

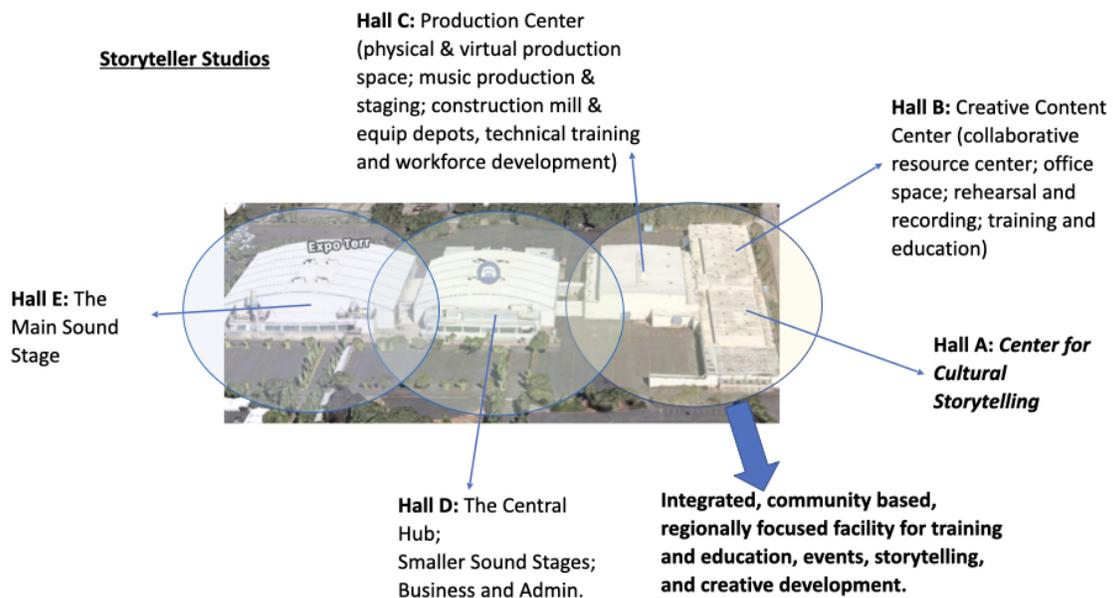
STORYTELLER

Storyteller is the working project title for a proposal for repurposing the Portland Expo Center into a Film & Music Creative Campus that supports content creation while celebrating the cultural heritage of diverse communities and the continuing power of storytelling, particularly through the lens of Japanese, Black, Native American and other priority communities; communities who have a historical connection to the Expo Center and its surrounding land.

Portland Expo Center is a 50+ acre site in North Portland that has traditionally been used for large-scale, “for-hire” shows and conventions. With more than 320,000 indoor square feet the Expo Center is perfectly suited to serve as a comprehensive, integrated “Campus” that can service and build a talented artistic, narrative and creative based population in Portland, in Oregon, and in the Pacific Northwest as a whole.

There is no center like this on the West Coast; the need for such a facility has been demonstrated through a feasibility study done in 2021-22. This proposal would repurpose this unique space from the ground up in a way that provides significant new investment, and real opportunities for community wealth generation and local control.

Storyteller will become a “creative destination” for the PNW that will have long term value to our communities and cultures. Successfully activating this area of North Portland with this community of storytellers will also lead to extensive ancillary development - of restaurants, cultural centers, hotels, and housing - all being driven by a creative content destination site that both celebrates and markets Oregon as a dynamic place to live and work.



At the core of this proposal lies repurposing the existing facilities into three distinct, complementary and interdependent spaces dedicated to the craft, cultural importance, and the enterprise of storytelling:

- (1) Dedicated spaces for celebrating the cultural significance, and preserving the heritage for historically connected communities (i.e. the Japanese, Black, Indigenous and other priority communities);
- (2) dedicated space for accessible, subsidized creative ventures including rehearsal studios, training facilities, music production, equipment vendors, pre- and post-production facilities, and for creative collaboration and experimentation; and
- (3) commercially viable soundstages for larger productions with a focus on priority communities.

More specifically,

- Hall A will become a Cultural Heritage Center, as defined by the priority communities.
- Hall B will become a Creative Content Center, a subsidized shared space for individual creatives and creative companies, again, looking to serve the priority communities.
- Hall C, the Production Center, which structurally cannot support a lighting grid, can be transformed into a shared space for physical production that is accessible to smaller budgeted productions, independent band rehearsal spaces, a construction mill, equipment depots and virtual production.
- Halls D & E, the Studios, which have large open span areas and high ceilings, can be retrofitted to be hireable sound stages with supporting green rooms, dressing rooms, construction spaces, make up, hair and costume areas.

Elsewhere on the Campus existing areas provide plenty of space for parking and for large outdoor events (e.g. concerts and screenings) while public transportation delivers creatives and visitors directly to the campus itself. In addition, wide, flat, open roof areas would mean solar power could be installed to power the Campus and share back to the grid.

Each “sector” can have its own funding source and operating plan: The Heritage Center will be operated by and from the historically connected communities as a public-facing cultural resource and museum, generating revenue through traditional philanthropic sources as well as program and event revenue, fees, and other sources; the Creative & Production Centers will be managed under a non-profit with a similar mix of funding sources, as well as the potential to participate in productions, provide

technical training classes, and other related activities; the commercial Studio will operate as a commercial business.

All three components will be connected together, working as a single integrated enterprise that aggregates and leverages local resources to attract and grow the media industry in Oregon, provide priority communities access into the extraordinary growth in possibilities for the BIPOC community in media development and production, and centralize and multiply training and job placement programs, support and development to specific communities, organizations and small businesses.

Through an upcoming “Request for Expressions of Interest” (RFEI) process, Metro is actively seeking proposals that would bring a “big idea” to the repurposing of the Expo Center giving the land for free and working out a partnership agreement with the chosen project proposal. The “buy in” would therefore be much smaller than if the land and structures needed to be purchased and built from scratch.