending	\$150,000
Middendorf Foundation - Pending	\$50,000
Additional prospects including individual donations, Afric	\$456,000
Total	\$7,106,000

14. Project Schedule (Enter a date or one of the following in each box. N/A, TBD or Complete)			
Begin Design	Complete Design	Begin Construction	Complete Construction
Completed	Completed	August 2026	January 2027
15. Total Private Funds and Pledges Raised	16. Current Number of People Served Annually at Project Site	17. Number of People to be Served Annually After the Project is Complete	
250000.00	3,120 audience members +	4,440 audience members +	
18. Other State Capital Grants to Recipients in the Past 15 Years			
Legislative Session	Amount	Purpose	
2019	\$300,000	Planning, design, construction, renovation,	
2020	\$100,000	Planning, design, construction, renovation,	
2022	\$1,200,000	Planning, design, construction, renovation,	
19. Legal Name and Address of Grantee		Project Address (If Different)	
Arena Players Incorporated 801 McCulloh St. Baltimore, MD 21201			
20. Legislative District in Which Project is Located	40 - Baltimore City		
21. Legal Status of Grantee (Please Check One)			
Local Govt.	For Profit	Non Profit	Federal
[]	[]	[X]	[]
22. Grantee Legal Representative		23. If Match Includes Real Property:	
Name:	Larry Young, Chair of the Board	Has An Appraisal Been Done?	Yes/No
Phone:	443-839-3246		
Address:		If Yes, List Appraisal Dates and Value	
801 McCulloh St. Baltimore, MD 21201			

24. Impact of Project on Staffing and Operating Cost at Project Site			
Current # of Employees	Projected # of Employees	Current Operating Budget	Projected Operating Budget
20	25	261000.00	300000.00
25. Ownership of Property (Info Requested by Treasurer's Office for bond purposes)			
A. Will the grantee own or lease (pick one) the property to be improved?			Own
B. If owned, does the grantee plan to sell within 15 years?			No
C. Does the grantee intend to lease any portion of the property to others?			No
D. If property is owned by grantee any space is to be leased, provide the following:			
Lessee	Terms of Lease	Cost Covered by Lease	Square Footage Leased
E. If property is leased by grantee - Provide the following:			
Name of Leaser	Length of Lease	Options to Renew	
26. Building Square Footage:			
Current Space GSF	19,734		
Space to be Renovated GSF	8,761		
New GSF	0		

27. Year of Construction of Any Structures Proposed for Renovation, Restoration or Conversion

original building pre-1900; addition 1976

28. Comments

With an annual budget of less than \$300,000, Arena Players Inc. (API) is led by by an all-volunteer administrative staff, who produce 6+ plays per year, provide summer and school-year out-of-school time programming for more than 60 young people, and more.

Key leadership includes Catherine Orange, an API board member and longtime volunteer, who serves as both the operations manager and youth theater director for API; as well as Donald Owens, who has been APIs artistic director since 2007. Additional key volunteer staff include Charlene Williamson, assistant youth theater director; Felicia Chapple, production manager; Victoria Jackson, resident designer/costumer; Coreythia Arrington, house manager; Sandra Meekins, resident stage manager; and Tracey Orange, Tony Rodgers, and Dion Fludd, building maintenance. In total, API has 10 volunteer, part-time staff members.

In addition to volunteer staff, API hires contractual artists to work as Youtheatre instructors, including dance teachers, speech coaches, and production technology instructors. Contractual musicians and designers are often hired to support mainstage productions as well. The number of contractors varies from project to project.

In question 24, the current number of paid staff is listed as 20, and future projected employees is 25. Since paid employees are primarily contractual, however, this number varies from project to project and year to year for this small team. With the renovation, API does hope to secure at least one paid administrative staff member in the coming years, in addition to contractual staff.