



## **Request for Qualifications Auburn Downtown Theater Recommendations**

### **I. Introduction/Purpose**

The City of Auburn seeks qualified firms or individuals to analyze existing performing arts space Auburn Avenue Theater in downtown Auburn, Washington. The City seeks a study that examines and makes recommendations for the continued ability to provide programming within a mid-sized performing arts venue in Downtown Auburn.

The Auburn Avenue Theater built in 1926, located at 10 Auburn Avenue has been a bus depot, a movie theater, and a dinner theater. In 2006, the City of Auburn entered into a 15 year lease with the owners of the dinner theater when they decided to close their doors for personal reasons.

Upon occupancy by the City of Auburn, several renovations were required in order to make the building code compliant and there have been numerous repairs to address significant damage to the building from external elements (snow, rain, time). Additionally many improvements to the space and technology have been added throughout the years including: new LED lighting, new sound equipment, wireless system, movie capabilities, and raked seating. The interior of the theater has limitations for different types of performances as there is no greenroom/bathroom backstage (a requirement for most performers), there is no area for building sets or rehearsal space, and the lobby is small for pre-show/intermission/post-show gathering area.

Since 2007, the Auburn Avenue Theater has been managed and operated by the City of Auburn as a performing arts venue. The 250 seat venue offers a variety of programming including music, comedy, films, youth theater classes and productions, and full-scale community theater productions. In addition, the theater is also a venue for community rentals. Programming at the Auburn Ave brought over 12,941 individuals to downtown Auburn in 2014.

The City is actively interested in retaining a vibrant downtown environment and providing an active theater and seeks to gain knowledge in the following areas:

- Physical condition of property and potential purchase and upgrades
- Deficits of the current building and potential solutions
- Potential of new building option/opportunities
- Potential of the connection to the adjacent property (75 Auburn Ave) to provide needed space, bathrooms, etc.
- Models of funding and potential budget packages

### **II. Background**

Auburn is described as a city of "twos": two nations (USA and Muckleshoot Tribe), two counties (King and Pierce), two legislative districts (47 and 31), and two rivers (White and Green) and these unique distinctions define much of the city's character. Auburn serves as both the regions employment hub, as well as a 100+ year old community that has a strong sense of self as well as regional identity and history. The current population of approximately 75,000 has grown from 49,000 in 2006 with the annexation of previously unincorporated surrounding communities. Outside city boundaries, Auburn regularly serves audiences northward to Kent, East to Enumclaw, West to Federal Way and South to Puyallup. Auburn's audiences are diverse in background, ethnicity and age.

Downtown Auburn is undergoing a renaissance. Recent and ongoing infrastructure investments by the City of Auburn, new businesses, commuter rail access, shopping and dining opportunities, and recreational and cultural amenities make Downtown Auburn a great place to live, work and play. Since 2010, the City of Auburn has been investing \$10 million of federal and state funds in the South Division Street Promenade Project and other downtown projects to make it easier and more attractive for private sector investment.

### **III. Scope of Work**

#### **Phase I: Theater Assessment**

Consultant will meet with City staff to confirm goals of the study and other contextual issues related to the project. The consultant will also:

- Review general background information, data, and previous studies of the facility
- Review the lease contract, make recommendations for purchase, renegotiation of lease, or other options
- As directed, interview stakeholders, meet with local officials, community leaders and others as appropriate
- Assess physical condition and coordinate an appraisal and inspection of property
- Identification of deficits of the current building and potential solutions
- Explore potential linkages between the two properties to address functionality deficits of current building
- Explore potential of new building option/opportunities
- Integrate knowledge of performing arts facility operations and an understanding of the needs of a performing arts venue
- Compile models of funding, potential budget packages, additional revenue streams
- Compare to other downtown theaters in terms of operation and models of funding
- Perform other fieldwork as necessary

#### **Phase II: Recommendations and Communication**

Consultant will provide a written report outlining findings and recommendations as well as present at staff and Council meetings as appropriate.

Recommendations are to include a review of the needs assessment items listed above and any other factors for consideration. A preliminary development of cost estimates as well as potential funding models should be included.

### **IV. Project Budget and Payment**

Total Budget: \$25,000

Selected individual/firm will be required to sign a professional services contract with the City of Auburn and serve as a contractor and maintain an insurance liability certificate. Payment will be in three installments based on terms of contract.

### **V. Project TimeLine and Dates**

Proposal Open: Wednesday, August 26, 2015

Auburn Avenue Open House: Thursday, September 17, 2015, 10 – 1pm

Application Deadline: October 1, 2015, 4pm PST

Selection of Individual Firm: October 12 – 16, 2015

Project timeline will occur at first planning meeting, but will be completed by April 2016.

## **VI. Consultant Selection Process Submittal Requirements**

Interested individuals/firms should submit no more than twenty (20) 8 ½ x 11” double-sided pages. The submission should include:

- Letter of introduction stating your interest in the project and experience
- Recent professional experience, including work with public sector clients and applicable projects
- Individuals you may assign as consultants/members of the team with a statement of their qualifications
- A minimum of three (3) local references with full name, title, address, email, phone and any additional contact information.

Briefly answer the following as part of the RFQ

- What makes you uniquely qualified for this project? What values or benefits do you bring to the process that differentiates you from the other candidates?
- Describe the process/system you would implement to produce a team or “partnering” relationship amongst those involved with the project, specifically in regards to interaction with City staff and the public.
- The budget of this project is \$25,000, please describe strategies that you would employ to stay within budget.

*Interested firms should mail or email their materials to:*

City of Auburn Parks, Arts and Recreation  
Attn: Maija McKnight, Arts Coordinator  
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