



Council Member Motion

For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of July 13, 2017

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** July 13, 2017
From: Councillors Alto and Madoff
Subject: Royal and McPherson Theatre Society/City of Victoria Partners Project Phase Two

BACKGROUND

In early January 2017, Council asked Councillors Madoff and Alto to convene a working group in conjunction with Royal and McPherson Theatres Society (RMTS) Board Directors and Staff for the purpose of seeking additional municipal support for the McPherson Theatre, beyond the status quo.

In February 2017, Council received and adopted a workplan proposed by Councillors Alto and Madoff, which included a workplan to accomplish that purpose. That initial workplan and its encompassing report are attached.

The core work team included Byron Smith (former RMTS Chair), Lorne DeLarge (current RMTS Chair) Lloyd Fitzsimonds (RMTS executive director), Randy Joynt (RMTS Manager of External Relations), Councillor Pam Madoff, Councillor Marianne Alto, Jocelyn Jenkyns (Deputy City Manager) and Nichola Reddington (City Senior Cultural Planner).

Since February, the Royal and McPherson Theatre Society/City of Victoria Partners' Group ('Partners') has met seven times to script a baseline and locally adapted presentations, connect with other municipalities to schedule Council presentations, prepare notes from those presentations, discuss and craft responses to issues emerging those presentations, and map out a way forward.

During the same time, presentations have been made to eleven municipalities: View Royal, Highlands, Metchosin, Saanich, Colwood, Langford, North Saanich, Oak Bay, Sidney, Central Saanich, and Esquimalt. A presentation to Sooke municipality remains to be scheduled. A preliminary overview of the questions and concerns raised, and response given, by each Council at each session is attached as Appendix A.

After this round of presentations, seven municipalities agreed to participate in further focused discussions about the future of the Royal and McPherson theatres: View Royal, Highlands, Metchosin, Colwood, North Saanich, Oak Bay, and Sidney. Two municipalities will consider participation after receiving information about other municipalities' interest: Saanich and Esquimalt. Two municipalities are currently discussing the matter further at full council or committees of the whole: Langford and Central Saanich.

The core presentation was tailored to reflect detail and data pertinent to each municipality, showing how many local residents patronized both theatres, what benefits accrued from community and commercial performances, and a host of related local and contextual information. A sample presentation is attached. Two to five members of the Partners' team presented to each municipality.

In January, the initial workplan approved by Council included the following directions – their progress is noted at the end of each:

- outreach to all 12 other municipalities in the CRD – DONE
- request to appear and present to municipal councils throughout the CRD – DONE
- appear and present at those Council meetings – 11/12 DONE
- collate information, questions, ideas, feedback heard at those presentations – OVERVIEW DONE, IN DETAIL IN PROGRESS
- consider options arising from feedback – IN PROGRESS & PHASE TWO
- create and present to Victoria Council a report back, including recommendations for future direction – PHASE TWO
- subject to Victoria Council approval, report back to engaged municipalities – INTERIM REPORT DONE, IN DETAIL IN PROGRESS & PHASE TWO
- subject to Victoria Council approval, recommend to CRD Board future action with regard to the McPherson Theatre – PHASE TWO

While the Partners' original workplan anticipated wrapping the project by the end of June, the calendar of municipal council meetings challenged that outcome with the simplest of realities – most municipalities hold their Council meetings on Monday evenings, not all municipalities could accommodate the presentation on an upcoming agenda, and not every Monday hosted a Council meeting. While 'doubling up' did occur (Sidney and Central Saanich were addressed the same evening), presenting to 11 municipalities necessarily stretched over 10 weeks following several weeks of coordination.

Additionally, as the project unfolded and evolved, the questions posed by Council members demanded a re-evaluation of the time and process needed to engage interested municipalities in a meaningful way, and provide ample opportunity for input, advice and collaboration.

Furthermore, while, in a corollary process, the City creates its Arts and Culture Master Plan, consideration of the role, relationship and place of the Royal and McPherson theatres in that plan, and in the cultural environment of the City and region, has, so far, been overlooked.

As a result, the Partners propose a subsequent phase of work, to be completed by November 2017. **Phase Two** includes **three parts**.

Part One is a more fulsome edition of this interim report, to be distributed to all 12 CRD municipalities, following Victoria Council feedback on this interim report. An accompanying cover letter to Mayors and Councillors from Mayor Lisa Helps may reference this as follow up to presentations and include both confirmation of participation in Phase Two by those who have agreed, and a further invitation to participate to those that were non-committal.

Part Two is a facilitated engagement process to include:

- A further invitation from Mayor Helps to each municipality that expressed an interest in being part of the conversation to send one elected representative to participate in three meetings

from early September 2017 to late October 2017. Some municipalities have already identified their participants (Sidney and Oak Bay). This invitation may also include additional detail on Phase Two process and expectations.

- A process to be facilitated by the Partners, and include three sessions, which could occur in different parts of the region for ease of participation.
 - Session #1 (early September) would encompass:
 - Further review of theatres' current state, issue identification, advantages of governance and funding alignment, current barriers to maximizing impact, value of arts and culture – providing detail requested by participating municipalities.
 - Further presentation and review of current and potential cost sharing models.
 - Review and response to questions arising from the presentation sessions.
 - Discussion of the role, relationship and place of the Royal and McPherson theatres, their governance, funding and operation, in the context of Victoria's emerging Arts and Culture Master Plan.
 - Session #2 (late September) would encompass a presentation, review and comments on proposed actions on governance and funding alignment.
 - Session #3 (mid-October) would provide an opportunity for a final conversation and participants' endorsement of recommended actions on governance and funding alignment.

Part Three would follow these three sessions with a penultimate report with recommendations returning to Victoria Council, and the Councils of other municipalities that have remained at the table as potential partners, for consideration and comment.

After Phase Two completes, a final report would be prepared and return to Victoria Council and participating municipalities for approval, with specific direction on the future governance and funding of the Royal and McPherson theatres.

At the Project's final completion (November 2017), solutions will be available for 2018 and beyond, reflecting the outcomes of the municipal outreach, responses thereto, engaged collective discussion and deliberation, and the will of Victoria Council and other participant Councils. Project completion at that time will enable timely CRD and/or municipal budget considerations for future years.

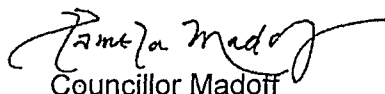
MOTION

That Council endorse the RMTS/City of Victoria Partners Project Phase Two as outlined in this report, and direct Councillors Alto and Madoff to continue facilitating the Project.

Respectfully submitted,



Councillor Alto



Councillor Madoff

Appendix A
Questions, Comments & Initial Response by Municipalities during CoV/RMTS
Presentations

View Royal, Committee of the Whole – April 11 2017

- Already part of CRD Arts Development. Is funding for the theatres separate?
- Would want to see budget/funding details
- The theatres are beautifully maintained

Will participate in conversation (no formal resolution)

Highlands, Council – April 18 2017

- There are other theatres in the region. Maybe they should be looked at holistically
- The outdoor stage attached to the McPherson is a problem for sound bleed

MOTION moved by Councillor Gord Baird, seconded by Councillor Roessingh: That it be relayed to the delegation that Council is interested in continuing the conversation/ discussion regarding the future of the McPherson Theatre. CARRIED

Metchosin, Council – April 24 2017

- Metchosin has a very small budget compared to other municipalities
- Theatres should be supported as libraries and rec centres are
- Already participates in CRD Arts Development Service
- May want to invest in local arts facilities

Will participate in conversation (no formal resolution)

Saanich, Committee of the Whole – May 1 2017

- Believe the ask was a veiled one for funding
- Saanich already has a rep on the RMTS Board so there's no need to appoint someone else for a conversation
- Saanich may want to build their own theatre in the future and additional commitments outside of the municipality could impact this
- This conversation has been going on in some form for twenty years so it should be resolved
- The CRD Arts Development Service may have a role to play in the conversation
- What does the conversation look like?

MOTION moved by Councillor Plant, seconded by Mayor Atwell: "That Council express an initial interest in discussions with the City of Victoria on the future of the McPherson Playhouse."

MOVED by Councillor Brownoff, seconded by Councillor Sanders: "That the motion be amended to add "and participation will be considered following the receipt of information from the Royal and McPherson Theatres Society detailing their discussions with other municipalities and future expectations."

The Main Motion, as Amended, was then Put and CARRIED with Councillor Wergeland
OPPOSED

Colwood, Council – May 8 2017

- There's a new theatre at Royal Bay High and a new theatre under construction at View Royal Casino. How does this conversation take these facilities into account?

Will participate in conversation (no formal resolution)

Langford, Administration and Finance Committee – May 9 2017

- Have naming rights for the theatres been considered to raise additional funds?
- Theatre capacity for the entire region should be considered. Isabelle Reader, Royal Bay, View Royal Casino etc.
- What does the process look like at the next stage?
- Funding for the arts is hard to come by

Will recommend that Council participate in the conversation

North Saanich, Council – May 15 2017

- Have we considered Mary Winspear and other theatres in the theatre/arts landscape?
- They imagine this will eventually be an ask for funds and there are other pressures (CRD Arts Development, Mary Winspear) and capacity issues to participate as they're a small Municipality
- What does the conversation look like?
- Even around their council table there may be different opinions so how will we manage the process with this in mind?

Resolution to participate in the conversation and to ask staff to get more details about the process

Oak Bay, Council – May 23 2017

- Ownership of the Royal by the CRD is "in trust". Oak Bay, Saanich and Victoria still have a stake in ownership and it couldn't, for example, be sold without the permission of the three municipalities
- Oak Bay is already involved in the conversation by virtue of their stake in the Royal so it makes sense that they participate fully in this conversation
- It's clear that Oak Bay's citizens attend the theatres in large numbers so Oak Bay should be involved
- In the future, it might be hard to make the decision to invest more money in theatres that are losing money. The business case needs to be looked at.
- Oak Bay has just invested \$1 million in the Dave Dunnet
- This process might reveal that the McPherson isn't needed.

Resolution to participate in the conversation, passed unanimously. Subsequently, Mayor Jensen advised that Councillors Croft and Murdock will participate on behalf of Oak Bay.

Sidney, Committee of the Whole – June 5 2017

- Sidney supports the Mary Winspear in a significant way so not interested in being part of the conversation.
- If Sidney were to be part of a conversation, it should include all of the venues in the region and Sidney would be looking at it through a "Sidney First" lens.
- Though the Royal and MAC are uniquely suited to some performances, the Mary Winspear is well suited to others and all the venues in the region have different advantages.
- What is the relationship between the RMTS and the CRD Arts Development?

Will take the question to the full Council when the Mayor and missing councillor are back. Subsequently, the Clerk for Sidney Council advised that: Sidney Council, at a meeting held on June 26, 2017, passed the following resolution: "That the Town participate in discussions regarding the future of the McPherson Playhouse Theatre and that Councillor B. Fallot be appointed as the Town's representative."

Central Saanich, Council – June 5 2017

- As there are a number of schools with theatres, have the school districts been part of the conversation?
- Lots of Central Saanich's land is agricultural so the tax base is small
- They should be part of the conversation and Councilor Alicia Holman would like to be the participant for Central Saanich
- The Mary Winspear will be asking for more money

Motion to take the question to Committee of the Whole so it can be furthered discussed.

Esquimalt, Council – June 12 2017

- No questions

Will consider the question after receiving the report detailing discussions with all of the municipalities.