

The Port Theatre Society presents

# The Community Performing Arts Centre



## January 2016 Business Plan



*Putting Community at the Centre of What We Do*

# The Port Theatre Society | Organizational Profile

## **Mission Statement**

The purpose of the Port Theatre is to stimulate and enhance artistic, cultural, and economic activities in the Central Vancouver Island Region through the operation of the 800-seat Port Theatre in the heart of downtown Nanaimo.

## **Vision Statement**

The Port Theatre is a dynamic cultural facility that demonstrates a commitment to excellence, plays a leadership role in the artistic life of Central Vancouver Island, contributes significantly to the economic diversification of the region, is an integral part of the national touring network, and is a continuing source of pride for the City of Nanaimo, the Port of Nanaimo and the surrounding communities.

*“We believe in the transformational power of the artistic experience and are passionate about co-creating opportunities for artists and audiences to share magical moments.”*

## **Contact Information**

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# Core Values | P.L.A.I.D.

## **P - Passion and Professionalism**

- Be passionate about our community and our work; demonstrate a commitment to professional service and skill development.

### **Behaviours: *We will...***

- Act in accordance with the core values
- Build on strengths and endeavour to overcome weaknesses
- Promote independent functioning of staff and a clear understanding of individual responsibilities
- Develop a cohesive, co-operative relationship among team members
- Provide opportunities for the skills development of staff and volunteers

## **L - Leadership**

- Build a creative environment which will maximize the potential of the Theatre and all involved in it.

### **Behaviours: *We will...***

- Work locally, provincially and nationally to support Arts and Culture development
- Build strong relationships between the regional business community and the arts community
- Promote all activities at The Port Theatre appropriately
- Develop a supportive environment within the City of Nanaimo and The Regional District of Nanaimo
- Provide opportunities for creative development of staff and volunteers

## **A - Accountability**

- Be responsible to the owners and users of the Theatre.

### **Behaviours: *We will...***

- Discharge the obligations contained in the Management and Operating agreement with the City of Nanaimo
- Monitor and control operations in a fiscally responsible manner
- Maximize the revenue and utilize potential of the Theatre
- Adapt events, physical plant and staffing requirements in response to opportunities and changing interests

## **I – Integrity**

- Be honest, even-handed and open in all activities.

### **Behaviours: *We will...***

- Match words with actions
- Show trust and respect in all relationships
- Accept responsibility for our actions and share our success as a team
- Evaluate continually the effectiveness and quality of all services provided

## **D - Diversity**

- Be accessible and responsive to all segments of the communities in the mid-island area.

### **Behaviours: *We will...***

- Follow non-discriminatory policies in employment practices and volunteer recruitment
- Be receptive to ideas and suggestions from all sources
- Encourage use of the Theatre for a variety of purposes to meet a wide range of interests and needs
- Make the Theatre a community place where everyone can belong and have FUN!

## A Brief History | Our Story So Far

Long before the birth of the Port Theatre Society, Nanaimo residents dreamt of building a performing arts centre on Nanaimo's waterfront as early as the 1970s. From 1986-88, the Mayor's Task Force on the Arts Centre took the first step in making it a reality, conducting a feasibility study funded by the City of Nanaimo, the Province of BC and the Federal Department of Communication. The Cornerstone Planning Group conducted an extensive community consultation process and determined the size, location and operating model of The Port Theatre. In 1989, City Council adopted the Cornerstone Development Plan, and on September 29, 1989 the City of Nanaimo formed The Port Theatre Society to realize the dream of an 800-seat theatre plus rehearsal studio on the breathtaking waterfront site in downtown Nanaimo.

The City provided start-up funds of \$35,000 and sixteen volunteers formed the Founding Board along with two City Councilors. In 1990, Development Officer Sandra Thomson was engaged and the strategic planning process began for a \$12.5 million campaign. In 1992, architect Terry Williams was selected. His goal was to build a theatre that had good sight lines from all seats, excellent acoustics and a wonderful sense of intimacy. Fundraising began and design got underway. From 1990 to 1994, membership grew from 450 to 2,700. In 1995, when preliminary estimates were received for the construction of the theatre, design and development of the rehearsal studio were postponed so as not to compromise completion of the larger performance facility.

On June 6, 1996 the ground breaking ceremonies were held. The Port Theatre opened its doors in September of 1998 thanks to grants from the Federal/Provincial Infrastructure Works Program and an outstanding level of community support. Of the \$13.1 million budget, \$8.6 million came from the Infrastructure Works program. The remaining \$4.5 million was from individuals, service clubs and corporate donations, and the City of Nanaimo and Regional District Areas A, B, C, D and E.

In 1999 the Society saw 178 events and 68,071 patrons through its doors. In 2013 this number increased to 249 events and 102,168 patrons, the highest number yet. This growth is projected to continue for the 2014 calendar year as attendance is already on its way to exceeding that figure. 2013 also saw the Society process the highest volume of dollars in ticket sales for itself and its clients, totaling over \$2.6 million. Aside from these successes, the Society has been able to raise over \$1.7 million for capital upgrades to the theatre over the last 15 years.

While the original plans for a rehearsal studio were shelved before construction began in 1996, the Society continued to see the need in the community for such a space. The Port Theatre raised funds through a capital campaign to invest in geo-technical engineering and architectural design. Technical drawings for a studio theatre and 3 rehearsal halls were completed in 2008.

Since 2009, the Port Theatre Society Board of Directors and staff have made this project a priority in recognition of the demand and needs of the community. The Society conducted a preliminary community consultation with 23 potential user groups to determine their needs for the studio theatre and rehearsal spaces. This included creating and implemented a series of intimate performances in the lobby and on stage to prove the popularity of small-scale performance space. In the spring of 2014, the Society embarked on a community consultation process that included 3 open house events with nearly 300 attendees, a survey of over 800 community members with 82% of respondents in support of the project, and the collection of over 350 letters of support.

Now, the Society stands on the precipice of seeing this project through to completion to finally realize the potential of The Port Theatre as a full Community Performing Arts Centre.

# Project Mission | Completing the Vision

The completion of the Port Theatres Community Performing Arts Centre is within our reach. The overriding purpose of this project is to provide affordable performance and rehearsal space to local arts organizations throughout Nanaimo and the Region and provide excellent facilities for professional arts organizations to grow, succeed and thrive.

## Our objectives for building this addition are:

- To provide long term, sustainable, accessible and affordable performance and rehearsal spaces for community users,
- To provide suitable space for local and touring professional artists,
- To encourage creative diversity throughout Nanaimo and the region,
- To support professional artists and cultural workers within the community,
- To attract more national and international touring acts to Nanaimo.

*This facility would be unique on Vancouver Island and confirm Nanaimo's role as leaders in arts and culture, creating exceptional opportunities for this community.*

## The proposed facilities will include:

- **50-240 seat flexible, purpose-built performance space:**
  - Acoustically tunable as a concert hall,
  - Classic black-box theatre setting,
  - Intimate cabaret setting,
  - Retractable seating for flat floor use.
- **Rehearsal spaces:**
  - 2 separate rehearsal spaces available to the community,
  - Could be used as performance venues with some production capabilities,
  - Available for workshops, master classes, and other alternative uses,
  - Sprung floors suitable for dance,
  - Both spaces at main stage level can be used in conjunction with Port Theatre events.
- **Additional services:**
  - Washrooms on south side of existing Port Theatre,
  - Extra loading space for main stage events to increase efficiencies,
  - Additional lobby space accessible via Diana Krall Plaza.

# Technical Specifications

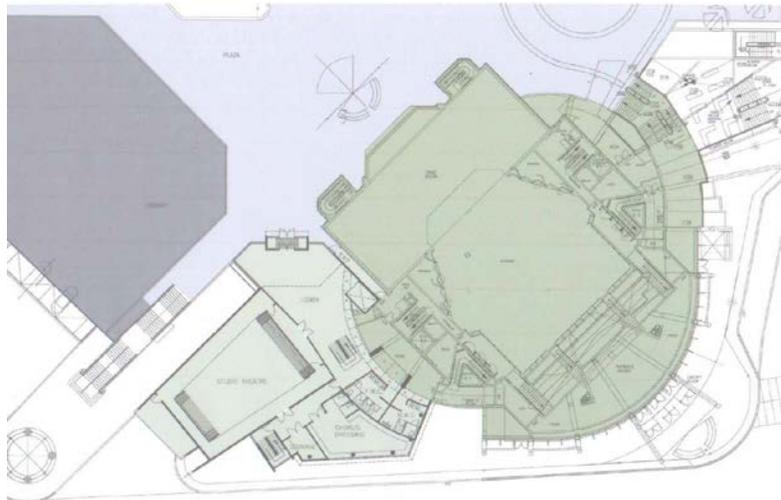
**Location:** South side of existing theatre building between loading dock and passenger pull-in loading zone

**Gross building space:** 15000 ft<sup>2</sup> on three levels

**Capacity:** 50 - 240 seated audience in the studio theatre

**Ground floor:** Equipment storage, technical support areas, concession  
Approx. 20' x 40' rehearsal space adjacent to existing theatre  
Approx. 20' x 20' rehearsal hall  
Service and storage area, crew space  
Male and female public washrooms for main stage  
Freight elevator

**Second floor:** Freight elevator  
Ancillary spaces



PATRON/PLAZA LEVEL

**Third Floor:** 65' x 45' studio theatre space  
High ceiling with lighting grid  
Variable acoustics  
Lobby entrance off Diana Krall Plaza  
Dedicated Ticket Centre and Front of House office  
Concession/bar  
Male and female public washrooms

**Fourth floor/Rooftop:** Mechanical/technical service area

# Project Mission | Serving the Region

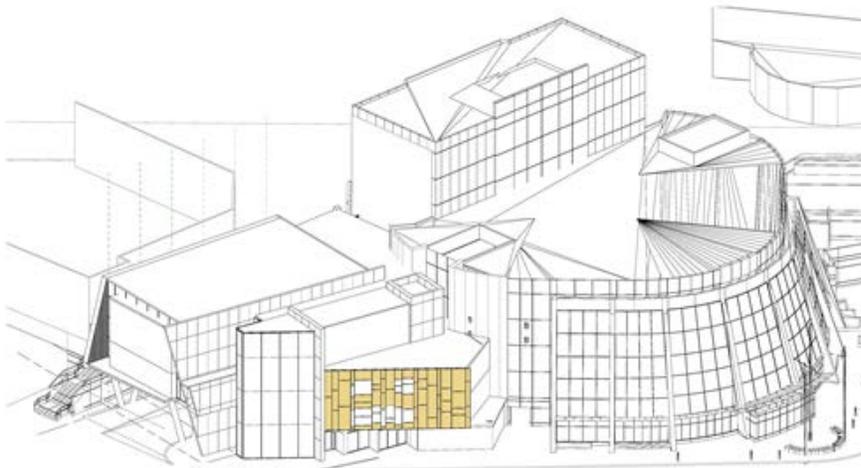
Now is the time to build the Community Performing Arts Centre expansion to The Port Theatre. Arts and culture are thriving in our region and are becoming increasingly recognized as important economic drivers. This spring City Council unanimously passed the Cultural Plan for a Creative Nanaimo, on the heels of recognizing Cultural Vitality as the City's fourth pillar of sustainability, while the recent study by the Nanaimo Economic Development Corporation showed an arts & culture impact to our community of \$125M annually.

A studio theatre and rehearsal spaces were identified as a community need in the original 1986-88 feasibility study by the Cornerstone Group, and since opening in 1998 rental clients of The Port Theatre have recognized and expressed the need for this space in ever increasing numbers. The creative community has also grown, with more groups presenting a wider variety of artistic expressions that require a smaller performance venue.

*This project has been identified in "A Cultural Plan for a Creative Nanaimo", which lists the "Need for expansion of the Port Theatre to create a studio theatre/rehearsal space complex" as a priority.*

There is value to the community and the City in creating a comprehensive arts centre that can offer alternative experiences for both local groups and touring professionals. This project is aimed at sharing resources and taking advantage of economies of scale in centralizing services. Arts and culture organizations through Nanaimo must change the way in which we work. We cannot continue to work in silos. We need to work together in meaningful ways to adapt successfully to an ever-changing climate.

The Port Theatre's Board of Directors, staff and 200+ volunteers are committed to meeting our community's need, while serving the City. The need for high caliber arts venues of this size has never been greater.



*The Community Performing Arts Centre's contemporary design by Terence Williams, designer of the original Port Theatre, perfectly contrasts the features of the existing building. Its edges and angles are more than just an aesthetic statement—we hope to encourage edginess in the programming at the Centre: more contemporary and experimental content, more diversity and inclusion, and more artistic risk.*

# Impact

Top Benefits as indicated in our Community Survey

## 1. More diverse programming possibilities by and for the community

- Provides an intimate, innovative, and configurable performance space for community groups, suitable for all audiences of up to 240, while rehearsal halls provide alternative performance space.
- Provides more opportunity for local, regional and national artists from all disciplines to attract new audiences of all ages and interests.

## 2. Creation of critical mass within the Arts District

- Increased activity in the downtown core with 250 or more events annually and an average of 200 patrons per event.
- Animation of Diana Krall plaza, identified as a need in the Nanaimo Cultural Plan, would be largely resolved with lobby access from the plaza.

## 3. Nurturing arts professionals within the community

- Increased arts and culture activity will allow for arts professionals to thrive, allow for more work in the creative sector throughout the region, and more opportunities for students coming out of relevant programs at VIU.

## 4. Creating and sharing resources

- Maximum efficiencies by having one management team with the ability to share equipment, office systems, staff and resources.
- Sharing existing infrastructure including theatrical equipment, service and maintenance contracts, heating, cooling and power.
- Ensuring long-term sustainable performance & rehearsal space for the community

## 5. Increasing Nanaimo's Arts & Culture profile provincially and nationally

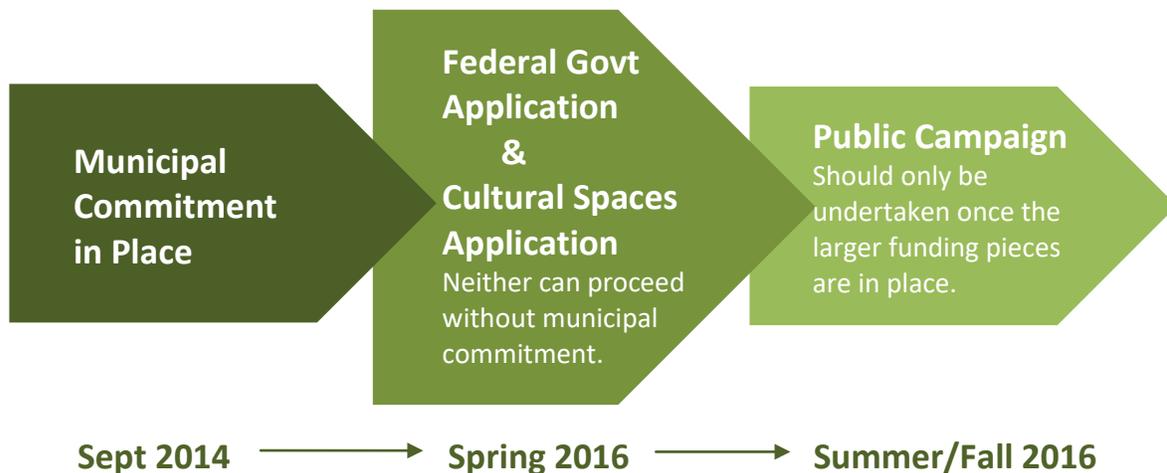
- This facility will be unique on Vancouver Island.
- Nanaimo will become a destination for touring acts.
- This facility will attract audiences from farther afield.

***“This [new facility] is integral to the growth of Nanaimo.”***

*Survey comment, Gerold Haukenfrers  
President, Nanaimo Blues Society*

# Funding Campaign Strategy

<b>City of Nanaimo</b> Sept 2014 City Council resolution to allocate funds	<b>\$4.6 mil</b>
<b>Federal Government</b> Infrastructure Funding	<i>Application Pending</i>
<b>Dept. of Canadian Heritage</b>	<i>Application Pending</i>
<b>Port Theatre Society Capital Campaign</b> Raised and spent on design/engineering to date Balance in project account/pledged as of Jan. 2016	<b>\$485,000</b> <b>\$160,000</b>
<b>Naming Sponsorship opportunities</b> Entire Performing Arts Centre Port Theatre Studio Theatre Rehearsal Room #1 Rehearsal Room #2 Studio Lobby	<i>Secured</i>     <i>Secured</i>
<b>Public/Community Campaign</b> Corporate Donations Foundations Campaign Service Clubs Special Individual Gifts Members Gifts Seat Sale	
<b>Overall Campaign Target</b> Total Design & Construction Costs	<b>\$12.6million</b>



# Project Team



**COMMISSIONED BY:  
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**STRUCTURAL      SCHEMATIC DESIGN DRAWINGS  
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