



New Performing Arts Facility

Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI)

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July 12, 2023

Date of RFEI Release

August 11, 2023

Proposals Due

August 2023

Property short list announced and interviews

August 2023

Up to three properties selected for further study

SUBMISSION PROCESS

Proposals should be emailed to both:

Karl Lisle

External Partnerships
and Programs Manager
City of Portland
Office of Management
and Finance
karl.lisle@portlandoregon.gov

Lauren Broudy

Spectator Venues
Program Coordinator
City of Portland
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The City of Portland is exploring the availability of potential sites for a new performing arts venue. This Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) invites submissions by interest-holding parties for properties which could be suitable for this use.

About this Request

For over 100 years, the [Keller Auditorium](#) has been one of Portland's largest and most popular performing arts venues, hosting nearly 400,000 guests each year and providing the only local space for large-scale performances such as Broadway productions, ballet, operas and more. Like many older civic buildings, the Keller was not built to withstand a major earthquake. A [2020 seismic report](#) provides a preliminary analysis of structural renovations needed to meet modern safety standards at the venue. Upgrades are also needed to improve guest amenities, backstage facilities and mechanical and production systems, to ensure large-scale productions can continue into the future. Along with four other venues, the Keller Auditorium is owned by the City of Portland and operated by the [Portland's 5 Centers for the Arts](#) (part of [Metro](#)) under the oversight of the [Metropolitan Exposition and Recreation Commission](#).

In 2022, the City of Portland and Metro contributed funds to a privately led effort to explore a renovation plan for the existing site with seismic and structural improvements, along with safety, accessibility and production efficiency upgrades, which meet current codes, all at the current venue location. This work builds on an earlier design competition aimed at reimagining the existing facility and is currently underway, scheduled for completion in late summer, 2023.

Concurrently, the City of Portland would like to examine possibilities for the development of a new large-scale performing arts venue, ensuring a comprehensive assessment of options for Keller Auditorium's future that address the operational needs of the users (e.g., clients, performers, staff and guests). While renovation or replacement of the building on-site are two obvious options, a third option, building anew in an alternative location, is being considered as it would allow continuous operations and may present other opportunities not possible on the current site.

The City is considering all modes of partnership opportunities for the potential new site: purchase, lease and/or co-development. The opportunity to become an anchor tenant to a larger development and generate millions of dollars in economic impact to our region is both exciting and trailblazing.

Next Steps

The City may select up to three sites that meet the minimum requirements for further evaluation and conceptual design work to evaluate feasibility.

The privately led effort to propose a Keller Auditorium renovation design on the current site will be completed by late summer 2023.

The renovation design will be paired with the list of properties that could serve as potential sites for a new large-scale performing arts facility to provide City leaders a comprehensive set of options for exploring the future of performing arts in Portland.

Working with Metro and the Portland's Centers for the Performing Arts, the City of Portland Spectator Venues Program will manage the solicitation, evaluation and selection process.

Funding to construct a project has not been identified at this time. This RFEI is not intended as a formal offering, award or guarantee of participation in a future solicitation.

Site Requirements

The following site attributes are considered ideal for a new large performing arts venue:

- Sites of at least two acres in area with approximate dimensions of at least 260 feet by 350 feet available for the building footprint. The venue will not comfortably fit on a typical Portland city block (200 feet by 200 feet).
- Robust access to mass transit and bike parking.
- Sufficient vehicle parking within walking distance, or sufficient space to construct onsite parking.
- Truck access and loading and a passenger vehicle loading/drop-off zone(s).
- Sites located within [Portland's Central City](#) are preferred.

Facility Parameters

The following are rough parameters for the program of a new large performing arts venue:

- Over 200,000 square feet of floor area
- Seating capacity of 2,800-3,000 patrons
- Stage with orchestra pit and rigging capable of large-format performances including Broadway shows, concerts, ballet and opera productions
- Loading dock capable of handling at least two (preferably three) full-sized trucks simultaneously
- Back of house with dressing rooms, rehearsal space, production spaces and necessary storage for large scale theatrical productions
- Front of house amenities including spacious lobbies, restaurant, pre-function spaces, restrooms, reception spaces, coat check, guest services and bars

Submission Criteria

Interested parties should submit a letter of interest no longer than three (3) pages outlining:

- (1) Map or site plan to convey the location of the property proposed as a site for a potential facility;
- (2) Basic site characteristics (site area, access, parking availability, known development constraints);
- (3) A brief narrative of the site's positive attributes describing how a performing arts center might fit on the site and benefit the surrounding area; and
- (4) Description of site ownership or development control of the proposed location and indication of preference on selling or leasing of the land. Please identify all parties with controlling interest in the property. Documentation of control may be requested at a later date.

Timeline

The following schedule outlines key dates and milestones:

DATE	KEY MILESTONES
July 12, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Date of RFEI Release
August 11, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proposals due by email to both: karl.lisle@portlandoregon.gov and lauren.broudy@portlandoregon.gov
August 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Up to 3 proposals selected for interviews with City of Portland staff
August through December 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Selected proposer(s) can expect to work with the City on concept feasibility

All questions and inquiries related to this RFEI can be directed in writing by email to:

Lauren Broudy

Spectator Venues Program Coordinator

City of Portland

Office of Management and Finance

lauren.broudy@portlandoregon.gov