

# Northrop Advisory Committee

*Report to the President • Executive Summary*

## Background at a Glance

Built in 1929 to host the entire student body, Northrop Memorial Auditorium has a current seating capacity of 4,800, has programmable space totaling 21,150 square feet, and is in use an average of 221 days per year. With an average of 51 University events and 40 rental events per year, an average of 2,263 people attend Northrop per event, and 205,217 attend per year. Its 2007 operating budget is \$5.6 million.

## Current Structural Stabilization Project

The scope of the 2005 Northrop Comprehensive Forensic Study included architectural, structural, life safety, mechanical, electrical, theatrical, and acoustical components. The study concluded that Northrop's structure is safe, but no aspect of the building is without issue or need of repair. The 2007 capital budget funded a \$21 million structural stabilization project to remedy immediate issues. Building asset preservation included tuck-pointing and roof repair. Life safety issues will be addressed with emergency power, lighting, safety railings, and auditorium egress.

## Northrop Advisory Committee

Charged by President Robert Bruininks and Co-chaired by University Services vice president Kathleen O'Brien and College of Liberal Arts dean Steven Rosenstone, the Northrop Advisory Committee came together under the guiding principles of advancing the University's mission, goals, and academic programs and priorities. The committee, made up of University and community representatives, developed for Northrop a vision that supports the University's

strategic goal of becoming one of the top three public research institutions in the world. The committee considered various options for Northrop's future use, to ensure stewardship and historic preservation while serving the University community and beyond.

## Evaluation and Consultation

The future of Northrop depends on successful collaboration within the campus community and with the Minnesota arts community. The advisory committee consulted widely with Twin Cities campus deans, regents professors, the University of Minnesota Foundation and Bush Foundation, and Twin Cities arts organizations, including Minnesota Opera, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, Ordway Center, Historic Theatre Group, Twin Cities Public Television, and Minnesota Public Radio.

## Advisory Committee Findings

- No aspect of Northrop is without issue.
- Northrop's current condition, configuration, and patterns of use make modest contributions to the academic priorities of the University.
- Given the very substantial investment of University funds each year to sustain it, Northrop must play a greater role in the academic life of the University.



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## Recommended Reconfiguration

The advisory committee analyzed and tested many options and alternative program models for Northrop. The committee recommends a reconfiguration that accomplishes the following:

- Maximize available academic space and ensure it is adaptable and flexible.
- Completely reconfigure the auditorium.
- Reconfigured capacity to 3,200–3,500 seats.
- Improve sight lines and acoustics.
- Update backstage facilities.
- Provide welcoming public spaces.
- Preserve historic design elements.
- Address life safety issues.
- Provide audience amenities.

## Funding the Renovation

The estimated cost of the renovation is \$90 million. The current exterior stabilization work will cost approximately \$20 million, leaving \$70 million to complete the renovation. A preliminary funding scenario calls for \$20 million in state of Minnesota funding, \$30 million in University bonding, and \$20 million in private funds.

## Important Next Steps

The three most important next steps in the revitalization of Northrop are:

- Identify Northrop leadership.
- Finalize financial model and capital funding strategy.
- Begin pre-design.
- Develop academic and cultural programming.

## Northrop Advisory Committee

### Co-chairs

Kathleen O'Brien, vice president, University Services

Steven Rosenstone, dean, College of Liberal Arts

### Academic Leaders

John Finnegan, dean, School of Public Health

Gerald Fischer, president and chief executive officer, University Foundation

Tom Fisher, dean, College of Design

Steven Goldstein, vice president for strategic initiatives, University Foundation

Craig Swan, vice provost, Academic Affairs

Richard Weinberg, professor, Institute of Child Development

### Student Leaders

Katie White, student representative, Minnesota Student Association

### Community Leaders

Lynn Casey, chairman and CEO, Padilla Speer Beardsley, Inc.

Eleanor Crosby, community volunteer

Judy Dayton, community volunteer

David Lilly, former University of Minnesota CFO

Marilyn Carlson Nelson, chair and CEO, Carlson Companies