

FD Date: 7-8-20  
Item No.: 1

**From:** Kathy Wright <kwswmbo@sbcglobal.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, September 5, 2020 2:43 PM  
**To:** Edwards, Erin <EEdwards@riversideca.gov>  
**Subject:** [External] Fw: Potential Sale of the Fox Performing Arts Center

Honorable Members of the Budget Engagement Commission  
Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

Including the Fox Performing Arts Center on the surplus property list and considering its sale is not something you should pursue. The Fox is a historic and iconic building that helps to make our downtown unique and a desirable place for residents and out of town visitors to enjoy. It provides entertainment and cultural opportunities comparable to those down the freeway in LA and Orange County. It is emblematic of Riverside as the City of Arts and Innovation and was promoted by the City Council and city staff during the Renaissance development as an important cornerstone of downtown's economic success. The City has control of who runs it and can ensure its proper upkeep and use to the benefit of our residents.

I find it interesting that another iconic city owned building, the Municipal Auditorium was once on the list but has since been removed. Why the keep the Muni and not the Fox? Both are important entertainment venues and contribute to the vibrancy of our downtown. I believe the sale of the Fox is shortsighted and will not solve our budget woes in general nor specifically, our CalPERS problems.

Please do not sell the Fox.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kathy Wright  
Resident since 1958

Kathy Wright

*"What we need in the United States is not division...not hatred...not violence or unlawfulness, but love and wisdom and compassion toward one another."*

*---Robert F. Kennedy  
on the night that Martin Luther King, Jr. was killed*

cc Mayor  
City Council  
City Manager  
City Attorney  
ACMs  
DCM

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Item No.: 1

**From:** [dmichalka@aol.com](mailto:dmichalka@aol.com) <[dmichalka@aol.com](mailto:dmichalka@aol.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 3, 2020 1:59 PM  
**To:** Bailey, Rusty <[RBailey@riversideca.gov](mailto:RBailey@riversideca.gov)>; Edwards, Erin <[EEwards@riversideca.gov](mailto:EEwards@riversideca.gov)>;  
[asmelendrez@riversidedca.gov](mailto:asmelendrez@riversidedca.gov); Fierro, Ronaldo <[RFierro@riversideca.gov](mailto:RFierro@riversideca.gov)>; Conder, Chuck <[CConder@riversideca.gov](mailto:CConder@riversideca.gov)>;  
Zelinka, Al <[azelinka@riversideca.gov](mailto:azelinka@riversideca.gov)>; Plascencia, Gaby <[GPlascencia@riversideca.gov](mailto:GPlascencia@riversideca.gov)>; Perry, Jim  
<[JPerry@riversideca.gov](mailto:JPerry@riversideca.gov)>; Hemenway, Steve <[SHemenway@riversideca.gov](mailto:SHemenway@riversideca.gov)>; Martinez, Elizabeth  
<[emartinez@riversideca.gov](mailto:emartinez@riversideca.gov)>  
**Subject:** [External]

Honorable Mayor Bailey, Riverside City Councilmembers, and Budget Engagement Commission:

Because of a building surplus, coupled with a budget deficit in the City of Riverside, I understand the City Council is considering a list of buildings to be sold. I was horrified to learn that the Historic Fox Theater was on that list. When people describe the Fox as the crown jewel of Riverside, it is not an exaggeration!

As a native Riversider, I remember as a child when my grandfather's employer, Hunter Douglas, held Christmas parties for employees' children and grandchildren at the Fox, complete with Santa Claus and gifts for everyone. As a teenager, I remember seeing movies at the Fox. I'm sure many others have similar nostalgic memories like these. But then I remember the building falling into disrepair in the 80s, and it sat empty and sad for years.

I was so proud of our City Council who brought about the Riverside Renaissance and had the wisdom and courage to not only save this beautiful building, but to restore it to incredible perfection!

I also remember attending the first performance when it re-opened in 2010, featuring singer Sheryl Crow. What a coup for the City to have been able to draw such a talent to Riverside. That night, Sheryl remarked that she'd had a little time to walk around our downtown, and found it beautiful!

Other entertainers came, like Kenny Loggins, the Doobie Brothers, Willie Nelson, and many more. Inland Empire residents are happy to pay a premium for this level of performers, and we need to revive that tradition.

The City's budget assistance will be negligible from the sale of this treasure. It would cut like a knife into the hearts of many, many people who not only remember but also recognize its real, cultural, and emotional value. It is a source of immense pride to our community, and one that we always want to be able to call our own.

PLEASE REMOVE THE HISTORIC FOX THEATER from your list of surplus building on the chopping block, like some old auto repair shop. For the good of the entire community and beyond, keep it within Riverside ownership.

Sincerely,  
Donna Doty Michalka  
Resident, Ward 5

cc Mayor  
City Council  
City Manager  
City Attorney  
ACMs  
DCM

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Item No.: 1

**From:** [cmluppino@aol.com](mailto:cmluppino@aol.com) <[cmluppino@aol.com](mailto:cmluppino@aol.com)>  
**Sent:** Saturday, August 29, 2020 11:53:34 AM  
**To:** Bailey, Rusty <[RBailey@riversideca.gov](mailto:RBailey@riversideca.gov)>  
**Subject:** [External] Opposition to Sale of The Fox

We have been residents of the beautiful City of Riverside for over 50 years. During that time, we have seen our beloved Fox Theater make a number of transitions until its magnificent branding into The Fox Performing Arts Center. Its salvation by the City of Riverside preserved this historical treasure for our community, and the citizens of our city are forever grateful.

Having said that, it is unconscionable to think that the city is now considering putting this incredible property up for sale.

The people of Riverside are proud of this great theater and what it means to our community. We implore you to reconsider its sale. We stand with Friends of The Fox advocacy group and other concerned citizens to strongly oppose the sale of The Fox Performing Arts Center.

Bud and Claudia Luppino

cc Mayor  
City Council  
City Manager  
City Attorney  
ACMs  
DCM

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August 17, 2020

Dear Mayor Bailey;

Although I do not live in Riverside, I fell in love with the City in 2008 when I started to work there. Since then I have referred to myself as a "Riversider by heart".

I am writing to support the efforts for the City to maintain ownership of the Fox Performing Arts Center. I am one of many non-Riversiders who spend most of my social time and money in Riverside shopping, visiting friends, dining out, volunteering, and attending the many special attractions of Riverside including performances and events at the Fox.

The Fox brings outside dollars to the City of Riverside but it is also a beacon of community pride and a tribute to the City's recognition of important City history. Along with the Mission Inn, it has become the nucleus of downtown.

Two days ago I was in downtown Riverside for lunch and shopping and I was so saddened at the effects of the COVID virus on the energy and the businesses in downtown. If they are going to recover when this is over, the Fox will play an important role in the recovery.

I encourage the City leaders to find a way to maintain the ownership of this important Riverside landmark and to maintain its special significance.

Respectfully,

Bobbie Neff

26045 McCall Blvd.  
Menifee, Ca 92586  
(951) 309-1576

cc Mayor  
City Council  
City Manager  
City Attorney  
ACMs  
DCM

FC Date: 7-8-20  
Item No.: 1

**From:** Steve Ogilvie <[rvrbosso@icloud.com](mailto:rvrbosso@icloud.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2020 5:56 AM  
**To:** Bailey, Rusty <[RBAiley@riversideca.gov](mailto:RBAiley@riversideca.gov)>; Fierro, Ronaldo <[RFierro@riversideca.gov](mailto:RFierro@riversideca.gov)>; [azelinka@riversideca.gov](mailto:azelinka@riversideca.gov);  
Zelinka, Al <[azelinka@riversideca.gov](mailto:azelinka@riversideca.gov)>; Martinez, Elizabeth <[emartinez@riversideca.gov](mailto:emartinez@riversideca.gov)>  
**Subject:** [External] Fox Theatre

Mayor Rusty Bailey

Councilman Ronaldo Fierro

City Manager Al Zelinka

Budget Engagement Commissioners

Good Morning,

The City of Riverside is a city where the government, private, and non-profit entities coordinate through very viable and beneficial relationships which are probably an envy of many other cities. What these relationships bring to our city is invaluable as they plan and implement the infrastructure, the programs, the services and the industry necessary to make a city a world class city. Several years ago, through coordination with the mayor's office, the city leaders, business leaders, non-profits and many others undertook a very detailed project titled "Seizing Our Destiny". This project I am sure took countless effort and hours for these leaders to discuss, draft, and finalize a very detailed plan of what the City of Riverside would need to be a city with an outstanding quality of life, a catalyst for innovation, a location of choice and a unified city for common good. (For the record, I was not any part of that process, I have only been a beneficiary as a citizen of their work through the enhancements in the City.)

After the acceptance of that document, these same community leaders went forward in great effort to use that project as a guide to assist the direction of the City. If you read that project report, many things within that report have moved forward and bring our City to the point it is today, one where the City has very nicely coordinated many aspects of a rounded community to meet the needs of its citizens.

Incorporated into the project was Strategic Route 6 and initiative 6.3 which was to capitalize on the investment the city has made in the Fox theatre and to use that as part of the plan to create a thriving Arts and Culture district. To create an atmosphere as a destination for entertainment and to create the downtown as a place of activity. The buildings, hotels, and renovation taking place downtown has and is creating downtown to be destination to go to eat, and to enjoy some time downtown. Downtown Riverside has changed so much.

The Fox is a marquee to our downtown and is a viable asset to our city. I have gone to many events at the Fox and talking with guests, people come from surrounding areas to enjoy the entertainment, spend some time and stay the night. The Fox is a draw to our city and adds to our overall culture and has the impact that was envisioned within seizing our Destiny.

I am uncertain as to how the term 'surplus' even began to be applied to the Fox. Surplus is an excess or something that is more than what is needed. The Fox is not either of those to this city. The Fox is a viable asset that brings to the culture and the community something that cannot be measured. The economic impact the Fox contributes is far more than to the Fox itself, it has far reaching economic impact to what is happening downtown.

The City made the decision to invest in the Fox and that investment has paid off very nicely to what is what is going on downtown. The City owns a place of historical significance and needs to retain that invaluable asset. It is not a surplus and should not be listed as such. Seizing Our Destiny was a joint effort. The City had invested in the Fox and the business community has responded by adding buildings, restaurants and places for people to go downtown. Has the City changed their commitment to Seizing our Destiny? That was a joint effort put together by many after hours and hours and involvement of hundreds of people through multiple meetings and conversations and the City is considering changing its direction with the Fox with a few short budget meetings?

The implications of selling the Fox will provide a one-time revenue boost and will only be a small band-aid on a small portion of a huge budget crisis. It is not the Fox that created this crisis, but other decisions previously made. I only imagine that the economic boost provided by the Fox far exceeds the economic cost of holding the asset. I am afraid that if the Fox ends up outside the control of the City, it could one day again fall into the dilapidated state it once was and it could reverse the positive impact it is having.

I ask that the City to find viable alternative solutions to its budget crisis, other than labeling the Fox as 'surplus' and giving up one of the few marquee destinations to our downtown. It needs to be retained. It is not surplus.

Respectfully,

Steve Ogilvie

Riverside, CA

cc Mayor  
City Council  
City Manager  
City Attorney  
ACMs  
DCM