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## **Study identifies development opportunities for new performing arts facilities**

The Regional Arts & Culture Council (RACC) today released an independent assessment of performing arts venues in the Portland tri-county region, including Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington Counties. This comprehensive study, commissioned by RACC earlier this year, identifies gaps in the local inventory and indicates demand for certain kinds of new facilities to better serve the local arts community and their audiences. Among the key findings:

- Large and midsized arts organizations are competing over a limited number of appropriately sized and adequately equipped facilities, including the Portland Center for the Performing Arts (PCPA). There is sufficient demand for one new, centrally-located, high-quality large venue (1800-2000 seats) and several flexible high-tech performance spaces (500 to 600 seats) throughout the region.
- The lack of proper facilities is impeding the evolution of some arts organizations. Although many small and midsized groups are using unconventional spaces (including churches, community centers, private businesses and homes) in creative ways, few of these facilities have ideal acoustics and production amenities, and some have accessibility concerns.
- Arts organizations can help neighborhoods thrive with more community arts centers beyond the central city. Several groups could share rehearsal, production and administrative space in these facilities. Suburban areas, especially those situated near public transit, could attract more festivals, concerts and touring performances by developing unique "destination" performance spaces designed to take advantage of their unique, idyllic settings.

*Act for Art*, the region's five year action plan for arts and culture, published in the spring of 2009, called for an inventory and assessment of existing public and private arts spaces, with an emphasis on the accessibility of these facilities. The City of Portland provided special funding last year to help make this assessment possible, and RACC will work with partners including HulaHub ([www.hulahub.com](http://www.hulahub.com)) to ensure that the entire inventory is available to the public as a searchable database later this summer.

Webb Management Services, Inc. of New York conducted the study with support from Boora Architects in Portland and input from artists and representatives of more than 100 local arts organizations. Local and national research also helped Webb Management Services identify connections to other civic priorities and emerging trends in audience behavior to help inform the development of any new facilities, whether public or private.

The complete Performing Arts Venues Assessment is available online at <http://bit.ly/aPAD1c> (a 6MB PDF download). The full URL is: <http://racc.org/sites/default/files/PerfArtsVenuesAssessment2010.pdf>.

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