



.....
Date May 6, 2024

**RECEIVE AND FILE COMMUNICATION FROM THE CITY MANAGER
REGARDING THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE ARGONNE ARMORY AT 602
ROBERT D. RAY DRIVE**

WHEREAS, the City of Des Moines owns the property at 602 Robert D. Ray Drive (“Site”), which Site is currently occupied by several City departments, including Neighborhood Services, Development Services, Information Technology, Facilities, and the Litigation Division of the Legal Department; and

WHEREAS, the City has purchased the property at 1200 Locust Street, and the City anticipates vacating the Argonne Armory and relocating the departments set forth above to the 1200 Locust Street property; and

WHEREAS, said City relocation will make way for a new occupant to redevelop the Site; and

WHEREAS, Christensen Development (Jake Christensen, President, 215 East 3rd Street, Suite 300, Des Moines, IA 50309) (“Developer”), on behalf of the Des Moines Performing Arts organization (Jeff Chelesvig, President & CEO, 211 Walnut Street, Des Moines, IA 50309), has approached the City Manager’s Office with interest in redeveloping the Site with the main facility for youth programs offered by Des Moines Performing Arts.

WHEREAS, the City Manager requests City Council direction staff to work with the Developer to refine the projects’ programming, design, and financial proposal and present preliminary terms of the developer-initiated proposal to the City Council at a later date.

WHEREAS, prior to any acceptance of such proposal, there will also be an opportunity for competing proposals for the Site to be submitted and considered by the City Council pursuant to Iowa Code §403.8.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Des Moines, Iowa, that:

1. The communication from the City Manager regarding the Developer’s proposal for redevelopment of the Site is hereby received and filed.
2. City staff are hereby directed to work with the Developer to refine the projects’ programming, design, and financial proposal in anticipation of future actions to be considered by City Council for such proposal at a later date.



Roll Call Number

Agenda Item Number

39 A

Date May 6, 2024

(Council Communication No. 24-203)

MOVED by _____ to adopt. Second by _____.

FORM APPROVED:

/s/ Lisa A. Wieland

Lisa A. Wieland
Assistant City Attorney

| COUNCIL ACTION | YEAS | NAYS | PASS | ABSENT |
|----------------|------|------|----------|--------|
| BOESEN | | | | |
| SIMONSON | | | | |
| VOSS | | | | |
| COLEMAN | | | | |
| WESTERGAARD | | | | |
| MANDELBAUM | | | | |
| GATTO | | | | |
| TOTAL | | | | |
| MOTION CARRIED | | | APPROVED | |

CERTIFICATE

I, LAURA BAUMGARTNER, City Clerk of said City hereby certify that at a meeting of the City Council of said City of Des Moines, held on the above date, among other proceedings the above was adopted.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal the day and year first above written.

Mayor

City Clerk



DES MOINES PERFORMING ARTS - ARMORY PROPOSAL

MAY 2024



221 Walnut Street P (515) 246-2300
Des Moines, IA 50309 F (515) 246-2305
DesMoinesPerformingArts.org

May 6, 2024

City of Des Moines
602 Robert D. Ray Dr.
Des Moines, IA 50309

RE: Armory Building

Des Moines Performing Arts (DMPA) has been a cultural cornerstone for over four decades, enriching the community with professional touring performances and educational initiatives. Our education and community outreach programs impact over 70,000 individuals annually. However, as we strive to expand our impact, **we are confronted with a critical obstacle: the lack of adequate physical space.**

To advance our commitment to arts education, we propose repurposing the historic Armory into a cutting-edge arts education center. This move would enable us to offer comprehensive programs, serving individuals of all ages and backgrounds. Key points include:

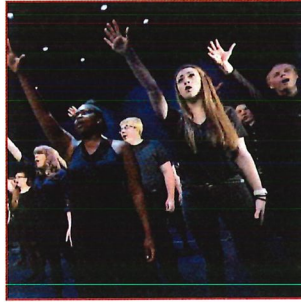
- The new project will welcome over 20,000 community members annually, reinvigorating an existing building and returning a once-public space to truly public use.
- The proposed renovations represent an approximate investment of \$15 million from DMPA.
- The Armory will become part of DMPA's proud tradition of creating meaningful and accessible opportunities for audiences of all backgrounds, while simultaneously presenting artists and educators that uplift diverse stories and experiences.

We understand the project's success relies on collaboration with the City of Des Moines. We're eager to work with city leaders to address the need for arts education infrastructure and enrich our community's cultural landscape. Thank you for considering this opportunity to create a brighter, more inclusive future through the arts.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Chelesvig".

Jeff Chelesvig
President & CEO

VISION & IMPACT



THE NEED:

- According to Arts Midwest, Iowa ranks 48th in the nation for state-driven arts funding. Public funds directed to the arts are calculated at \$0.34 per Iowan. By comparison, Minnesota contributes over \$9.62 per resident.
- The Iowa Arts Education Data Project reports that enrollment in school arts classes, including dance and theater, have witnessed a steady decline since 2018. Despite this decline, there remains a desire for arts education, as displayed in the overwhelming success of our summer camps, Broadway intensives, and the Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards, all of which have consistently reached maximum capacity.
- DMPA venues are bursting at the seams. Balancing calendar dates and physical space, it is extremely difficult to expand our education programming in any meaningful way. In 2024, summer camps sold out within 90 minutes with a significant waiting list, and the Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards now stand as the largest program of its kind in the country.

continued >

WHERE WE ARE CURRENTLY:

- Serve 70,000 annually across education and community engagement programs.
- 6,000 impacted by the Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards (IHSMTA) program annually.
- 40,000 annually served by the field-trip-based Applause Series.
- 400 hours of summer camp programming.

WHERE WE ARE GOING:

- Additional field trip opportunities beyond the Applause Series.
- Expanding camp offerings throughout the year (not just in the summer).
- Enhanced field trip experiences that build upon current offerings.
- Expanded partnerships with other non-profit organizations and other arts and culture organizations.
- Introduction of programming for children four years old and younger.
- The Armory has the potential to expand our education program's reach by an additional 20,000 participants per year.



TIMELINE



- MAY 2024**
Submission of the developer-initiated proposal
- JULY 20, 2024**
Executed Development Agreement
- JULY 20, 2024-JULY 19, 2025**
Building inspections, due diligence, and fundraising feasibility study
- JULY 20, 2025**
Buyer removal of contingencies
- MARCH 2026**
Property Sale Date

ABOUT

DES MOINES PERFORMING ARTS:

The Des Moines Civic Center is a testament to the power of a dream and determination. In the 1970s following the closing of Des Moines' KRNT Theater, a local bond option to build and fund a performing arts center was proposed and narrowly defeated. Undeterred, a group of area business leaders joined forces and raised over \$9 million in less than 90 days for the cause. The rest is history.

In June of 1979 the Des Moines Civic Center hosted its first performance. Along with the black box Stoner Theater, and Nollen Plaza (now Cowles Commons), the Des Moines Civic Center became a downtown landmark.

In 2002, the Temple Theater became DMPA's 4th venue. In 2013 the organization rebranded itself as Des Moines Performing Arts (DMPA).

Today, DMPA stands as a stalwart champion of the arts, dedicated to fostering inclusivity and education throughout Iowa. Beyond its role as a cultural cornerstone, DMPA serves as a catalyst for economic growth, with the Willis Broadway Series alone contributing an estimated \$37 million in local economic development annually.

Central to its mission is a steadfast commitment to arts education, exemplified through transformative initiatives such as the Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards and the field-trip-based Applause Series. DMPA firmly believes that access to the arts is a fundamental right, and through its tireless efforts, it continues to enrich lives and cultivate creativity across communities, ensuring that the transformative power of the performing arts knows no bounds.

continued >



JAKE CHRISTENSEN

Jake founded Christensen Development in 2003 with a passion for urban development. With more than 20 years of experience, Jake has made it his company's mission to transform not just individual sites but entire areas of the city into thriving community centerpieces. While the Christensen Development team may be small, it has accomplished big things, completing \$450 million in projects in Omaha and across the state of Iowa.

Alongside his development work, Jake is passionate about volunteering and community involvement. Currently, he serves as a member of the Des Moines Airport Authority, Greater Des Moines Partnership Executive Committee, Downtown Vision Plan Co-Chair, Co-chair of the Downtown Community Alliance and the Greater Des Moines Water Trails Advisory Committee. He was named Commercial Real Estate Professional of the Year, is a graduate of the Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute, 2005 Forty under 40 honoree, and was named the Des Moines Community Champion by the Greater Des Moines Partnership and the Des Moines Business Record in 2015.



SLINGSHOT

Slingshot Architecture is well recognized for exceeding our clients' expectations through offering innovative solutions and ideas for a wide range of projects since 2002. At Slingshot Architecture, our mission is to craft positive experiences for people in the built environment from inside-out + outside-in. We focus our efforts on urbanism, architecture, and interiors to always bring people together.

Slingshot Architecture is a process-focused firm with investigation and engagement being central to creating a project's vision. We are driven by meaningful work created through personal relationships. We encourage our clients to expect more from design and challenge us to achieve great things for them. We inquire to find the specific drivers for each stakeholder in order to embed them into our work. What drives you will drive us. We are here to create something amazing, purposeful, specific, and unexpected. We are here to have an impact.

SLINGSHOT
ARCHITECTURE