



COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: October 28, 2025
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VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: December 10, 2025
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Standing Committee on City Finance and Services
FROM: General Manager, Arts, Culture, and Community Services
SUBJECT: Vancouver Civic Theatres Rental Rates 2026-2027

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 recommends Council approval of fee increases for the 2026/2027 performing arts season that runs from September 1, 2026 to August 31, 2027 for rental use of the Vancouver Civic Theatres as follows:

- 5% for commercial licensees, as outlined in the Summary of Rental Rates contained in Appendix A.
- 3.5% for non-profit organizations and Theatre Rental Grant recipients as outlined in the Summary of Rental Rates contained in Appendix B.

When factoring in additional event revenues (food and beverage, ticketing fees, parking, merchandise commission), incremental VCT revenues for 2026 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 26, 2024 (RTS 16477) 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, 2025 to August 31, 2026.

On June 4, 2025 (RTS 17898), Council approved 47 Theatre Rental Grants totalling \$1,278,350 for the period of September 1 through December 31, 2025 and 61 Theatre Rental Grants totalling \$1,902,525 for the period of January 1 through August 31, 2026.

City Manager's Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

Context and Background

VCT rental rates are adjusted each year during the preparation of the annual operating budget. Adjustments are made effective September 1st 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

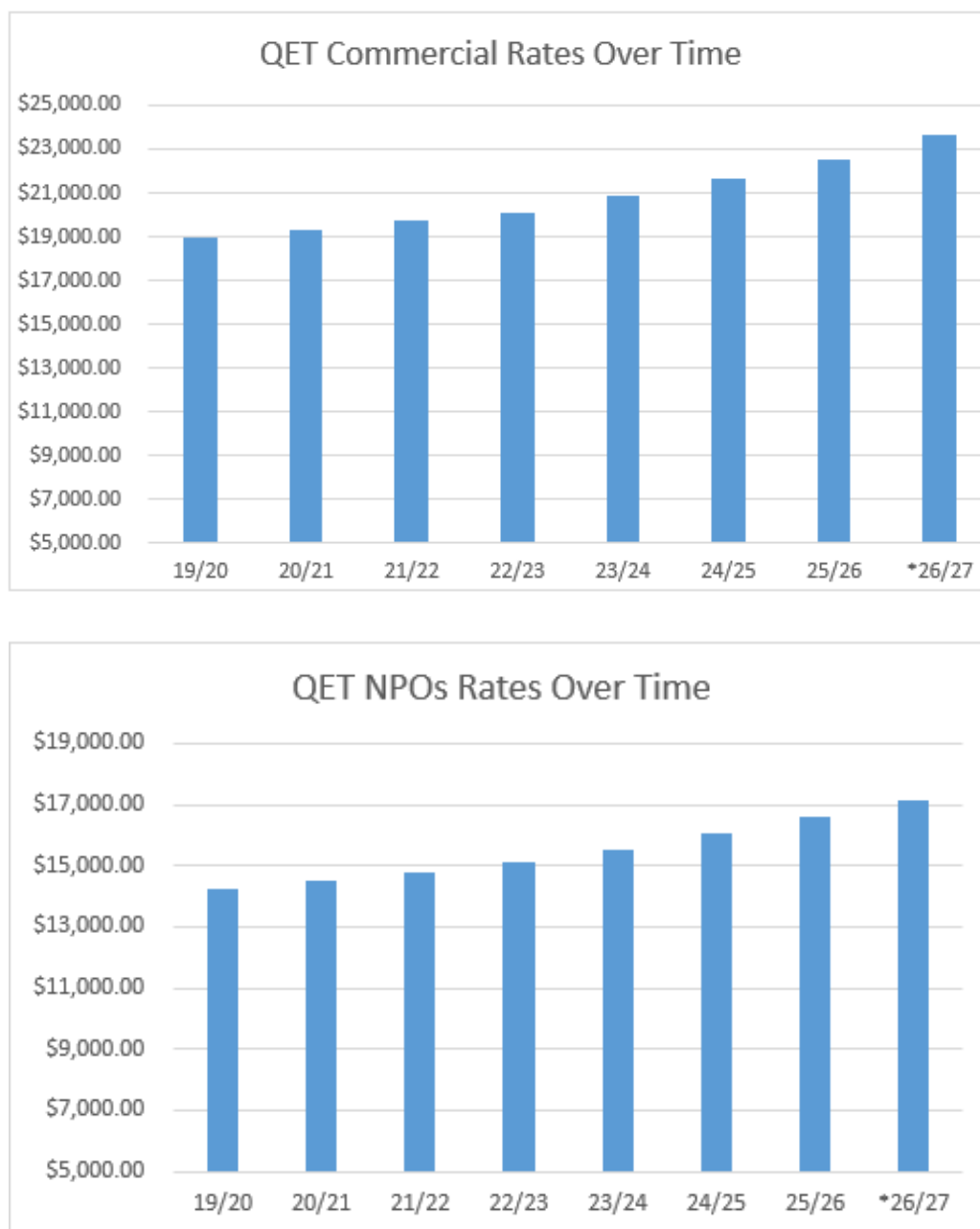
Recommended VCT rental rates are set based on operational cost and in relation to rental rates of comparable facilities to align with local, national, and international markets. Rental rate increases at Vancouver Civic Theatres' large capacity venues – the Queen Elizabeth Theatre (QET) and Orpheum – 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 an optimum rate. Lower utilization impacts other VCT revenues (food and beverage, ticketing fees, parking revenue, merchandise commissions) which can negatively impact net income.

The recommended rental rates also factor in Council's 2026 Budget direction by addressing cost recovery and optimizing revenue opportunities.

Figure 1 below shows rental rates at QET (including recommended rates for 2026/27) 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



** 26/27 rates are subject to Council approval*

Upon review of the VCT operating costs and the related market rates of similar venues, staff are recommending a 5% increase for commercial rental rates, and a 3.5% increase for NPO, and TRG rental rates for the 2026/2027 season (September 1, 2026 to August 31, 2027), 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 – 2026-2027

Venue	Rental Type	25/26	26/27	
		Fee	Fee	% Chg.
QET & Orpheum	Commercial Licensees	\$ 22,500	\$ 23,625	5.00
	NPOs/TRG Licensees	\$ 16,575	\$ 17,155	3.50
Vancouver Playhouse	Commercial Licensees	\$ 5,225	\$ 5,485	5.00
	NPOs/TRG Licensees	\$ 5,025	\$ 5,200	3.50
Annex	Commercial Licensees	\$ 1,720	\$ 1,805	5.00
	NPOs/TRG Licensees	\$ 1,660	\$ 1,720	3.50

The VCT advisory committee met on November 13, 2025 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 December 10, 2025. In preparation for a potential increase, all booking enquiries received for the 2026/2027 season have been informed of a potential rental increase pending Council approval. If Council approves the 2026/2027 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 2026/2027 Season, staff are recommending a facility fee increase of 25 cents per ticket sold.

Financial Implications

The rental rate increase would impact revenues from September 1, 2026 through August 31, 2027. The approved rates will be included in the 2026 and 2027 operating budget.

Figure 3 below, shows an estimated overall increase in rate related rental revenue of approximately \$344,576 for the 2026/2027 Season.

Figure 3 - estimated revenues with fee increases forecast*

Rental Type	26/27 With No Increase	26/27 With Proposed Increase	Difference	Rate Increase
Commercial	\$ 3,502,860	\$ 3,678,003	\$ 175,143	5%
Theatre Rental Grant	\$ 4,089,839	\$ 4,232,983	\$ 143,144	3.50%
Non-Profit	\$ 751,127	\$ 777,416	\$ 26,289	3.50%
	\$ 8,343,826	\$ 8,688,402	\$ 344,576	

* based on fiscal year 2026 forecast of number of events

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) forecasts indicate VCT will 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.

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APPENDIX A

VANCOUVER CIVIC THEATRES SUMMARY OF COMMERCIAL RENTAL RATES

<div> <div>VANCOUVER CIVIC THEATRES</div> <div> Summary of Rental Rates for SEPT. 1, 2026 to AUGUST 31, 2027 For Commercial Licensees Subject to Council approval </div> <div>12-Nov-25</div> </div>	
QUEEN ELIZABETH THEATRE & ORPHEUM	Commercial 8:00 am - midnight
1 Performance	\$23,625
2 Performances (In the same time period)	\$35,435
Conference (maximum 10 public hours)	\$35,435
Rental Deposit <i>Per Performance or Set Up Day (Non-Refundable)</i>	\$5,295
*Technical Day	\$8,790
Film Shoot Rental Deposit <i>Per Performance or Set Up Day (Non-Refundable)</i>	\$14,615
Film Shoot <i>Per Day 8:00 am to 8:00 am (Labour extra)</i>	\$14,615
<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>	
VANCOUVER PLAYHOUSE	Commercial 8:00 am - midnight
1 Performance	\$5,485
2 Performances in the same time period	\$8,235
Conference (maximum 10 public hours)	\$8,235
Rental Deposit <i>Per Performance or Set Up Day (Non-Refundable)</i>	\$1,365
Technical Day (Head Carp, Head Electric, Stage Door included at regular rates only)	\$2,700
<i>ALL RATES ARE SUBJECT TO GST.</i>	
ANNEX	Commercial 8:00 am - midnight
1 Performance	\$1,805
2 Performances (In the same time period)	\$2,730
Rental Deposit (Non-Refundable)	\$490
Technical Day (Labour Extra)	\$880
<i>ALL RATES ARE SUBJECT TO GST.</i>	
ᓄᓂᓴᓂᓴᓂ Xwtl'a7shn	Commercial 8:00 am - 8:00 am (24 hour period)
Daily (Labour Extra)	\$2,025
Rental Deposit (Non-Refundable)	\$2,025
<i>ALL RATES ARE SUBJECT TO GST.</i>	
ANCILLARY SPACES	Commercial 8:00 am - midnight
Queen Elizabeth Salons (Labour Extra)	\$845
Theatre Lobbies (QET/ORPHEUM) (Labour Extra)	\$2,265
QET/Orpheum Rehearsal Hall and Playhouse Lobby or Studio (Labour Extra)	\$650
<i>ALL RATES ARE SUBJECT TO GST. (these rates are not applicable for film shoot rentals)</i>	
FACILITY FEE	
\$5.00* per ticket sold \$20.00 and over [†] (tax included)	

**VANCOUVER
CIVIC
THEATRES**

12-Nov-25

Subject to Council approval

ALL RATES ARE SUBJECT TO GST

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\$4.25* 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