



# **Veterans Memorial Coliseum:**

## **Finding a path forward . . .**

**Multnomah County Veterans Task Force**

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**Susan Hartnett, AICP**

**Spectator Facilities and Development Manager**

**City of Portland, Office of Management and Finance**

## VMC Fast Facts

- Built as multi-purpose arena and event venue for conventions, exhibitions and sporting events; construction completed in 1960; seats 8,000 to 12,000
- Funded through \$8M\* local bond approved by voters in 1954
- Square footprint (360' per side), 576 panes of grey tinted glass (each 3.5'X9'), 22' high white painted plywood top band
- Roof rests on four cruciform columns that rise 70' above arena floor; continuous 1,060' curtain screens free-standing arena bowl from ambient light
- Designed by Skidmore Owings and Merrill; International Style Modernism architecture; called “teacup in a glass box”; placed on National Register of Historic Places in 2009

\*\$71M in 2015 dollars







# Perennial Question: What To Do With the Memorial Coliseum

- Question not addressed when Rose Quarter development agreements negotiated
- First study took place two years after Rose Garden Arena (now Moda Center) opened
- Major efforts to explore options took place 1997-98, 2001-03 and 2010-12
- Ideas have included converting it to big box retail or office, expanding it into major athletic and recreation center, and demolishing it to build a baseball stadium
- Most recent proposal for \$31.5M renovation as spectator and event venue failed to achieve support
- Council renamed Memorial Coliseum to Veterans Memorial Coliseum in 2011

# Veterans Memorial Coliseum Options Study

- Two year effort completed in August 2015
- Examined full range of options for building's future including:
  - Continue Current Operations
  - Close and Deconstruct for Future Redevelopment
  - Renovate/Remodel/Transform (5 scenarios)
- For each option, study provided overview of concept, general scope of work, financial performance information, rough construction cost estimates, and a risk assessment
- No specific recommended action
- City Council has not formally reviewed or accepted the report
- Available at [portlandoregon.gov/cao/vmc](http://portlandoregon.gov/cao/vmc)

## Current Status and Expected Direction

- National Trust for Historic Preservation named the Veterans Memorial Coliseum a National Treasure in April 2016
- Further refinement of a “right sized” renovation based on Options Study hypothetical scenarios begins in January 2017
- Mayor-elect Wheeler has signaled interest in finding a path forward for both the VMC and further Rose Quarter area development; no specifics yet
- Discussion about the future of the memorials will be needed when time is right