

Gas City

such as plays, musicals, and recitals. In addition, the city plans to hire someone who will be in charge of bringing in live entertainment and musical groups from all over the world across a variety of genres.

“This is an exciting thing,” Mississinewa Community Schools Superintendent Tab McKenzie said. “This is a great opportunity for our kids and for our staff. Mississinewa, even though it’s the second largest district in Grant County, it’s the smallest geographically, so the location of this project makes it accessible to the entire community and surrounding area.

“We have big dreams that this project is of a quality that we can attract national performances and people who are nationally recognized in entertainment and in theatrics and bring that level of culture

Art

He said the building owners will not participate in the content selection because “these are not commission pieces. We want the artists to have great flexibility, to have a lot of freedom to

express themselves and tell the story they want to tell.”

The cost of the project will be borne by the artists and money raised through donations and grants.

Reece said he has spoken with city officials, but emphasized that municipal government is not involved in the selection or approval.

“Street art is a whole culture,” he said. He

cited Miami, Fla., as a location where street art is thriving. “It is more than just the art. It is clothing and food and music and a whole way of life.”

“We will have some truly marquee walls in Marion, and the art is going to cover about 20,000 square feet over the 10 locations.”

He acknowledged that the widespread presence of murals may be controversial.

“There are going to be some people who love it and some not like it at all. For most people in Marion urban art is new, and like any art there are going to be people who become converts and

cess with this auditorium, and you are going to be proof to the rest of the state that they, too, can achieve that kind of success when you come together and work together.

“This is only the beginning for Gas City.”

While Tuesday’s groundbreaking was only the first step, Rock is confident that the Gas City Auditorium will be incredibly beneficial to not only Gas City, but to Grant County as a whole.

“We are going to do it right, no matter how long it takes us,” Rock said. “It’s going to be something we are going to be proud of way after I’m gone, and people can enjoy this for years to come. Once this opens and we start getting good performances, we are going to see a lot of things popping up that we probably never even dreamed could pop up.”



Gas City community leaders taking part in the groundbreaking ceremony. Photo by Sean Douglas

and entertainment experience to our own community. I’m proud to be associated with this.”

With a 2,500 person capacity, the auditorium de-

sign incorporates one large stage, several balconies, and multiple entrances and exits for an exhilarating and streamlined entertainment experience.

“What’s so incredible about this project is the collaboration and the partnership that went into making this happen,” Indiana Lieutenant Governor Suzanne

Crouch said. “Built by the city, but going to be run by the schools, that’s an incredible example of why things work in Indiana. You’re achieving great suc-

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some who will resist it.

Reece, a Marion native who lived in Boston and Miami for many years before returning to Marion several years ago, said “I am a huge believer in public art and urban art.”

“Public art is amazing. It can change lives. We’re trying to make art available, art that is simply there.

“I love art that really pulls people into the medium. A work that is 120 feet long is going to pull people into it,” he said.

The November weekend as it is scheduled will include painting at all of the locations and there will be live music throughout the day in the courtyard space on the Courthouse Square.



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