



Culture, Arts and Heritage Commission Meeting Agenda

April 10, 2025

12:00 PM

Microsoft Teams

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City Hall

Aspen Room, 1st Floor

415 W. 6th St

Vancouver, WA 98660

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

2. Approval of Minutes

- a. March 13, 2025

3. Workshop

- a. Performing Arts Center Evaluation
Speaker: Natasha Ramras
- b. Cultural Access Update
Speaker: Committee Members

4. Community Forum

To provide public testimony, please see instructions below.

5. Action Items

6. Commission and Staff Reports

- a. Cultural Services Manager
- b. Commission President
- c. Clark County Art Commission

Culture, Arts and Heritage Commission

MEMBERS

Brad Richardson, *President*

Linda Reid, *Vice President*

Vacant

Vacant

Lee Rafferty

Rebekah Percival

Ricky Gaspar

Rosalinda Mendoza

Russell Ford, CACC

Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services

415 W. 6th Street

Vancouver, WA 98660

TTY: 711

www.cityofvancouver.us

7. Open Discussion & New Business

Adjournment

Community Forum Instructions

Time is reserved at each Commission meeting for Community Communications. During this time, the public may speak on any issue. Each speaker will have three minutes to address the Commission. Community members who wish to submit detailed testimony that may exceed three minutes of speaking time are encouraged to email their comments so they can be included with the meeting materials.

Community Communications participants are encouraged to pre-register by email at kirsten.hull@cityofvancouver.us or by phone at 1-360-487-8307, but may comment during this period without pre-registration; options for Community Communications are:

1. In Writing: Public comments can be submitted in writing via email to kirsten.hull@cityofvancouver.us by 5pm the day before the meeting.
2. Remotely: attend the Microsoft Teams meeting online; be prepared to speak online during the Commission meeting at the time of Community Communications.
3. In Person: Fill out a Public Comment form in person prior to the start of the Community Communications portion of the meeting.

City Hall is served by C-TRAN. Route information and schedules are available online at www.c-tran.com. You also may reach C-TRAN at (360) 695-0123 for more information on times, fares, and routes.

Anyone needing language interpretation services or accommodations with a disability at a Vancouver City Council meeting may contact the City Manager's staff at (360) 487-8600 (RELAY: 711). Assistive listening devices and live Closed Captioning are available for the deaf, hard of hearing and general public use. Please notify a staff person if you wish to use one of the devices. Every attempt at reasonable accommodation will be made. To request this agenda in another format, please also contact the phone numbers listed above.

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 13, 2025

12 p.m.

Vancouver City Hall

Aspen Room

415 W. 6th Street

Vancouver, WA

Commissioners Present:

Richardson, Reid, Rafferty, Gaspar, Mendoza and Ford

Commissioner Absent:

Percival

Item 1: Call to Order

President Richardson called the March 13, 2025, meeting of the Culture, Arts & Heritage Commission to order at 12:05 p.m. The Commission met in Aspen Room at Vancouver City Hall using Microsoft Teams.

Item 2: Approval of Minutes

Motion by Reid, seconded by Ford, and approved unanimously to adopt the minutes from January 9, 2025.

Motion by Ford, seconded by Rafferty, and approved unanimously to adopt the minutes from February 25, 2025.

Item 3: Community Forum

Peri Muhich requested help to repair the headstone of Lucinda Barker at Old City Cemetery. Donovan reported that there are several damaged headstones at the cemetery and no budget for repairs. It's estimated that this headstone would cost \$800-\$1200 to fix.

Reid asked if the cemeteries program keeps an inventory of damaged headstones. Richardson added that Old City Cemetery has a historic designation which makes it eligible for funding through preservation grants. He suggested that the Culture, Arts & Heritage Commission collaborate with the Historic Preservation Commission to bring attention and resources to this issue and proposed that the CAHC volunteer for a cleanup day at the cemetery to promote the cause.

Members

Brad Richardson
President

Linda Reid
Vice President

Vacant
Vacant
Lee Rafferty
Rebekah Percival
Ricky Gaspar
Rosalinda Mendoza
Russell Ford, CCAC

**Parks, Recreation and
Cultural Services
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To request accommodation or other formats, please contact:
Kirsten Hull | 360-487-8307 | TTY: 711 | kirsten.hull@cityofvancouver.us

Item 4: Action Item

a. City Flag Discussion

Laura Shepard, Communications Director, gave an overview of the process to nominate a new City flag from entries designed by community members. Shepard asked that three Commissioners volunteer to serve on a Flag Selection Committee which will create a judging rubric, review entries, consider community feedback and recommend a flag to City Council. The Commission provided feedback on the timeline and design competition prizes. Richardson requested that the old flag be thoroughly researched and that the transition process to this new flag be documented for future efforts. Rafferty, Mendoza, and Ford volunteered for the committee.

Item 5: Workshops

a. Arts Hub Update

Donovan gave the following updates:

- March's First Friday open house at the arts hub celebrated Holi. The artwork currently on display will be up through the rest of the month.
- The arts hub project management team is planning the scope and timing of the roof repair and associated renovations. The renovation project will start in early 2026. Temporary activation will continue through the rest of 2025 and as far into 2026 as possible, depending on the repairs.
- Later this spring, Donovan and Perlick will be planning a Request for Proposals to continue design work for the project.
- Donovan will be scheduling facility tours for The Armory in Olympia and Multnomah Arts Center in Portland.

b. Cultural Access Program

Reid provided updates on the development of a Cultural Access Program for Vancouver. The Cultural Access Task Force met on Monday. A member from Evergreen School District has joined and the task force is seeking a member from Vancouver Public Schools as well. Marygrace Goddu from Inspire Olympia called in to Monday's meeting and walked the task force through Olympia's program as an example. The first City Council Workshop on this issue is scheduled for Monday, May 19th.

Item 6: Commission and Staff Reports

a. Cultural Services Manager

Donovan gave the following updates:

- A dedication ceremony for Revealed, a new sculpture at Clark County Historic Museum, will be held on April's First Friday. The City commissioned the sculpture in 2019. The dedication will be held at 3 p.m. before the 7 p.m. Speaker Series event "*They Want Our Rhythm, But Not Our Blues: African American Innovation Through Pop Culture.*" The sculpture's structure is designed to house metal bricks engraved with words sourced from the community. The first brick will be engraved with a word chosen by NAACP Vancouver and this brick will be unveiled at the dedication. The museum will continue working with various community groups to add new bricks word by word.
- The Vancouver Arts and Music Festival will start a day early, on Thursday, July 31, thanks to support from a new partner organization. The applications for vendors and performers dramatically exceeded the number of available spots. The planning team is collaborating with local businesses to arrange off-site performances to accommodate this year's demand. Reid added that VDA can help with arranging downtown venues. Richardson volunteered the museum's back room for acoustic and poetry performances.

b. Commission President

Richardson gave the following updates:

- The Fort Vancouver 200th Anniversary committee met recently. Visit Vancouver will host the main webpage for the events. The National Park Service, Fort Vancouver, and Friends of the Fort will be featured as the primary event organizers. Related events from affiliate organizations will be displayed on a shared calendar. Richardson suggested that the Clark County Council handle next year's America 250 anniversary the same way.

c. Clark County Arts Commission

Ford gave the following update:

- La Center appointed Margene Rivara to the Clark County Arts Commission. The arts commission appointed Steve Oglesby of Camas as chair.
- Ford hosted a raku mask workshop at the arts hub recently. The workshop aims to bring together individuals who work in the arts for shared creative time and networking.

Item 7: Open Discussion and New Business

Reid attended a workshop where community members brainstormed a distinctive landmark for Vancouver. Most of the ideas had a public art component. Reid also learned that a community member is planning to restart the annual Recycled Arts Festival.

The Commission requested an update on the City's Performing Arts Center project. Some commissioners have been asked about the project by community members and they would like more information to share.

Reid and Richardson asked to revisit an earlier discussion about City-owned historical properties. They suggested the Commission oversee usage of those properties to increase their public benefit.

Adjourned

This meeting adjourned at 1:23 p.m.

Needs Assessment for Performing Arts Facilities in Vancouver, WA

Developed for the City of Vancouver
August 26, 2024

Webb Mgmt

Introduction

- A management consulting practice focused on the development, renovation, and operation of cultural facilities
- 28 years of experience and more than 500 completed projects
- Feasibility studies, business plans, strategic plans, and district plans, all focused on live arts and entertainment
- Recent regional work includes facilities master plan for Portland's Regional Arts and Culture Council and the feasibility work for the Federal Way Performing Arts Center



Photo credit: Hylton Performing Arts Center, Prince William, VA, with the text, "building creativity" written across the center of the photograph

Study Brief

Explore the case for new facilities

Webb Mgmt was hired by the City of Vancouver to update 2020 performing arts facility feasibility study, addressing:

- Potential demand for new facilities on the part of local and regional audiences as well as potential users of new facilities
- Gaps in the current regional facility inventory
- How new facilities might align with broader City of Vancouver goals



Photo credit: KO Projects Report, 2020

Methodology

Our research included...

- A broad range of invitations for community stakeholders and local groups to provide input
- Confidential interviews with local leadership and potential facility users
- Market research and detailed data analysis on the City of Vancouver and surrounding region
- Survey of local arts organizations on their potential need for and uses of new facilities
- Review of broader forces and trends in live arts and entertainment sectors
- Review of current and planned arts facilities in the area
- Analysis of comparable national projects as precedents and examples to illustrate recommendations.



Local & Regional Facilities



Research Findings

Aligning with City of Vancouver goals

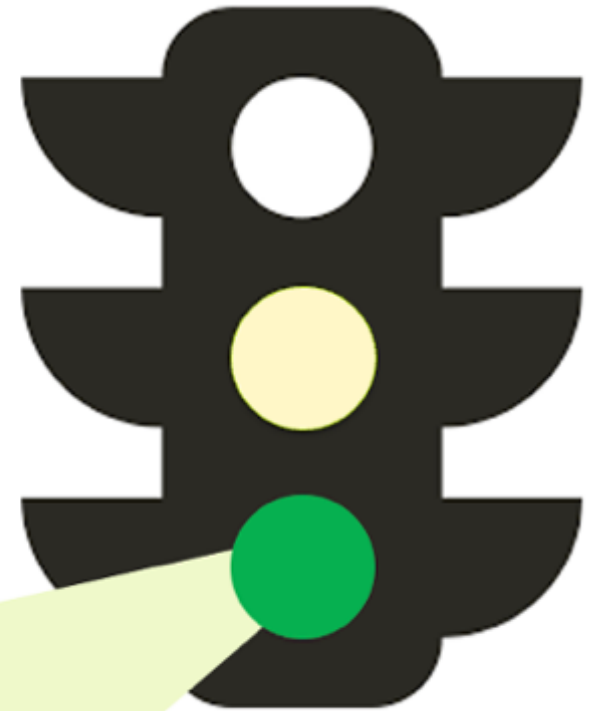
- The 2007 Vancouver City Center Vision and Subarea Plan endorsed the creation and support of “messy vitality”, a dynamic and rich mix of residential, cultural, civic, retail and entertainment places that will attract growth, job development, and round-the-clock activity in the downtown Vancouver area
- The City of Vancouver’s 2018 Culture, Arts & Heritage Plan Arts and Heritage Plan elements include building cultural capacity, leveraging a downtown arts district, and adding cultural space—with specific mentions of performance and rehearsal spaces
- The City of Vancouver is currently working on a new comprehensive plan which will recognize the importance of offering unique cultural experiences that fuel connections to place and acknowledge the significance of investing in facilities and other elements of cultural ecosystem



Conclusions

What we learned

- There is a potential audience for new facilities, both locally and regionally
- There is demand for performance spaces on the part of a number of local arts organizations, with most of that demand for smaller spaces for performance, rehearsals, and teaching
- There are gaps in the local and regional facility inventory, including the need for smaller spaces that can support emerging local arts groups, slightly larger and better spaces that can support a combination of local and touring programs, and a regional gap for a mid-size hall
- Finally, new arts facilities have been recognized as a critical building block for the City of Vancouver in pursuing its ambition to become a national waterfront city. Critical to that effort is creating spaces that support unique cultural experiences that fuel connections to place



Recommendations

How to proceed

1. Assuming appropriate investments, the Arts Hub project can fill an important gap for small and emerging artists and organizations, providing affordable access to reasonable facilities for performance and rehearsal.
2. The next step for the City of Vancouver should then be the development of a 400–600 seat multipurpose venue to be animated by a combination of local groups and touring programs.
3. A case can be made for a larger (1,200 to 1,500 seat) hall to serve the region in the future, depending on other initiatives now under consideration in Portland.



Recommendations

A new 400–600 seat venue

With the Arts Hub project now underway, the next priority should be the new 400–600 seat venue, which should also include a secondary multipurpose room for rehearsals and other programming as desired.

We believe that this should be the next venue developed given:

- It is more responsive to needs of local arts organizations
- It is in alignment with the City of Vancouver's priority to offer unique cultural experiences that fuel connections to place
- It is possible to locate it in downtown Vancouver where the project can support municipal goals for downtown vibrancy



Recommendations

A new 400-600 seat venue

Stress the following aspects and attributes:

- Flexibility, with systems that allow for easy and inexpensive changeovers from theater-style to cabaret to flat-floor and other configurations
- Strong food and beverage options and opportunities to enhance the audience experience and drive the meeting and event business
- ~2,000-sqft multipurpose room with some technology that can match the main space stage size, accommodate rehearsals and be rented for meetings and events
- An operator with significant programming and marketing skills and resources to support both presenting and rental clients, with a target of 150 public performances a year in the main space



Recommendations

New venue scale and cost based on benchmarks

- 40,000 to 50,000 gross sqft for a building with a 500-seat theater
- 3,000 to 3,500 sqft stage size including wings
- 2,000 to 2,500 usable sqft multipurpose room to match stage performance area
- \$1,000,000 to \$2,500,000 annual contributed income depending on the range of nonprofits supported and the commercial orientation of the presenting program
- There is tremendous variability in project costs depending on the scale and timing of the project—the Reser Center’s project budget of \$52 million is probably the most relevant



Next Steps

Should the City of Vancouver decide to advance plans for new facilities, next steps should include:

- Physical planning, including the development of a space program, massing diagrams, consideration of possible sites and a capital budget
- Business planning that addresses how recommended facilities should be programmed, operated and financially sustained
- Forecasts of economic impacts and the role that local government could play in supporting operations both financial and administratively
- Fundraising, potentially starting with a fundraising feasibility study based on this report, the physical plan (including capital budget) and the business plan (including operating pro-forma)



Questions?

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