



April 3, 2025

Mayor Marianne Alto and members of Council
City of Victoria
City Hall
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

Dear Mayor Alto and members of Council;

Re: Application for a Liquor Primary license
At: 1325 Government Street, Victoria, BC V8W 1M5
Applicant: The Downbeat Event Centre (1500123 B.C. Ltd.)

Thank you for providing the applicant the opportunity to respond to the report presented to the Committee of the Whole. We are writing to express our support for the recommendation outlined in the staff report to approve the application for the Downbeat Event Centre venue. We also appreciate the endorsement of the Downtown Victoria Residents Association and the letters of support that have been submitted.

In response to a few concerns raised by some residents, we would like to address the following points:

1. Notification and Response to Concerns

City staff sent notifications to 343 property owners and residents in the surrounding area. We acknowledge that only two letters of opposition were received, and we would like to address the concerns raised in these communications.

2. Decline of Liquor Primary License Establishments

Over recent years, there has been a noticeable decline in the number of liquor primary license establishments, with several venues closing, one that comes to mind is the Yates Street Taphouse. The Downbeat Event venue represents a new opportunity for the community to have a vibrant, diverse event space.

3. Diverse Event Programming

The Downbeat Event Centre will serve as an event centre, catering to a broad range of events and diverse demographics, including live music performances, cultural events, and more.

4. Support for Local Musicians and Live Music

Attached is an article that underscores the importance of venues that support live music and musicians. The Downbeat Event Centre will provide a platform for local artists to perform, a key aspect of nurturing the city's music scene. Many famous renowned musicians started their careers in nightclubs, pubs, and live music venues.

5. Historical Significance of the Location

The Downbeat location has a rich history as a nightclub, dating back at least to the late 1970s, a tradition that we hope to continue and celebrate with the new venue.

6. Non-Alcoholic Options

The Downbeat Event Centre will offer a wide selection of non-alcoholic products for patrons who choose not to consume alcohol, ensuring there is something for everyone to enjoy.

7. Requested Operating Hours

The requested hours of operation, from 9:00 AM to 2:00 am, align with current industry standards for event-driven venues. However, it is important to note that the operating hours will be flexible, and events will be scheduled based on demand. These hours are consistent with those allowed for hotel banquet rooms, convention centres, and other event spaces under the Liquor Control and Licensing Act regulations. Moreover, major events such as the upcoming FIFA World Cup coming next year to Vancouver further exemplify the need for flexible event hours.

8. Commitment to Being a Good Neighbor

The Downbeat Event Centre is committed to being a good neighbor and working with residents to minimize noise concerns. The venue is located below ground level, and management will ensure that doors remain closed during events, adhering to the City of Victoria's noise bylaws.

9. Community Engagement and Safety

The patrons attending events at The Downbeat Event Centre are unlikely to cause significant disruptions to the neighborhood. The presence of additional patrons will contribute to the area's vibrancy and increase visibility on the street, potentially enhancing safety. Moreover, we believe the venue's events will attract a positive crowd, adding to the sense of community and well-being.

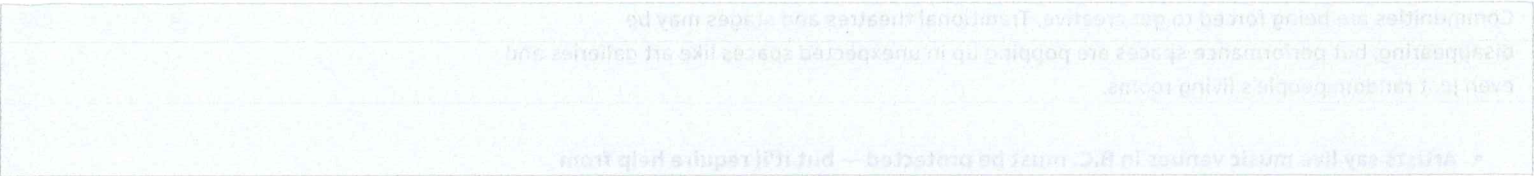
In conclusion, the owners of The Downbeat Event Centre are dedicated to being responsible and engaged members of the community. They are committed to

participating in local events, supporting organizations, and collaborating with business associations to contribute to the growth and prosperity of the area.

Thank you for your consideration of this application. We look forward to your support in helping bring this exciting venue to life.

Yours truly,

Bert Hick, Founder and President
Rising Tide Consultants



British Columbia

How British Columbians are getting creative with live music venues

Photography studios and backyards are standing in for traditional spaces as venues close their doors

CBC News · Posted: Mar 16, 2025 6:00 AM PDT | Last Updated: 2 hours ago



Calgary band Reuben and the Dark performs at a house in Kamloops, B.C., on Oct. 17, 2019. (Courtney Dickson/CBC)

 [comments](#)

Many live music venues are closing.

Whether it's nightclubs in downtown Vancouver, a non-profit space in the province's capital or a smaller venue in rural British Columbia, dedicated spaces for artists to perform are becoming few and far between.

In general, the high cost of rent for both artists and for business owners running the venues is the main culprit.

Communities are being forced to get creative. Traditional theatres and stages may be disappearing, but performance spaces are popping up in unexpected spaces like art galleries and even just random people's living rooms.

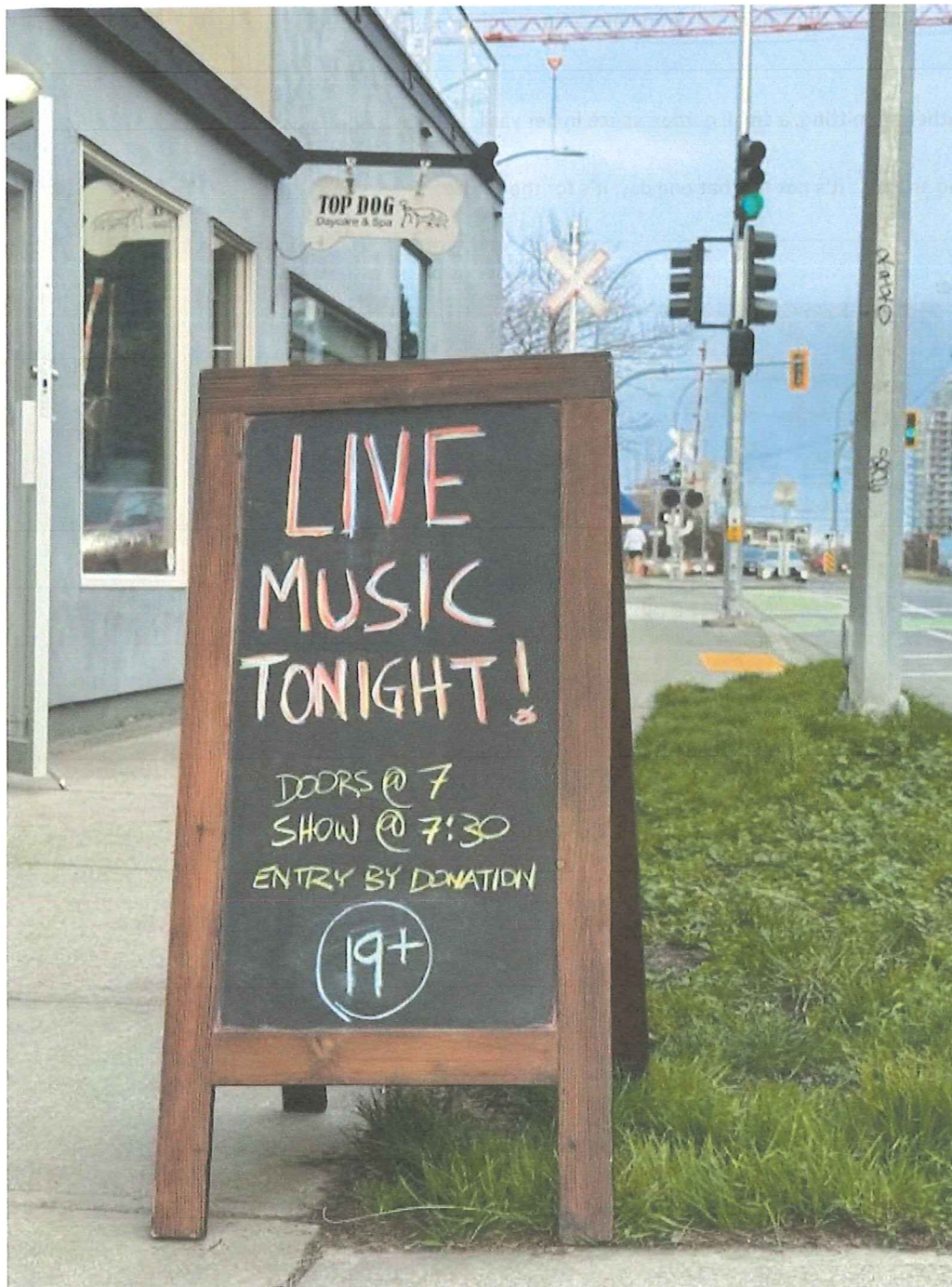
- **Artists say live music venues in B.C. must be protected — but it'll require help from municipal governments**

Podcast host and producer Kristina Rothstein remembers the [Sugar Refinery](#) in downtown Vancouver as a place where "interesting things were always happening and people were trying out new things and putting on a play and doing a weird experimental show."

"I always felt at home," she said.

The venue, located on the Granville strip, shut down in 2003, but music lovers and artists alike still reminisce about the shows they saw there. Rothstein's curiosity around what venues came before and after her favourite spot inspired her podcast, [In Search of Lost Venues](#), where she wanders Vancouver neighbourhoods with local musicians talking about live music events of days gone by.

And while remembering the good old days can be cathartic, there still remains a problem: musicians are looking for somewhere — anywhere — to perform, now.



Unexpected venues are offering up space for musicians to perform as traditional venues close their doors.
(Submitted by Antonio La Fauci)

Beloved B.C. musician Dan Mangan and his business partner, Laura Simpson, founded Side Door in 2017 after noticing a lack of space for performers.

It connects artists with hosts who have a space for them — often their own homes. Both the artist and host are paid automatically through the platform, and thousands of shows have happened since the platform launched.

- [Juno Award winner Dan Mangan took his Side Door project to the Dragons — and got an offer](#)

Victoria Levesque has hosted several shows through Side Door since 2019 and has a few coming up.

She offers an indoor living room space or, weather permitting, a small garden space in her yard.

"When you put the time and effort into hosting artists ... it's not for that one day; it's for the future of their career," she said.

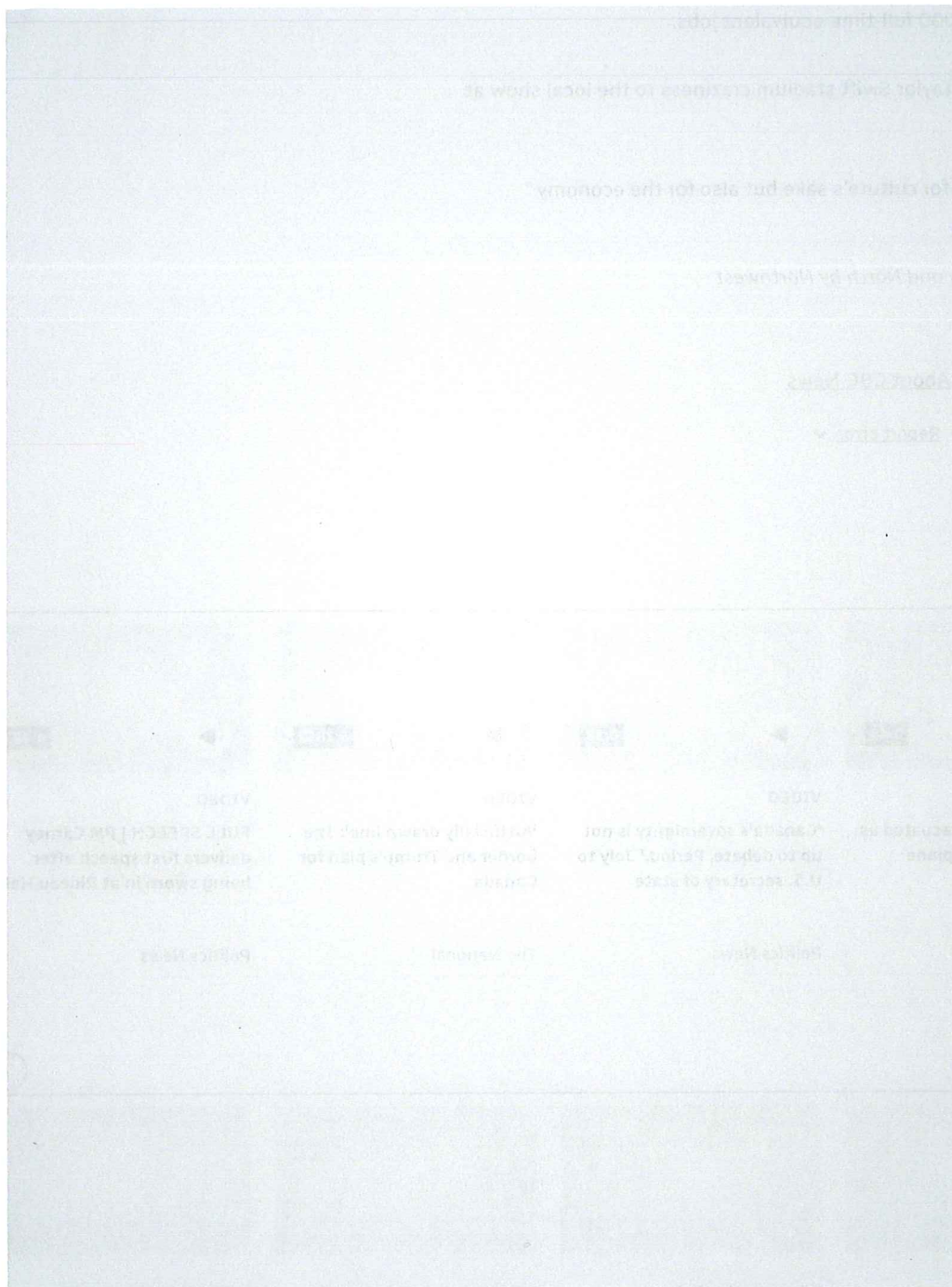
WATCH | Inside Victoria's DIY live music scene:



Victoria prides itself on its vibrant art scene. But the last few years have been rough for local live music venues, with beloved spots having to close their doors. Now, local musicians and music lovers are creating their own live music spaces using whatever they have. Rohit Joseph takes us on a tour of Victoria's DIY music scene.

In Victoria, a photography studio has become a more broad creative space, hosting live comedy and music.

"I was a punk rock kid growing up. I used to go to lots of punk shows and lots of house party shows," said Antonio La Fauci, owner of Cinderbloc Studios. "I kinda like just getting people together and having people build a showcase through creativity."



A show at Cinderbloc Studios in Victoria. (Submitted by Antonio La Fauci)

Not far from Cinderbloc, the Little Fernwood Gallery has also offered up space for do-it-yourself live music, where artists rent the gallery space and convert it into a live music venue, bringing the equipment, ticketing the event and everything they need to put on a show.

Tarun Nayar, Canadian Live Music Association board chair and a Surrey, B.C., musician, said independent venues — longtime, traditional establishments or DIY spots — are necessary for both local and global musicians.

The association recently released the results of a [study](#) on the impact live music has on the Canadian economy. It found that in 2023 alone, live music contributed \$10.9 billion to the

country's GDP and supported more than 100,000 full-time equivalent jobs.

"We all know it's important, from the biggest Taylor Swift stadium craziness to the local show at the Biltmore or the Fox," he said.

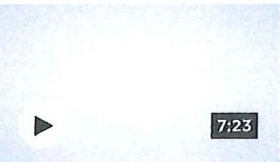
"Taking it seriously is very important, not just for culture's sake but also for the economy."

With files from Rohit Joseph, Courtney Dickson and North by Northwest

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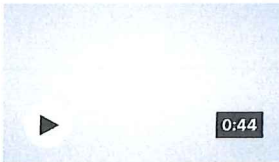


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VIDEO

What polls say about a Carney vs. Poilievre election

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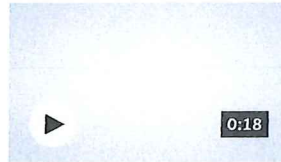


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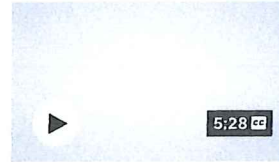


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VIDEO

'Canada's sovereignty is not up to debate. Period,' Joly to U.S. secretary of state

Politics News

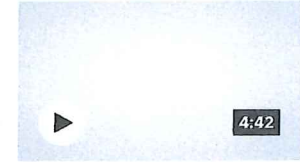


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VIDEO

'Artificially drawn line': The border and Trump's plan for Canada

The National



4:42


VIDEO

FULL SPEECH | PM Carney delivers first speech after being sworn in at Rideau Hall

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Benjamin Lopez Steven

Politics




FIRST PERSON

I swapped a life of comfort in Bangladesh for an empty fridge and blizzards in Canada

Mohammad Akib Hossain


Canada - Saskatchewan



What one family's 'nightmare' says about the chaos at Jordan's Principle

Brett Forester

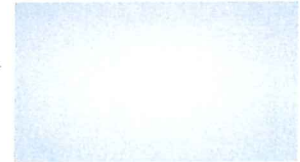
Indigenous



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