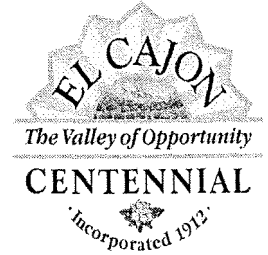


# City of El Cajon Agenda Report

MEETING: July 9, 2013  
ITEM NO: 4.1



**TO:** Mayor Lewis, Mayor Pro Tem Wells,  
Councilmembers Ambrose, Kendrick, McClellan

**FROM:** City Manager Douglas Williford

**SUBJECT:** Authorization for Request for Qualifications for Architectural Services  
for the East County Performing Arts Center (ECPAC)

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the City Council authorize the City Manager to issue a formal Request for Qualifications to hire an architect to prepare and provide construction documents ready for bid.

**BACKGROUND:** The El Cajon City Council is on record as supporting the improvement and re-opening of the East County Performing Arts Center (ECPAC) in the near future.

Research into what needs to be done to re-open the facility from a physical standpoint, as well as from an operational standpoint, has been submitted to the City at various times during the past few years. Specifically in 2010, a study was completed by Kurt Swanson & Associates at the City's request. The Swanson study reviewed the history of ECPAC and its finances, suggested various options for physically improving the facility, analyzed an operational plan for running the facility, and outlined a possible financial plan. In general, the Swanson study looked at a very high level of capital improvements to ECPAC, at a total cost of \$4.3 million. Some of these capital items, such as the provision of an entirely re-constructed new roof (\$800,000) and the construction of a new entrance directed towards Main Street (\$280,000) were discretionary in nature and clearly not absolutely required to immediately re-open the facility.

In June 2012, the ECPAC Foundation submitted a study that analyzed the same basic components of ECPAC, although in a more comprehensive and detailed manner. The ECPAC Foundation study presented significant useful information regarding potentially beneficial capital improvements to the facility, as well as its operations and finances. Both of these studies have been previously distributed to the City Council for its review and consideration.

In addition to reviewing these studies, we met with Mitch Gershenfeld, currently the President and CEO of the McCallum Theatre in Palm Desert. Mr. Gershenfeld was the former Manager of ECPAC and given his specific knowledge of the facility and the performing arts theater business, in general, he has provided valuable insight and assistance to staff regarding ECPAC's potential future. In addition, we hired two (2) of the McCallum's key technical staff to look at the facility and provide their perspective on the facility's needs. This was not done in the form of another extensive report, but rather as providing a brief, written summary and verbal observations.

In late 2012, the City of El Cajon received an energy audit report prepared by EFM Solutions in association with SANDAG and SDG&E. The report provided recommendations to replace approximately 200 lights and ballast that would result in annual energy savings of approximately \$4,741.00 per year. Other recommendations include HVAC upgrades, pump motors and new 2-way valves providing annual energy savings of approximately \$2,482.00 per year.

In addition, the City recently met with representatives of the Grossmont Union High School District to discuss possible partnerships between the two agencies regarding ECPAC. After a discussion of the respective goals of the two agencies, it was decided not to pursue a partnership at the present time, although it is entirely possible that the District may wish to make use of the facility in the future.

As stated in staff's November 2012 status report to the City Council, the real question is not what the *minimum* expenditure necessary to re-open ECPAC is, but rather what is the *most appropriate* expenditure necessary to create the best venue we can while still being affordable. This is especially true if the facility is to be viewed by the performing arts and entertainment community as a high quality venue useful for the long term.

The minimum cost to re-open the facility in some basic fashion may be in the \$400,000-\$500,000 range, however, there are much higher costs associated with additional improvements that are truly needed or would be very useful immediately, such as ADA improvements, a new emergency generator and a new "smart lighting" system.

Based on all of this information, City Public Works staff, who possess extensive experience with the facility, has completed their own analysis of what can and should be done in order to re-open ECPAC in the most cost effective and appropriate manner. This proposal represents a major commitment on the part of the City to the long term modernization and use of ECPAC on behalf of the El Cajon community and the region at large.

The funds that will be used to pay for these improvements will be "one time only" funds generated by the sale of the former Police Station, possibly supplemented by Federal CDGB funding for the ADA improvements. There will be no on-going General Fund revenues used for these proposed improvements, therefore, the funding for the improvement of ECPAC will not be in conflict or compete with funding for on-going City operations, including staff costs, parks, public safety, street and building maintenance or other annual repeating costs.

Following is the specific list of potential improvements that will be analyzed and costed out by the architectural firm that is hired:

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| New emergency generator              | (required)                                      |
| Fire alarm / smoke detector upgrades | (required)                                      |
| Water system upgrades                | (required)                                      |
| Stage curtain flame treatments       | (required)                                      |
| ADA improvements                     | (strongly suggested)                            |
| New roof                             | (strongly suggested- some repairs are required) |

|  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| HVAC upgrades  | (strongly suggested) |
| New Smart lighting or similar                        | (strongly suggested) |
| Non-stage lighting improvements                      | (strongly suggested) |
| Green room cosmetic repairs                          | (strongly suggested) |
| New digital sound system                             | (suggested)          |
| New carpeting  | (suggested)          |
| Renovated concession area                            | (suggested)          |
| Additional minor improvements<br>throughout building | (suggested)          |

A fully qualified architect, with specific experience with similar facilities, will be able to cost out these improvements more precisely, although it will not be until we receive actual bids for construction that we will know the exact cost of each item. At the present time, if all the above improvements were to be completed, we estimate the cost to be between \$1.5 - \$1.8 million, plus architectural fees and a standard contingency fund. Obviously, if certain items were deleted subsequent to the architect's analysis and cost estimate, the cost would go down.

Staff projects construction costs to be markedly less for certain items than some previous estimates the City has reviewed, for the following reasons:

- **ADA Upgrades.** Does not include elevator service to the third floor because it is not needed. It will address all code compliance issues to meet the minimum ADA requirements.
- **Roof.** Staff is now looking at a fluid applied re-roof for the flat portions, removing the need for demolition and hazardous materials abatement. Potential reduction of \$425,000 from previous estimates.
- **Interior Finishes.** This work can be done much less expensively. Potential reduction of \$300,000.
- **Main Entrance.** Does not include a reorientation of the main entrance to the south. Reduction of \$280,000.
- **Additional Women's Restroom.** Water system upgrades included in estimate will increase the functionality of existing facilities. Potential reduction of \$180,000
- **Orchestra Lift Replacement.** Not likely needed. An inspection will be performed and a detailed report provided. At this time the lift is functioning safely and as designed. Reduction of \$150,000.
- **Stage Curtains.** Existing curtains are relatively new and will only require a flame retardant treatment. Potential reduction of \$150,000.

### Next Steps

Staff expects to come before the City Council several times during the next year regarding ECPAC issues. The next steps involving the City Council include:

- Approval of award of architect
- Approval of plans and authorization to bid construction documents
- Approval of award of bid to construction company
- Approval of Request for Qualifications\Proposals for General Manager
- Discussion of fund raising aspect of ECPAC
- Other pertinent issues as they arise

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The 2013-2014 Budget includes \$2,850,000 of General Funds for design and improvements to the El Cajon Performing Arts Center (ECPAC).

**SUBMITTED BY:**



**Douglas Williford**  
**City Manager**