

THE COMMUNITY PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE

FAQ: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Updated December 2014

Why is this venue important?

For more than 20 years, our community has expressed the need for alternative and intimate spaces. 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. These groups often have very specific needs in terms of space to rehearse, perform, grow an audience, and excel. Our goal is to nurture these groups and meet the ever growing demand.

FUNDING MODEL

What does the funding model look like?

The Community Performing Arts Centre completion has a projected cost of \$12.6mil. The Port Theatre Society has committed to raising \$8mil, 2/3rds of the project. The City of Nanaimo has committed \$4.6mil to the project.

How will the City of Nanaimo pay its \$4.6mil? What will be the impact to taxpayers?

The objective is to minimize impact to Nanaimo citizens and taxpayers. City of Nanaimo has committed to adding this project to its Building Canada application. ***This project could qualify for up to \$8mil***, any and all funds received from the Building Canada fund would replace the City's contribution. This funding is contingent on the Port Theatre Society raising its portion of the total.

Why did the Port Theatre Society ask the City of Nanaimo to be guarantor for a \$2mil line of credit?

The Port Theatre is a city-owned facility, and so The Port Theatre Society has transferred all assets to the City of Nanaimo. This means that The Port Theatre Society doesn't qualify for a line of credit despite its financial stability. The Port Theatre is responsible for fundraising to pay off this Line of Credit.

Does the Port Theatre believe it is in a position to secure \$8mil?

Yes, we have been in discussion with two funding bodies for three years whose potential contribution totals \$5-6mil. Through a community fundraising campaign, the Port Theatre will raise the remaining funds.

The Port Theatre Society has a proven track record of fundraising success: in the 1990s the society raised \$13 mil towards the building of the Port Theatre, gifted the building to the City of Nanaimo, and has continued to raise funds for capital & equipment upgrades to the city-owned facility ever since.

Why is the City's contribution important?

Up-front municipal funding is the first step in being able to leverage additional funds from provincial, federal and corporate sources. The Port Theatre Society is able to move ahead in applying for \$2.5mil through Heritage Canada because of the City's public commitment to this project. It is not possible to secure funding from senior levels of government for infrastructure projects without such a commitment. This funding model has been developed to maximize opportunities and to minimize municipal contribution.

How about raising ticket prices to help pay for this project?

The Port Theatre does not set the ticket price for rental clients. Only 15-20 events per year are presented directly by the Port Theatre Society.

The Port Theatre has a \$0.50-\$2 Capital Development Fee (CDF) that is added to the price of each ticket. The Board of Directors has allocated \$1 of the CDF on every ticket to the Community Performing Arts Centre project, while the remainder of the funds are allocated to necessary equipment maintenance and replacement.

THE FACILITIES

What are the different seating variations in the studio theatre?

The retractable seating system will allow for a variety of flexible seating arrangements including full extension for a 220-seat audience, theatre in the round, intimate cabaret-style seating, and full flat floor use.

Is retractable seating comfortable?

Yes, retractable seating is sophisticated and comfortable. You will hardly notice the difference.

What will the acoustics be like?

Acoustics have been a priority from the beginning. The same team that designed the acoustics for the main stage is doing so for the studio theatre. The space will be acoustically tunable to accommodate a variety of music genres.

Could all three rehearsal spaces be used at the same time?

Yes! This would be an ideal situation. One space could be accessed by a group performing on the main stage for their rehearsals, while a community group holds a weekly rehearsal in the second space, and another group hosts a workshop, meeting, or performance in the third space. Accessibility will be key.

Will this centre have a liquor license?

We will be speaking with a liquor licensing consultant to determine the best kind of license for the space.

COMMUNITY USERS

Will this centre be useful for my group's individual needs?

We will be customizing interiors based on user groups' needs, and through our community consultation process have already started to gather input. Our plan is to supply as much equipment and amenities as required by user groups, with no additional rental costs. If there is something your group needs, make sure you ask!

Will these spaces be affordable to community groups?

Absolutely. The primary objective of The Port Theatre staff and Board of Directors is to ensure that this centre is affordable to community groups in the context of community use and services provided. The Port Theatre is committed to developing an operating model with reasonable rental rates at the core.

IN THE COMMUNITY

How will this centre impact the downtown & public spaces?

This centre will bring hundreds of people to the downtown core on an almost daily basis, and increase economic activity throughout the day and the evenings. Animation of Diana Krall plaza has been identified as a need in the Nanaimo Cultural Plan and City planning. The addition's entrance at the plaza-level will help resolve existing issues and create vibrancy at the centre of downtown.

Why was this design team chosen?

The same team that designed the original Port Theatre has been involved in this project from the very start, to ensure an intimate understanding of the current building in order to maximize efficiencies when the two spaces are integrated. The tendering process for the next stages of this project will follow City of Nanaimo procedure.

What is the timeline to get this centre built?

Our timeline shows tendering in the fall of 2015, with construction completed in 2017 as part of Canada's Sesquicentennial celebration.

How can I/my business/my organization support this project?

First and foremost become knowledgeable about the project and the important role arts & culture have to play in our community's economy, health, and well-being. We are always happy to share plans and project updates throughout the process, and look forward to keeping you informed. Finally, stay tuned for the launch of our public fundraising campaign in the not too distant future!