



News from: City of Oakland

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City of Oakland Issues RFP for Henry J. Kaiser Convention Center

Oakland, CA – The City of Oakland has issued a Request for Proposals/Notice of Development Opportunity for the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the former Henry J. Kaiser Convention Center under a long-term ground lease. Proposals are due by 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 12, and a pre-submittal meeting and building tour will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, October 10.

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“The City of Oakland, the Oakland community and all our partners have done incredible work beautifying the Lake Merritt area over the last several years, and the stunning Henry J. Kaiser Convention Center represents a remarkable opportunity for the right investor to build on that success,” Mayor Jean Quan said. “I enthusiastically invite investors to submit a proposal for the adaptive reuse of the center, a rare opportunity to bring one of Oakland’s most prized civic buildings back to life, and to further the revitalization of the Lake Merritt area. With our economy on the upswing and our arts and cultural industry thriving, now is the time to invest in Oakland.”

Originally named the Oakland Municipal Auditorium, the 215,000-square-foot building opened as a multi-purpose arena and theater in 1914. The building, a City of Oakland Landmark, was renamed in honor of Henry J. Kaiser in 1982 and the theater was named in honor of Oakland Symphony conductor Calvin Simmons. Due to City budget cuts, the building has been closed and largely unused since 2005. The building contains a 45,000-square-foot arena, the 1,900-seat Calvin Simmons Theater, two banquet rooms, a ballroom, lobby and a full basement. The building is adjacent to the Oakland Museum of California, Laney College and Lake Merritt, which has been transformed through Measure DD, the Oakland Trust for Clean Water and Safe Parks.

To address its goal of maintaining regular public access to the building while ensuring a financially feasible project, the City anticipates a mix of public and private uses in the building. While proposals should include the restoration of the existing Calvin Simmons Theater, the City is open to creative and new ideas for the adaptive reuse of the rest of the building, including uses such as performance space, entertainment venues, conference and event spaces, light industrial or maker space, commercial office uses and retail and restaurant space.

Language has been included in the RFP to preserve the building’s historic exterior and significant interiors by requiring adherence to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties. The building may qualify for federal historic tax credits.

To view the RFP, please visit oaklandnet.com/realestate.

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