



News Release
City Hall
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City Commission approves design architect agreement for a new performing arts center

Sarasota, FL: The City Commission approved an agreement Monday with world renowned architecture firm Renzo Piano Building Workshop, Inc. to design an extraordinary new performing arts center at The Bay where the cultural arts will come to life and inspire generations to come.

The negotiated \$36.9 million contract includes multiple design and construction milestones over an estimated 60-month duration with a concept design as the first design phase milestone.

A concept design is expected to be delivered with a clear understanding of future building costs on or before Nov. 30 when an implementation agreement will be presented to the City Commission for consideration.

“This is a critical step with this process,” said Mayor Liz Alpert. “We’re looking forward to getting the information we need with the initial design concept so we can come together as a community and support this vision, which has always been included with The Bay master plan.”

The new performing arts center is a 50-50 public-private funding partnership between the City of Sarasota and the Sarasota Performing Arts Foundation. The Foundation announced earlier this month it will fund the initial concept design phase as part of its 50% contribution.

"We are thrilled to embark on this transformative journey with Renzo Piano Building Workshop and are grateful to the City Commission for their leadership and vision," said Tania Castroverde Moskalenko, CEO of Sarasota Performing Arts Foundation. "We will be delighted to share initial designs with the community which we are confident will ignite the imagination and energize our residents."

The Architect Selection Committee recommended Renzo Piano Building Workshop, Inc. as the design architect firm in June 2023 after a Request for Qualifications yielded 43 submissions from interested firms around the world. The Design Architect announced last month that Sarasota-based Sweet Sparkman Architects will be the Architect of Record for the project.

"We are excited to embark on this great adventure with the City of Sarasota, Sarasota Performing Arts Foundation, and our new partners, Sweet Sparkman Architects. We envision a building influenced by the water, Floridian nature and the movement of the sun, which gently connects with the natural setting of The Bay Park creating a significant outdoor space for people. Places are all about the people who inhabit them, and we would like to extend our gratitude to the Sarasota community for their support and interest in our work," stated Renzo Piano Building Workshop.

An economic impact study released last week anticipates a new performing arts center will generate over \$150 million in annual economic impact – exceeding the economic impact of the current Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall by 30%. The study was prepared for the Foundation by HR&A Advisors, a leading real estate and economic development firm in the United States.

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About the City of Sarasota: Distinguished by U.S. News and World Report as the No. 11 Best Place to Live in the U.S., the City of Sarasota is a diverse and inclusive community located on Florida's Suncoast with 56,000 year-round residents, several internationally recognized cultural arts venues, stunning sunsets along Lido Beach and Major League spring training baseball with the Baltimore Orioles. Learn more about us at www.SarasotaFL.Gov

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