

Conrad Centre for the Performing Arts Operating Model Presentation (DSD-2024-281)



Context

Conrad Centre for the Performing Arts (CCPA)

- Professional performing arts centre
- 300-seat theatre + 100-person rehearsal hall
- 36 King Street West

January 2021

- Conrad Family donated the CCPA to the City
- “Bring the venue to life!”

October 2023

- The City assumed operational responsibilities
- Green Light Arts (GLA) was approved by Council to temporarily operate

December 2023

- Culture & Entertainment division was created
- Council mandate: **Develop a new operating model for the CCPA**

Community Engagement

Two Surveys

- Audience (280 responses) and Presenter (17 responses plus meetings)

Audience Feedback

- Maximize utilization
- Local performing arts
- Emerging artists
- Affordable ticket price
- Equitable access
- Promote upcoming events

Presenter Feedback

- Cost is critical
- Transparent booking process
- Need support from the venue
- Variety of performing arts
- Education and mentorship
- Equipment upgrades

Proposed Mandate

Vision

- A cultural venue where the community can participate

Mission

- Accessible to a wide range of arts organizations, presenters, etc.
- Transparent and reasonable expectations
- Showcase performing arts
- Mentorship and learning opportunities
- Operational sustainability
- KPIs for equity, utilization, artist participation, and attendance

Values

“Accessible, Aspirational, Balanced, Equitable, Flexible, Inclusive, Innovative, Responsive, Sustainable, and Transparent.”

Operating Model Analysis

Operating Models

1. Non-profit
2. Commercial (private)
3. City

“Path-of-the-presenter”

1. Scheduling
2. Costing
3. Contracting
4. Ticketing
5. Event Operations
6. Event Services

✓ City-led Operating Model

- Recognizes needs of presenters and the community at the CCPA.

Financial Analysis

Financial Models

1. Low Cost + Low Service
2. High Subsidy + High Service
3. Hybrid Model

Considerations

- Human resources required
- Revenue potential
- Cost to operate the venue
- Presenter feedback

✓ Hybrid Financial Model

- Support to presenters
- Balances cost to tax base
- Opportunity for sustainable growth

Conclusions from Analysis

Key Takeaways

- ✓ The CCPA is a complex venue
- ✓ True cost to operate makes venue inaccessible to many
- ✓ Operating and capital support is necessary



City-led Priorities

Facility Allocation

- Updated rental rates
- Standard operating procedures
- Clear and transparent processes

Support from a Non-Profit Organization

- Green Light Arts has supported the City since October 2023
- Mentorship services until June 30, 2026
- Future RFP process

Capital Improvements

- Sound and lighting
- Seating
- Lobby

Implementation

Next 6 Months

- GLA continues to operate while City scales up
- Mentorship service agreement
- HR recruitment
- Develop fee schedules and operating procedures

2025 Budget

- New operating cost centre
- Capital budget issue paper

Reporting

- Annual updates to Council

Transformative Opportunity

- Create a cultural hub
- Provide affordable access to performing arts organizations
- Increased cultural programming for community
- Support presenters with marketing
- Create educational and mentorship opportunities

...A vibrant entertainment scene in Kitchener.