



C I T Y O F
RENO
Memorandum

DATE: September 19, 2025

TO: Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Jackie Bryant, City Manager **APPROVED ELECTRONICALLY**

FROM: Ashley D. Turney, Assistant City Manager

DEPT: City Manager's Office

SUBJECT: September 24, 2025 City Council Meeting, Item C.4 Lear Theater/First Church of Christ, Scientist – Corrected Staff Report

This memo has been prepared to provide Council with the corrected staff report for item C.4 on the September 24, 2025 City Council meeting. The item contained two immaterial clerical errors.

In the "Previous Council Action" section, a date was incomplete. The corrected date is now reflected in the attached staff report.

The second error indicated two unsolicited letters of interest had been received. While multiple parties indicated interest and had expressed their intent to submit a letter, only one letter was ultimately received. This correction has been made in the attached staff report.

STAFF REPORT

Date: September 24, 2025

To: Mayor and City Council

Through: Jackie Bryant, City Manager

Subject: Staff Report (For Possible Action): Presentation, discussion, and direction to staff on the potential disposition, lease, or other direction for the Lear Theater/First Church of Christ, Scientist located at 501 Riverside Drive, Reno, Nevada in response to a Letter of Interest received by Gina Hasler; together with matters which pertain to or are necessarily connected therewith.

From: Ashley D. Turney, Assistant City Manager

Department: City Manager's Office

Summary:

In February 2025, Council gave direction to staff to sell underutilized properties and directed the Lear Theater/First Church of Christ, Scientist to remain in the City's inventory at the time due to lack of budgeted funds needed for repairs and/or development. Multiple parties have since expressed interest in renovation, development, purchase, or management of the Lear. A letter of interest has been received from Gina Hasler. Staff is seeking direction from Council on next steps for the Lear Theater/First Church of Christ, Scientist. The City of Reno Management Policy covering the Disposition of City-Owned Real Property (eff. 06-25-19), Section IX. C. requires Council to determine if and how the property should be disposed.

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

Fiscal Sustainability
Arts, Culture, and Historic Preservation

Previous Council Action:

February 26, 2025 – Council directed the disposition of City-owned properties, including potential sales, leases, or transfers to the Redevelopment Agency.

December 11, 2024 – Council accepted the Historic Structures Report for the Lear Theater.

October 9, 2024 – Council reallocated the remaining State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) due to a lack of responsive bids for landscaping, fence repairs, and improvements on the Lear.

March 8, 2023 – Council approved a \$1,000,000 allocation to the Lear Theater for landscaping,

fence repairs, improvements (to include a Historic Structures Report) from SLFRF September 22, 2021 - Council approved an installment Purchase Agreement between the City of Reno and Artown to purchase of the Lear Theater located at 501 Riverside Drive and the adjacent parking lot located at 0 West First Street in an amount not to exceed \$875,000, to be paid at a rate of \$125,000 per year.

Background:

The City of Reno agreed to purchase the Lear Theater/First Church of Christ, Scientist from Artown in September 2021 in the amount of \$875,000, paid over seven years at a rate of \$125,000 per year. The property was transferred to the City of Reno in February 2023.

On March 8, 2023, Council approved a \$1,000,000 allocation to the Lear Theater for Landscaping/Fence Repairs/Improvements to include a Historic Structures Report (HSR) from State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF). The physical improvements to the property were put out for bid in the fall of 2024 after a lengthy approval process, and after receiving no responsive bids, the remaining funds were reallocated.

The HSR was presented to Council on December 11, 2024 and is intended to be used as a comprehensive planning tool for the proactive maintenance and future rehabilitation of the Lear Theater. The HSR shows the building to be in fair to poor condition overall. The Lear Theater has preservation covenants on the property through 2060 because it has received federal funding from the Historic Preservation Fund under past ownership. Those covenants are passed on to any future owners of the property. The covenants state that all visual and structural alterations must have permission from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). This also means that all updates to the building and the site must be done within the guidelines of the Secretary of the Interior's (SOI) Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. As the Lear is listed on the Local Register of Historic Places, the Historical Resources Commission will be part of the approvals for any changes to the exterior of the building via the Certificate of Appropriateness process.

On February 26, 2025, Council reviewed 50 City-owned properties without a defined long-term strategy, leading to inefficiencies in management and use. These properties were categorized as parcels recommended for disposition, parcels proposed for purchase by the Redevelopment Agency, parcels scheduled for sale to the Regional Transportation Commission, parcels recommended for lease, parcels already under contract for disposition, and parcels to be retained due to long-term agreements or funding obligations. The Lear was identified as a parcel to be retained at the time due to the existing covenants, and the City's lack of budgeted funds for future repairs and/or development. The parking lot for the Lear was identified as a potential property for lease (separate from the theater), however, Council directed staff to wait until after the 2025 Legislative Session before further discussion this option with interested parties.

Staff has since received multiple inquiries regarding the status of the Lear and has received an unsolicited letter of interest from Gina Hasler. Staff is seeking direction from Council on preferred next steps.

Discussion:

The City of Reno agreed to purchase the Lear Theater/First Church of Christ, Scientist from Artown in September 2021 in the amount of \$875,000, paid over seven years at a rate of \$125,000 per year. The property was transferred to the City of Reno in February 2023.

Council previously approved a \$1,000,000 allocation to the Lear Theater for Landscaping/Fence Repairs/Improvements to include a Historic Structures Report (HSR) from State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. The physical improvements to the property were put out for bid in the fall of 2024 after a lengthy approval process, and after receiving no responsive bids, the remaining funds were reallocated.

The HSR was presented to Council on December 11, 2024 and is intended to be used as a comprehensive planning tool for the proactive maintenance and future rehabilitation of the Lear Theater. The HSR shows the building to be in fair to poor condition overall. There are a number of items requiring near term attention, and the City has no budgeted funds to repair the deferred maintenance of the structure as noted in the HSR.

Staff has since received multiple inquiries regarding the status of the Lear and has now received an unsolicited letter of interest from Gina Hasler. Staff is seeking direction from Council on preferred next steps.

Council may choose to award an exclusive contract to Gina Hasler based on the unsolicited letter for purchase, lease, or other option. Council may also direct staff to open a request for qualifications or proposal and return to Council at a future date with responsive bids, or Council may choose to take no direction on the letter of interest received.

Key considerations of this decision:

- The City's long-term ability to manage this asset based on current and future budget conditions
- Trade-off between one-time revenue from a sale and long-term lease income
- Potential increases in property tax revenue if property is sold
- Market conditions affecting property values and sale timing
- Legal and financial obligations (maintenance, security, fence rental, etc.) associated with

maintaining the property

Financial Implications:

None at this time as no funds have been allocated for the Lear Theater. Should Council choose to sell the property, costs for appraisals and transfer will be incurred.

Legal Implications:

Legal review completed for compliance with City procedures and Nevada law. Depending on the final disposition approach chosen, applicable provisions under NRS 268 would need to be followed.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends Council give direction on the next steps on the Lear.

- If Council directs staff to take all actions necessary to prepare the Lear Theater property for sale, direction shall include but not be limited to, ordering appraisals and completing any necessary parcel maps or boundary line adjustments; and direct staff to either enter into negotiations with Gina Hasler and return to Council with a purchase and sale agreement for approval pursuant to NRS 268.059 and 268.063;
- Prepare and release an RFQ/P for the sale or lease of the Lear Theater;
- Auction the property pursuant to NRS 268.062; or
- Take no action.

Proposed Motion:

I move to direct to staff to proceed in accordance with direction given.

Attachments:

Lear HSR
Memo to Council regarding Safety of Lear
Property Disposition Policy
Letter of Interest (Gina Hasler)