



**Front - Title/Description**

***The Strand***

On April 21, 1921, this building opened as the Strand Theater and Arcade. The two thousand-seat theater boasted one of the largest vaudeville stages in the state and a screen for viewing motion pictures. The building was the pride of theater mogul Walter J. Butterfield and one of three hundred theaters created by Chicago architect John Eberson, who designed the interior in a French theme with a blue sky and filmy clouds painted on the ceiling. The arcade's office suites, bowling alleys, ballroom and fourteen stores, including the Cinderella Tea Shop and the Palace of Sweets Candy Shop, made the arcade one of Lansing's most distinctive commercial spaces. In 1941 the theater was renovated and renamed the Michigan. It closed in 1980.

**Significant Date:**

Two World Wars and the Depression (1915-1945)

**Registry Year:** 1983    **Erected Date:** 2001

**Marker Location**

**Address:** 211-219 Washington Square

**City:** Lansing

**State:** MI    **ZipCode:**

**County:** Ingham

**Township:** Lansing

**Lat:** 42.73200600 / **Long:** -84.55213000

**Web URL:**

**Back - Title/Description**

***Theater District***

As early as the 1870s Washington Avenue was the center of Lansing's theater district. In 1921 the marquee lights glowed for the first time here at the Strand, which joined the Bijou, the Colonial, the Empress, the Garden, the Orpheum, the Vaudette, the Plaza and the Gladmer in featuring vaudeville and motion pictures. In 1927 the first "talkie," The Jazz Singer, opened at the Capitol Theater (formerly the Empress) heralding the end of vaudeville. Owners rushed to equip their theaters for sound. During the 1970s multiplexes drew audiences away from downtown theaters. The Strand, renamed the Michigan in 1941, closed in 1980. The theater was demolished and the arcade renovated for office space, but the ornate facade remains as a reminder of the city's once glittering theater district.