



Keller Auditorium

EXPLORING THE FUTURE OF AN ICONIC PORTLAND VENUE

Portlanders have packed the Keller Auditorium since 1917 to see Broadway shows, operas, ballets and civic events. As the owner and operator of this iconic performing arts space, the City of Portland and Metro are teaming up to make sure it is safe – and successful – in the future.

The Keller plays an essential role in Portland’s arts community, providing the only local space for large-scale performances. It generates half the revenue for Metro’s Portland’s theaters – helping make smaller, local productions feasible, affordable and accessible.

Like most older civic buildings, the Keller was not built to withstand a major earthquake. A 2020 seismic report provides a preliminary analysis of renovations needed to meet modern safety standards. Guest amenities, backstage facilities, and mechanical and production systems are also outdated, creating a competitive disadvantage.

Renovating the Keller, replacing the facility in its current location, or building an entirely new venue are all options that would require significant time, investment and collaboration.

A privately led effort to propose a Keller Auditorium renovation design and the exploration of potential sites for a new large-scale performing arts facility are both underway and by early 2024, City leaders should have a comprehensive set of options for exploring the future of performing arts in Portland.

FAST FACTS

- Built in 1917
- Limited upgrades since 1968
- Hosts 400,000 visitors per year
- Owned by City of Portland
- Operated by Portland’s Centers for the Arts (a branch of Metro) and overseen by the Metropolitan Exposition and Recreation Commission (MERC)

2020 SEISMIC STUDY

- Meets fire and safety code requirements
- Not built to withstand major earthquake
- Options range from seismic upgrades and amenity improvements to full venue replacement

WHAT’S NEXT

- The City of Portland and Metro are supporting a privately led effort to develop a Keller Auditorium renovation design option for the existing facility
- Exploration is also underway for potential sites for a new large-scale performing arts facility
- A set of options for the future of the Keller Auditorium will be presented to Portland City Council by early 2024

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