

CIVIC AUDITORIUM

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# Council reaffirms support to renovate Civic Auditorium

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SANTA CRUZ — Council members Tuesday followed a Civic Auditorium Technical Advisory Committee recommendation reaffirming support for a plan to renovate the Civic Auditorium at an estimated cost of \$6.2 million.

Council members approved spending \$15,000 to hire a consultant for a financial funding study and directed the mayor to appoint a finance committee.

The finance committee is to coordinate a fund-raising effort, including a community fund-raising capital drive and preparation of grant requests. Other funding sources include "certificates of participation" (similar to bonds) and low-interest loans.

Council members agreed with committee members to reject a more-elaborate plan to build a 900-seat cultural facility next to the auditorium on a parking lot for an estimated \$10.3 million.

Committee members said the alternate proposal was too costly and would eliminate badly-needed downtown parking space. Also there may not be a market for two facilities, according to a Civic marketing study.

The approved plan features flexibility in seatings arrangements. The configuration of seats can be changed according to the type of event by the use of moving towers carried on air casters.

Councilwoman Katy Sears-Williams cast the only dissenting vote. She argued the council should not close out the option of the \$10.3 million proposal at this stage of the planning process.

Majority council members argued it would be a waste of time and money to direct the consultant to study two plans at the same time.