



## COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: October 25, 2024  
Contact: Natalie Lue  
Contact No.: 604.665.3020  
RTS No.: 16477  
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20  
Meeting Date: November 26, 2024  
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Vancouver City Council  
FROM: General Manager of Arts, Culture, and Community Services  
SUBJECT: Vancouver Civic Theatres Rental Rates 2025-2026

### Recommendations

- A. THAT Council approve the recommended rental rates and fee increases for commercial licensees, which are outlined in the Vancouver Civic Theatres Summary of Commercial Rental Rates that is attached to this report as Appendix A.
- B. THAT Council approve the recommended rental rates and fee increases for not-for-profit organizations and Theatre Rental Grant (TRG) recipients, which are outlined in the Vancouver Civic Theatres Summary of Non-Profit and Grant Rental Rates that is attached to this report as Appendix B.

### Purpose and Executive Summary

This report seeks Council approval of fee increases of 4% for the 2025/2026 performing arts season that runs from September 1, 2025 to August 31, 2026 for commercial licensees, as outlined in the Summary of Rental Rates contained in Appendix A, for rental use of the Vancouver Civic Theatres.

This report also recommends Council approval of fee increases of 3% for the 2025/2026 performing arts season that runs from September 1, 2025 to August 31, 2026 for non-profit organizations and Theatre Rental Grant recipients as outlined in the Summary of Rental Rates contained in Appendix B, for rental use of the Vancouver Civic Theatres. When factoring in additional event revenues (food and beverage, ticketing fees, parking, merchandise commission) and management of discretionary spend, incremental VCT revenues for 2025 are forecast to cover increases in operational costs, while maintaining rental rates in the range of similar type venues.

## **Council Authority/Previous Decisions**

On November 28, 2023 (RTS 15719) Council approved new rental rates for VCT that included both commercial and not-for-profit rental rates for the performing arts season that runs from September 1, 2024 to August 31, 2025.

On May 29, 2024 (RTS 16264), Council approved 45 Theatre Rental Grants totalling \$1,275,294 for the period of September 1 through December 31, 2024 and 66 Theatre Rental Grants totalling \$1,866,975 for the period of January 1 through August 31, 2025.

## **City Manager's Comments**

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

## **Context and Background**

VCT rental rates are adjusted each year prior to the preparation of the annual operating budget. Adjustments are made effective September 1<sup>st</sup> of each year in alignment with the traditional performing arts season. Rental rates are set annually in relation to the specific economic factors, such as general inflation, cost, and labour increases, the City's budget objectives, and in relation to the local, regional, and national market.

## **Discussion**

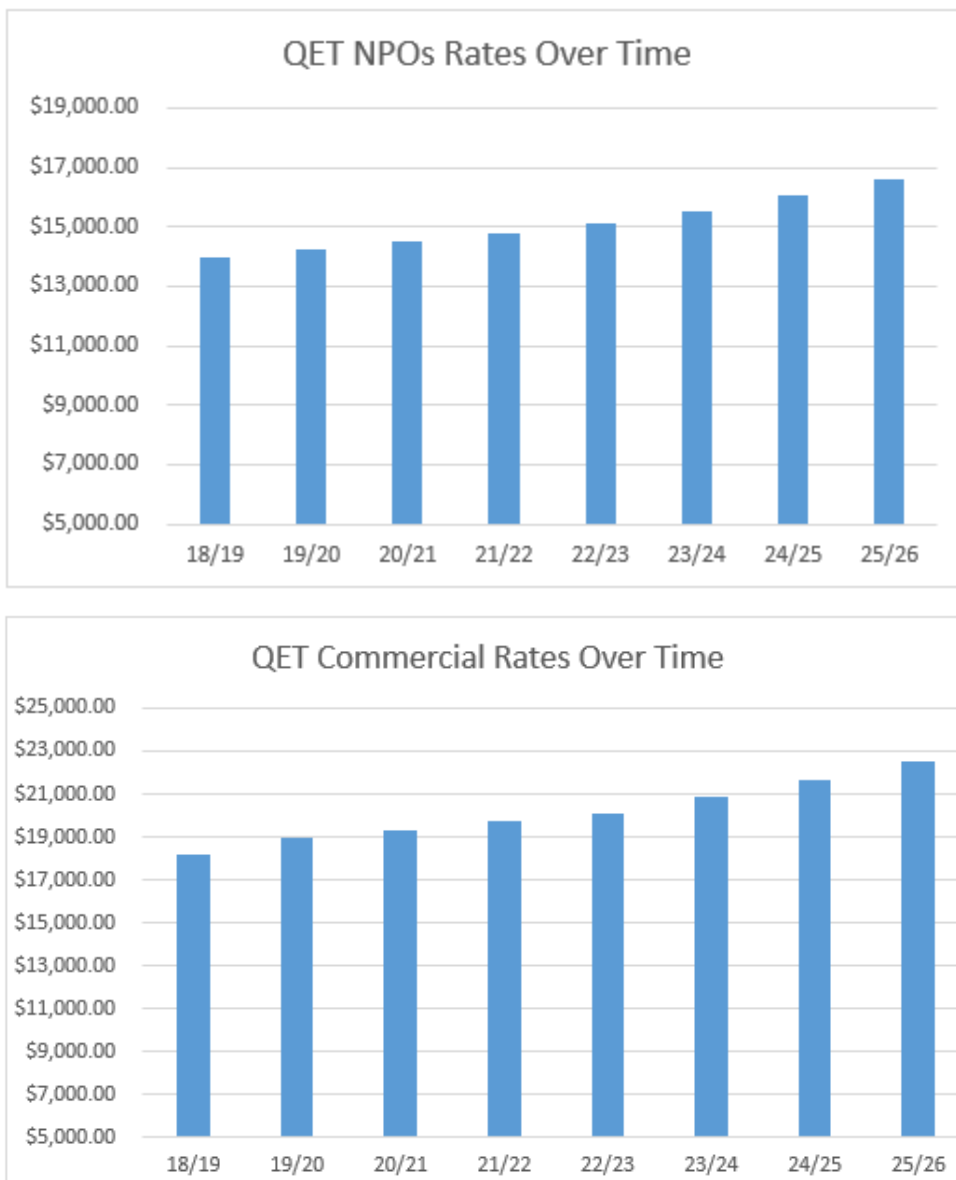
### Rental Rate Evaluation Process and Rationale for Increase

Recommended VCT rental rates are set based on operational cost and in relation to rental rates of comparable facilities to align with local, national, and international markets. Rental rate increases at Vancouver Civic Theatres' large capacity venues – the Queen Elizabeth Theatres (QET) and Orpheum – also allow for subsidization of VCT's smaller capacity, community-based venues – the Annex and the Vancouver Playhouse – where the rents are lower than their operating cost. This maintains accessibility within budget constraints and competitiveness in the market.

Recommended rental rate increases and associated pricing are determined as part of the overall business plan of the VCT venues, addressing the need to cover operational costs while remaining competitive to the local market and ensuring the VCT venues continue to be utilized at a high rate. Lower utilization impacts other VCT revenues (food and beverage, ticketing fees, parking revenue, merchandise commissions) which can negatively impact net income.

Figure 1 below shows rental rates at QET (including recommended rates for 2025/26) as an example of a premiere performing arts centre that books both non-profit and commercial operators. The charts demonstrate a gradual and consistent increase over the past eight years for commercial and non-profit organizations' (NPOs) rates.

Figure 1 - QET Rental Rates for NPOs and Commercial events



Upon review of the VCT operating costs and the related market rates of similar venues, staff are recommending a 4% increase for commercial rental rates, and a 3% increase for NPO, and TRG rental rates for the 2025/2026 season (September 1, 2025 to August 31, 2026), as per Appendices A and B.

To demonstrate the impact of rental rates proposed in Recommendations A and B, a summary schedule of some of the key rental rates for the current season and the proposed rates for the next season are shown below in Figure 2 for comparison. Full Proposed Rate Schedules can be found in Appendix A and B.

Figure 2 – VCT Proposed Rental Rate Increases – 2025-2026

Venue	Rental Type	24/25	25/26	
		Fee	Fee	% Chg.
QET & Orpheum	Commercial Licensees	\$ 21,635	\$ 22,500	4.00
	NPOs/TRG Licensees	\$ 16,090	\$ 16,575	3.00
Vancouver Playhouse	Commercial Licensees	\$ 5,025	\$ 5,225	4.00
	NPOs/TRG Licensees	\$ 4,880	\$ 5,025	3.00
Annex	Commercial Licensees	\$ 1,655	\$ 1,720	4.00
	NPOs/TRG Licensees	\$ 1,610	\$ 1,660	3.00

The VCT advisory committee will meet on November 21, 2024 to consider endorsement of the rates as outlined in Appendices A and B, and their motion will be communicated to Council prior to the report being considered on November 26, 2024. In preparation for a potential increase, all booking enquiries received for the 2025/2026 season have been informed of a potential rental increase pending Council approval. If Council approves the 2025/2026 rental rates, a confirmation letter will be sent to all regular users of VCT to confirm these rates.

#### Vancouver Civic Theatres Facility Fees

The VCT does not operate an in-house box office system and has implemented an Approved Ticket Provider program. On behalf of VCT rental clients, ticketing companies will continue to charge facility improvement fees directly to ticket purchasers attending events at Civic Theatres and remit this fee to VCT. The fee, net of VCT and City administrative costs (15%), is transferred to the VCT capital facility reserve for capital maintenance of the theatres. For the 2025/2026 Season, staff are recommending that the facility fee remain un-changed for both commercial and NPO rates to ensure that these rates remain within market value, as compared with both local and national performing arts centres.

#### **Financial Implications**

The rental rate increase would impact revenues from September 1, 2025 through August 31, 2026. The approved rates will be included in the 2025 and 2026 operating budget.

Figure 3 below, shows an estimated overall increase in rate related rental revenue of approximately \$262,067 for the 2025/2026 Season.

Figure 3 - estimated revenues with fee increases forecast\*

Rate Type	<u>2025/2026 Financial Impact:</u>			
	25/26 With No Increase	25/26 With Proposed Increase	Difference	Rate Increase
COMMERCIAL	2,908,466	3,024,805	116,339	4.00%
TRG	4,169,657	4,294,747	125,090	3.00%
NPOs	687,935	708,573	20,638	3.00%
	<b>\$ 7,766,058</b>	<b>\$ 8,028,125</b>	<b>\$ 262,067</b>	

\* based on fiscal year 2025 forecast


Rental rates have historically been set to recover the operational cost of VCT, but not to recover the full cost including all capital costs and overhead. The proposed rates provide for operating cost recovery across all venues. When factoring in additional event revenues (food and beverage, ticketing fees, parking, merchandise commission) and management of discretionary spend, forecasts show VCT will be able to cover overall operational cost with the recommended adjustment to rental rate revenues.

**Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications associated with this report’s recommendations.

\* \* \* \* \*

**APPENDIX A  
VANCOUVER CIVIC THEATRES SUMMARY OF COMMERCIAL RENTAL RATES**

	<b>Summary of Rental Rates for</b> SEPT. 1, 2025 to AUGUST 31, 2026 For Commercial Licensees  Subject to Council approval	<b>16-Oct-24</b>
	<b>QUEEN ELIZABETH THEATRE &amp; ORPHEUM</b>	<b>Commercial</b> 8:00 am - midnight
	1 Performance 2 Performances (In the same time period) Conference (maximum 10 public hours)	<b>\$22,500</b> <b>\$33,750</b> <b>\$33,750</b>
	Rental Deposit <i>Per Performance or Set Up Day (Non-Refundable)</i> *Technical Day Film Shoot Per Day 8:00 am to 8:00 am (Labour extra)	<b>\$5,045</b> <b>\$8,370</b> <b>\$11,425</b>
<i>ALL RATES ARE SUBJECT TO GST.</i>		
<i>*Monday - Saturday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm , Head Carp, Head Electric at regular rates, any additional hours after 5:00 pm are subject to VCT Director approval and venue availability</i>		
<b>VANCOUVER PLAYHOUSE</b>	<b>Commercial</b> 8:00 am - midnight	
1 Performance 2 Performances in the same time period Conference (maximum 10 public hours)	<b>\$5,225</b> <b>\$7,845</b> <b>\$7,845</b>	
Rental Deposit <i>Per Performance or Set Up Day (Non-Refundable)</i> Technical Day (Head Carp, Head Electric, Stage Door included at regular rates only) Film Shoot Per Day 8:00 am to 8:00 am (Labour extra)	<b>\$1,300</b> <b>\$2,570</b> <b>\$3,785</b>	
<i>ALL RATES ARE SUBJECT TO GST.</i>		
<b>ANNEX</b>	<b>Commercial</b> 8:00 am - midnight	
1 Performance 2 Performances (In the same time period)	<b>\$1,720</b> <b>\$2,600</b>	
Rental Deposit (Non-Refundable) Technical Day (Labour Extra) Film Shoot Per Day 8:00 am to 8:00 am (Labour extra)	<b>\$465</b> <b>\$840</b> <b>\$1,720</b>	
<i>ALL RATES ARE SUBJECT TO GST.</i>		
<b>ᓃᓂᓂᓂᓂᓂ Xwtl'a7shn</b>	<b>Commercial</b> 8:00 am - 8:00 am (24 hour period)	
Daily (Labour Extra) Rental Deposit (Non-Refundable)	<b>\$1,930</b> <b>\$1,930</b>	
<i>ALL RATES ARE SUBJECT TO GST.</i>		
<b>ANCILLARY SPACES</b>	<b>Commercial</b> 8:00 am - midnight	
Queen Elizabeth Salons (Labour Extra) Theatre Lobbies (QET/ORPHEUM) (Labour Extra) QET/Orpheum Rehearsal Hall and Playhouse Lobby or Studio (Labour Extra)	<b>\$805</b> <b>\$2,155</b> <b>\$620</b>	
<i>ALL RATES ARE SUBJECT TO GST. (these rates are not applicable for film shoot rentals)</i>		
<b>FACILITY FEE</b>		
\$4.75* per ticket sold \$20.00 and over *(tax included)		

**APPENDIX B  
VANCOUVER CIVIC THEATRES SUMMARY OF NON-PROFIT AND GRANT RENTAL RATES**

<b>VANCOUVER CIVIC THEATRES</b>	<b>Summary of Rental Rates for</b>		<b>16-Oct-24</b>	
	SEPTEMBER 1, 2025 to AUGUST 31, 2026			
	For Not-For-Profit, Theatre Rental Grant (TRG), and VCT Grant Licensees			
	Subject to Council approval			
<b>QUEEN ELIZABETH THEATRE &amp; ORPHEUM</b>	<b>Full Day</b> 8:00 am - midnight	<b>Half Day</b> 8:00 am - 5:00 pm		
1 Performance	<b>\$16,575</b>	<b>\$12,305</b>		
1 Performance (Orchestra Level Only)	<b>\$12,305</b>	<b>\$9,885</b>		
2 Performances (In the same time period)	<b>\$24,855</b>	<b>\$14,820</b>		
2 Performances (Orchestra Level Only)	<b>\$18,460</b>	<b>\$14,820</b>		
Secondary School Graduation (11:00 am or 7:00 pm start time - max 3 hour event)			<b>\$12,305</b>	
Rental Deposit <i>Per Performance or Set Up Day (Non-Refundable)</i>			<b>\$4,945</b>	
*Technical Day			<b>\$8,215</b>	
Half Day Rehearsal (max 4.5 hour event, must finish by 5:00 pm)			<b>\$2,895</b>	
Hourly Rate			<b>\$655</b>	
<b>ALL RATES ARE SUBJECT TO GST.</b>				
<i>*Monday - Saturday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm , Head Carp, Head Electric at regular rates, any additional hours after 5:00 pm are subject to VCT Director approval and venue availability</i>				
<b>VANCOUVER PLAYHOUSE</b>	<b>Full Day</b> 8:00 am - midnight	<b>Half Day</b> 8:00 am - 5:00 pm		
1 Performance	<b>\$5,025</b>	<b>\$3,765</b>		
2 Performances (In the same time period)	<b>\$7,535</b>	<b>\$5,635</b>		
Rental Deposit <i>Per Performance or Set Up Day (Non-Refundable)</i>			<b>\$1,280</b>	
Technical Day (Head Carp, Head Electric, Stage Door included at regular rates only)			<b>\$2,525</b>	
Half Day Rehearsal (max 4.5 hour event, must finish by 5:00 pm)			<b>\$1,895</b>	
Hourly Rate			<b>\$435</b>	
<b>ALL RATES ARE SUBJECT TO GST.</b>				
<b>ANNEX</b>	<b>Full Day</b> 8:00 am - midnight	<b>Half Day</b> 8:00 am - 5:00 pm		
1 Performance	<b>\$1,660</b>	<b>\$1,660</b>		
2 Performances (In the same time period)	<b>\$2,490</b>	<b>\$2,490</b>		
Rental Deposit <i>Per Performance or Set Up Day (Non-Refundable)</i>			<b>\$455</b>	
Technical Day (One Theatre Technician included at regular rates only)			<b>\$830</b>	
<b>ALL RATES ARE SUBJECT TO GST.</b>				
<b>ᓃx<sup>w</sup>ᓃᓃᓃᓃ Xwtl'a7shn</b>	<b>8:00 am - 8:00 am (24 hour period)</b>			
Daily (Labour Extra)				<b>\$580</b>
Rental Deposit <i>Per Performance or Set Up Day (Non-Refundable)</i>				<b>\$580</b>
<b>ALL RATES ARE SUBJECT TO GST.</b>				

ANCILLARY SPACES	Full Day 8:00 am - midnight	Half Day 8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Queen Elizabeth Salons (Labour Extra)	<b>\$455</b>	<b>\$300</b>
Theatre Lobbies (QET/ORPHEUM/PLAYHOUSE) (Labour Extra)	<b>\$455</b>	<b>\$300</b>
QET/Orpheum Rehearsal Hall and Playhouse Studio (Labour Extra)	<b>\$455</b>	<b>\$300</b>
<i>ALL RATES ARE SUBJECT TO GST.</i>		

FACILITY FEE
\$4.00* per ticket sold \$20.00 and over *(tax included)

**To qualify for these rates, Licensees must be a registered non-profit society, a community service co-op registered with BC Registry Services**