



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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City signs Memorandum of Understanding with Colorado Springs Community Cultural Collective regarding future operation of City Auditorium

Proposal aims to renovate and revitalize historic building for community arts, culture, education, community activities and events

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. – The City of Colorado Springs has formalized a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Colorado Springs Community Cultural Collective at City Auditorium (CSCCC) regarding the City Auditorium, located downtown at 221 East Kiowa Street. The MOU will help the City determine the viability of CSCCC’s proposal, which was selected as the highest ranked offer through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process that began in 2018 with a main goal of securing a financially stable entity to effectively manage, operate, and maintain full use of the nearly 100-year-old building, which has significant capital needs.

The MOU requires CSCCC, a newly formed 501c3 nonprofit organization, to successfully complete a due diligence period before the City and CSCCC move forward with a final award agreement for the design, construction, financing, development, ownership, professional management, and operation of the City Auditorium. The MOU does not include transfer of ownership of the City Auditorium property. A transfer of ownership would follow a successful due diligence period as part of a final award agreement and must comply with the City of Colorado Springs Procedure Manual for the Acquisition and Disposition of Real Property Interests.

“A revitalized City Auditorium at the center of the downtown creative district brings opportunities for entertainment, culture, education and business as well as economic opportunity for other cultural arts-oriented organizations and businesses,” said Bob Cope, Colorado Springs Chief of Economic Development. “We are intrigued by the CSCCC’s proposal and believe its project team has the background and successful track record to assure that the City Auditorium continues to not just successfully operate for the next 100 years, but to thrive for the benefit of all residents and visitors alike. The due diligence period is an important step for the CSCCC to more fully share and prove its vision of the sustainable future of this historic building to City officials and the residents of Colorado Springs.”

Two milestone periods are outlined in the MOU. The first is that by February 2022, the CSCCC must, among other tasks, successfully identify sources of \$5 million toward the project’s estimated construction cost of \$53 million; prepare a business plan explaining the vision and

necessary components that illustrate the feasibility and sustainability of the proposed use; and begin preparing schematic designs. The second milestone is a one-year timeframe beginning March 1, 2022 in which the CSCCC must, among other tasks, provide proof of the total fundraising requirement; engage stakeholders and the general public in an outreach process; and fully describe the programs and services to be offered to private user groups and the general public. The City Auditorium will not be available to the public to rent during the due diligence period.

The CSCCC has identified a gap for performance venues suitable to smaller cultural organizations in need of affordable mid-size venues and creative workspaces, a role which a revitalized City Auditorium could fill. As such, the CSCCC proposal includes making significant repairs and renovations to the building while also improving and expanding its functionality to be a better host for arts and culture, education and multi-purpose community activities and events.

“The structure of the CSCCC business model is to allow utilization to a wide array of community members, inclusive of all populations regardless of socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical ability and language,” said Linda Weise, CSCCC president. “We believe the revitalized City Auditorium will afford the opportunity for another 100 years of relevance by providing a safe, renovated and much-needed place currently missing in the community for affordable cultural and performing arts as well as for other community events.”

The estimated total cost to renovate the building and realize CSCCC’s proposal is approximately \$53 million. Private donations solicited by the CSCCC, grants, and tax credits are anticipated to make up a large part of the required budget. Some tax credits and other sources of funding would only be available if the facility is owned by the CSCCC, rather than the City. The City has earmarked \$2.5 million for the project through funding it received from the American Rescue Plan Act.

The CSCCC is planning to engage stakeholders and the general public through a series of public meetings to be scheduled this fall and winter. At these meetings, residents will have an opportunity to provide input and feedback on the proposed facility uses and renovations. To sign up for notices of the times, dates and location of the public meetings, email PublicEngagement@CommunityCulturalCollective.org.

For more information on the City Auditorium, visit [ColoradoSprings.gov/CityAuditorium](https://coloradosprings.gov/CityAuditorium), and for more information on the CSCCC, visit CommunityCulturalCollective.org.

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