

Draft Nanaimo Performing Arts Guild Business Plan

Background

The Nanaimo Performing Arts Guild is beginning work on a business plan for the Old Victoria Arts Centre (The OV) a City-owned performing arts facility located at 25 Victoria Road. The OV is a multi-use space offering affordable creative spaces, entertainment, and events. The OV includes a main theatre and box office, main dressing rooms, lower floor rehearsal hall, lower dressing room, and lower kitchen.

Staff is providing the following background as a resource for Guild members for the Business Plan Workshop.

Nanaimo Performing Arts Guild Overview

The purpose of the Nanaimo Performing Arts Guild (The Guild) is:

- To support, encourage and celebrate the continued presentation of a wide variety of performing arts activities at the Old Victoria Arts Centre;
- To increase public understanding and appreciation of the local performing arts community;
- To work collaboratively to advance strategic and operational improvements to the Old Victoria Arts Centre by providing input, advice, and guidance on topics relevant to facility operation and community use and enjoyment;
- To advise as required on the future creation of additional small multi-use performance spaces in the City of Nanaimo.

Logistics and Operations

The Guild and the City of Nanaimo's Parks, Recreation and Culture team work cooperatively to maintain the Old Victoria Arts Centre.

- Facility bookings are managed through the City's Allocations team and maintained by the Facilities team.
- The Manager of Culture and Special Events is the key staff liaison for the facility and the Manager, Civic Facilities is the key contact for facility issues.
- A contract Site Liaison has been hired by the Guild to liaise with City staff and User groups and provide oversight and support for rentals.
- Contract custodial services are provided for the facility. Contacts for that contractor are the Manager, Civic Facilities and the Site Liaison.

Guild Oversight

The Guild oversees administrative and operational matters for the OV. Duties include:

- Developing recommendations concerning the ongoing maintenance and operational needs of the Old Victoria Arts Centre, and on current and future space-related supports for the performing arts community;
- Collaborating with the City of Nanaimo to prepare maintenance and operating budgets for the Old Victoria Arts Centre;
- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the Old Victoria Arts Centre;

- Overseeing the required custodial duties at the Old Victoria Arts Centre.

Current OV User Groups

- The OV is regularly rented by local cultural organizations (theatre and performing arts organizations) and by individuals. It is used for everything from rehearsal space to one-day events to multi-day productions.

Programs and Services

The OV is a City-owned rentable facility. There are not currently any City programs operating out of the facility. Programs and services are as provided by user groups.

Desired User Groups

The Guild has stated they want to encourage a diverse range groups and individuals to book the space for events and activities.

Marketing and Community Engagement

Guild members have expressed interest in:

- Updating the Old Victoria Arts Centre information on the City's website (complete)
- Promoting the Old Victoria Arts Centre on social media
- Creating an Open House series or City event series (perhaps promoted/registered through the Activity Guide) to introduce the OV to a broader audience and to promote local cultural groups.

Financial Considerations

As with all of its Facilities, the City has a Capital Plan for the OV with budget to maintain the facility and a timeline for facility upgrades and projects. The planning process is complete for 2025 and 2026.

- A Rick Hanson accessibility audit is currently in progress.
- Funding is available to repaint and re-floor the facility in 2025.
- The Guild has contracted a Site Liaison for six months with the option to renew for an additional six months. Funding is available for this position. Guild members have indicated that they would like to review the Site Liaison job description as part of their work plan, to determine whether they would like to update the job description for this position in the future. (Note: as this conversation involves a position, discussion will happen in-camera).

Key 2025 Achievements

- Establishing the Contract Site Liaison position
- Special Guild meeting to develop a business plan
- Determining the need for a communications/engagement plan and facility improvements

Key 2025 Challenges

- Engagement with the performing arts community
- Building a work plan and setting priorities
- Learning together as we collaborate to create opportunities

DRAFT WORK PLAN: NANAIMO PERFORMING ARTS GUILD 2024—2026

The goal of the work plan is to support, encourage and celebrate the continued presentation of a wide variety of performing arts activities at the Old Victoria Arts Centre (The OV Arts Centre) in alignment with the terms of reference for the Nanaimo Performing Arts Guild, City Plan and the Integrated Action Plan Priorities for Culture.

Topic	Overview
Increase public use and enjoyment of the OV Arts Centre as a performing arts space	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Draft, finalize and initiate a Nanaimo Performing Arts Guild business plan with priority actions in the following areas:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Communications plan○ Recommendations for staffing/site support○ In collaboration with Culture staff, plan a series of open house/performance opportunities at the OV Arts Centre to increase awareness and use of the facility.
Work collaboratively to advance strategic and operational improvements to the Old Victoria Arts Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop recommendations concerning the ongoing maintenance and operational needs of the Old Victoria Arts Centre, connected to both the facility accessibility audit and to user group experience.
Resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advise as required on the future creation of additional small multi-use performance spaces in the City of Nanaimo.• Receive presentations to advance awareness & share knowledge
Items referred by Culture & Events, Facilities and/or OV Arts Centre Site Liaison	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review & provide recommendations on issues and projects brought forward by staff.
<p>City Plan Connection: C4.5.2 – Establish flexible and innovative cultural facilities that anticipate and enable a wide range of cultural programs and can accommodate a variety of production, exhibition and performance experiences; C4.5.3 – Make arts and culture visible and accessible throughout the city, in each of the designated Urban Centres, with a special focus on Downtown; C4.5.5 Provide spaces for arts and culture programming within City owned facilities; C4.5.9 Maintain existing cultural infrastructure and support planning for enhanced facilities; C4.5.10 Recognize and promote the role that culture and the creative sector play in the community with respect to community identity and quality of life; C4.5.12 – Collaborate with partners to identify cultural planning and development opportunities; C4.5.15 – Work with partners to establish creative hubs that provide a range of spaces and resources to support artists and arts organizations.</p>	