



Board of County Commissioners

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Invitation: Fairfield County Seeking Performing Arts Center Feasibility Study

August 6, 2019

The Fairfield County Economic and Workforce Development Department is accepting proposals for a study assessing the feasibility of a Performing Arts Center in the city of Lancaster, Ohio, or other areas of Fairfield County.

Background:

Fairfield County, part of the Columbus region, is the fifth fastest growing county in Ohio. The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission estimates the Columbus region will add between 500,000 and 1 million residents by 2050. Downtown development is a key to attracting millennials and baby boomers to a community. But there is a lack of entertainment options in the downtowns throughout Fairfield County. A recent study showed there is interest in funding a performing arts center in downtown Lancaster. The Fairfield County Commissioners passed a resolution to investigate the feasibility of building or repurposing an existing building into a performing arts center in the county for the purposes of improving the economy and in support of the community.

The county has representation on the board of the Lancaster Performing Arts Center. This not-for-profit organization is focused on answering the need for additional entertainment options in the city of Lancaster and the surrounding area. Downtown Lancaster has seen a resurgence, but it has limited entertainment options. Lancaster needs to fill the entertainment gap to continue to compete with other communities in attracting both younger and older residents. It is also 45 minutes from downtown Columbus and borders the Hocking Hills, a travel destination in Ohio. A performing arts center can attract residents from the Columbus area as well as tourists in the Hocking Hills.

There is also a social impact to a Performing Arts Center that may include programming for area youth. Arts can have a positive impact on teens and young adults. This can even provide an economic benefit to communities with the avoidance of costs for addiction counseling, court fees, and juvenile justice.

Fairfield County is seeking proposals for a performing arts center feasibility study, assessing the need for and impact of a performing arts center in downtown Lancaster. Lancaster, the county seat and largest city in the county, is the logical location for a potential performing arts center. Other areas of the county could be considered. The study will identify the economic impact that a venue would have on the county.



Objectives of the proposal are to:

- Evaluate key partners, key activities, value propositions, relationships, beneficiaries, projected cost structures and revenue streams, social costs, and community benefits of a performing arts center
- Assess the economic sustainability of a performing arts center
- Evaluate the economic impact of a performing arts center
- Determine the social impact of a performing arts center
- Determine the size and elements of a performing arts center
- Identify specific operating expenses of the facility
- Model the above factors into an already existing facility at Stanberry School
- Provide information about other potential locations identified as part of the evaluation

Timeline:

Invitation Announced	August 6, 2019
Deadline for Proposals	August 27, 2019
Interviews	Week of September 3, 2019
Award with Intent to Contract	September 11, 2019
Study Due for Review	November 15, 2019
Feedback due from County	November 22, 2019
Presentations	Week of December 9, 2019

There are multiple resources and existing information that can be utilized when creating the feasibility study. The Fairfield County Economic and Workforce Development department will provide economic data for the county and the region. There was a feasibility plan created in 2012 that can be referenced. There is a fundraising capacity plan in 2018.

Scope of Study

1. Needs Assessment
 - a. Review of previous studies (the performing arts center/convention center study; the case for support – fundraising capacity study)
 - b. Review of current performing arts groups, programs, venues in the Lancaster area
 - c. Meet with the stakeholder of the Lancaster Performing Arts Center Board to review current work and direction
 - d. Review of existing performing arts space in the area
 - e. Create a market analysis utilizing existing market data (Fairfield County Economic and Workforce Development can assist)
 - f. Identify gaps in entertainment to create a list of potential programming for a venue
2. Comparable
 - a. Illustrate trends in the performing arts and venues
 - b. Identify peer markets and their performing arts centers and programming
 - c. Explain how a Lancaster performing arts center can fill local and regional gaps



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- d. Interview peer market performing arts centers
- e. Explain risk and opportunity factors identified by peer markets
3. Facility Recommendation
 - a. Identify quantity of seats needed for venue with various scenarios – include detail such as number of shows, rehearsals
 - b. Identify additional amenities needed at venue (ie. kitchen, meeting space, classroom space, etc.)
 - c. Identify location recommendation
 - d. Review whether Stanberry fits these needs
4. Market demand
 - a. Map out the demand by performance type and segment
 - b. Map out the demand for performing arts classes to be held in the venue
5. Operations Recommendation
 - a. Review possible structures for an organization to run the Performing Arts Center
 - b. Create a detail Operating Statement for the Center
 - i. Include revenues with ticket prices
 - ii. Include costs for running facility, attracting talent, managing the program, etc.
6. Economic Impact
7. Social Return
 - a. Include improved recreation, entertainment, youth engagement, mental health, and wellness
 - b. Costs avoided may include juvenile justice, court system, mental health/addiction costs
8. Budget
 - a. Please include budget detail including staff time and travel costs
 - b. Contract must be for a “not to exceed” amount; the hourly rate should be one inclusive hourly rate
9. Conflicts of Interest
 - a. Bidders must note whether there are any conflicts of interest with Fairfield County or the LPAC Board
10. Deliverables
 - a. Weekly status updates
 - b. Summary
 - c. A well-organized feasibility study including all objectives and the full scope of study above
 - d. Presentation
11. Submissions should be emailed to Rick.Szabrak@FairfieldCountyOhio.gov in PDF format by 5 p.m. on August 27, 2019.
12. *Evaluation*
 - a. A committee comprised of Fairfield County Economic Development and the Lancaster Performing Arts Board will interview finalists in person or via phone
 - b. Criteria will be based on costs, previous experience in providing feasibility studies for performing arts’ centers, innovation, and effectiveness of presentation
 - c. This proposal does not equal an offer nor does it bind the County in entering into a contract
 - d. There is no requirement for bidding for professional services; this is an invitation to participate