



Project Data

Key Scope Items:

- Theater Community Facility Needs Analysis
- Survey of Theater Companies
- Programming for a Proposed Support Facility

Development Budget: TBD

HSP Professionals Involved in Project: Rob Hunden

Time of Service: 2006

Theater Support Facility

Chicago, Illinois

The Cultural Planning Office of the City of Chicago engaged Hunden Strategic Partners and Skidmore, Owings and Merrill to conduct an evaluation of the need for and feasibility of a theater support facility in Chicago.

As part of the City of Chicago's ongoing strategy to support the development of a strong theater community, it was believed that a theater support facility would allow itinerant companies access to low-cost rehearsal and other critical spaces. The theory assumed that the more stable theater companies that could be supported in Chicago, the stronger the theater economy would be, leading to more opportunities for actors, directors, and other theater professionals. This in turn would provide a competitive advantage for the City.

HSP evaluated the current local theater market and assessed the needs of the theater community. A key component of the analysis was comprehensive survey of local theater companies. The results showed that while theater companies could afford to rent space for performances, the rental of space for rehearsals, offices, box office activities, and storage of costumes was cost prohibitive for many. Yet, there was not a strong enough commitment or need demonstrated from the theater community to convince the city that public funds should be invested in a cooperative-style project.