

In December of 2020, the Community Services Department released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the management, operation, and programming of the La Habra Depot Theater. The RFP was created to offer established theater production companies the opportunity to provide programming that would best benefit the entire community, with high quality, professional youth and adult programming and would also enhance the existing program at the Children's Museum at La Habra as well as our local school district's.

The Depot Theater is a 135-seat historic venue of approximately 3,978 square feet, not including the outdoor patio. It is located within a restored train station that was originally built in 1909. It is in working condition, but is in need of upgrades and repairs in many areas. We therefore were soliciting organizations who were willing and able to provide the funds necessary to provide the proposed services without any assistance from the City.

The RFP required verifiable minimum qualifications in experience, financial stability, insurance, and references, but left the content of the proposed use open to discussion and was due on March 1, 2021.

We received five responses to the RFP, four proposing theater operations and one proposing a historical museum operation in partnership with the Children's Museum. Each proposal was rigorously evaluated by staff and each was determined to meet the minimum requirements of the RFP and representatives were invited to present their proposal in a first round of interviews in April of 2021.

The interview panel from the first round included a City Staff person, a La Habra City School District representative, and a Friends of the Children's Museum representative. The results showed that there were two proposals that stood above the rest with the following average scores:

Boxcar Theatricals	Score 85
Electric Company Theatre	Score 90
La Habra Historical Society	Score 61
La Jolla Booking Agency	Score 61
Phantom Project Theatre Group	Score 95

The top two organizations, the Electric Company Theatre and Phantom Productions, were then invited to a second interview where a representative from the La Habra Host Lions Club, a retired La Habra City Manager, and a Board Member of the Friends of the Children's Museum gave the organizations an opportunity to provide details of their proposals.

The evaluators at both interviews were chosen because of their connection and understandings of City operations and for their overall commitment to providing recreational, cultural and social opportunities to the youth and adults of La Habra.

The interview questions were designed to elicit responses to demonstrate an understanding of theater operations, the capacity to provide the operations financially and professionally, and the overall commitment to the City and our residents.

The results of the interviews showed that one provider clearly demonstrated that it was the best prepared at this time to provide an opportunity of overall success at the Depot Theater and was being recommended by the interview panel with the following average scores:

Phantom Project Theatre Group	94
Electric Company Theater	76

Staff received the recommendation and contacted the references provided by Phantom Project Theatre Group and find that they are the best qualified response and should be awarded a lease agreement for services as outlined in the RFP.

Staff therefore recommend that the Community Services Commission accept staff's intent to execute a lease agreement with Phantom Project Theatre Group and that the Commission forward that recommendation to the City Council.