

Orpheum Theater Discussion

June 24, 2025





Background on the Orpheum

History of the Venue

- 1911 – Majestic Opera House Opens
- 1915 – Majestic Collapses (5 ft of snow)
- 1916 – New Theater – Orpheum – Opens
- 1970 – Restaurant added
- 1999 – Closed abruptly after Lease ends
- 2002 – Reopened – New Ownership
- 2010 – Stage Left Deli Opens
- 2015 – Mural Installed on eastern side
- 2015 – Aspen Deli takes over restaurant





Background on the Orpheum

History of the Venue and Discussions

- Background on Current Ownership
 - Chris Scully and Charles Smith
- Past Economic Development Discussions
- Discussion on Centralized Arts Venue
 - Flagstaff Arts Council Report
 - Beautification, Arts and Science Report





Framing the Discussion

Why are we having this discussion today?

- Potential change of ownership in the near future
- Approached by owners to explore options for City to acquire building
- Request by Owners for the City to Explore Keeping the Orpheum Theater as a Community Asset



Framing the Discussion

Background on Conversations

- Meetings with City of Flagstaff and Orpheum Management Began a Year Ago
- Meetings with Scottsdale and Tucson
- Meeting with Creative Flagstaff





Framing the Discussion

Benefits of Keeping Orpheum as a Community Asset

- Ensuring Space for the Community, Non-Profits, Public Agencies
- Maintaining Historically Significant Building
- Repeat Model Used Locally (Center for the Arts, Pepsi Amphitheater, Theatrikos)
- Threat of losing Orpheum Theater to Other Development



Discuss Potential Scenarios

Scenario 1

- City Acquisition/Private Management
 - City Acquires Venue
 - Through Competitive Process Selects a Management Arrangement (Public or Private)





Discuss Potential Scenarios

Scenario 2

- City Acquisition/District Oversight
 - City acquires venue
 - Creates a special district (potential arts district) scenario
 - Other venues could fall under district umbrella
 - Possible transition to local arts organization



Discuss Potential Scenarios

Scenario 3

- City Does Not Acquire Property
 - Owners Sell the Property (and Business) on the Open Market



Considerations

- Timeline
 - Can the City Move Fast Enough?
- Management
 - Best Structure?
- Financing
 - Need Appraisal
 - If over \$3 Million, would need to go to Voters
- Property Considerations
 - Existing Zoning
 - Historic Preservation Opportunities
- Facility Condition
 - 107-Year Plus Building
 - Would need to do a Facility Assessment and



Other Considerations

City Needs on the Horizon

- Funding for the Indigenous Community Cultural Center
 - Possible Integration with Orpheum Funding
- Funding for Public Safety
 - New Fire Station and Associated Needs
 - Future Council Conversation
- Wastewater Treatment Plant
- East Flagstaff Community Library
 - Future Council Conversation

Questions and Direction

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