

NEWS RELEASE

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Port Theatre Expansion Not Selected for Funding

Summary

This week, The City of Nanaimo and The Port Theatre Society received official notification regarding the Investing in Community Infrastructure Program (ICIP) that the Port Theatre Community Performing Arts Centre Expansion project was not selected for funding. The project, although deemed worthwhile, was in competition for funding from many other communities which meant that more applications were received than could be funded.

The Port Theatre Community Performing Arts Centre has been a vision of the Port Theatre Society for years. The objectives of this project was to provide affordable, suitable and accessible space for a diverse set of community users and local and touring performance artists, as well as encourage creative diversity. The Performing Arts Centre project had plans to add a 50-240 seat, flexible-built performance space with two separate rehearsal spaces for the community to the existing 800-seat theatre.

There is specific support for the Performing Arts Centre in the 2014-2020 Cultural Plan. It is also referenced in the 2016-2019 Strategic Plan Update which identifies Cultural Vitality as a pillar of sustainability. The City committed \$4.6 million to assist the Port Theatre in achieving this vision in 2014.

The project budget is estimated to cost \$21.2 million.

Strategic Link: n/a

Key Points

- The addition of the configurable performing arts space would have provided much needed rehearsal space to the community.
- The addition of this rehearsal space was predicted to further develop Nanaimo's downtown and enhance that area as a cultural hub of the community.

Quotes

"On behalf of myself and Council, we are extremely disappointed that the Port Theatre Community Performing Arts Centre Expansion Project has been denied funding. We all recognize what an important project this is to the City of Nanaimo."

Leonard Krog
Mayor
City of Nanaimo

"The Port Theatre Society has been committed to expanding the performance and rehearsal opportunities for our community for many years. While we are deeply disappointed in not being selected for funding from the ICIP grant, our dedication to building a strong and vibrant cultural sector will remain undaunted. The program was vastly over subscribed, and the official notification stated clearly that there was recognition of the importance of this project to the community despite not being funded."

Diana Johnstone
President, on behalf of
The Port Theatre Society

Quick Facts

- The Port Theatre opened in 1998 and is co-managed by the City of Nanaimo and The Port Theatre Society.
- The need for studio theatre and rehearsal spaces was identified in the original 1986 – 88 feasibility study and reconfirmed during the 2014 Cultural Plan for A Creative Nanaimo.

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