

# Staff Report



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To	General Committee
Subject	Barrie Performing Arts and Event Centre – Design Development Advancement
Date	June 11, 2025
Ward	All Wards
From	R. Pews, Director of Corporate Facilities
Executive Member Approval	J. Schmidt, General Manager of Community and Corporate Services
CAO Approval	M. Prowse, Chief Administrative Officer
Staff Report #	FAC005-25

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## Recommendation(s):

1. That the Schematic Design for the proposed Performing Arts Centre, as outlined in Appendix A of Staff Report FAC005-25, be approved and used to guide the project through the Design Development phase.
  2. That Hariri Pontarini Architects be awarded an additional \$455,000 to advance the design and costing of the Performing Arts Centre to the 50% Design Development stage, funded from the Theatre Reserve, to further refine the project scope and enhance the accuracy of the projected construction cost.
  3. That staff report back to General Committee following Council's 2025 summer recess with the outcomes of the 50% Design Development phase, including a Class C Cost Estimate for the proposed Performing Arts Centre.
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## Executive Summary:

**The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress of the conceptual/schematic design and preliminary costing for the proposed Performing Arts Centre (PAC), and to seek approval to advance the project into the Design Development phase.** This next phase will establish a higher level of detail and cost certainty allowing staff to better inform General Committee of the project scope, schedule and estimated budget.

## Key Findings:

**As directed by Council through Motion 24-G-223, Hariri Pontarini Architects (HPA) was retained to complete the schematic design for a proposed Performing Arts Centre, utilizing the existing Sea Cadets site and adjacent City-owned lands. A**

rendering of the schematic design is included as Appendix A to this report.

**The schematic design and accompanying Rough Order of Magnitude Cost Estimate have been developed based on the following key program elements:**

- Approximately 45,000 sq. ft. facility, including both large and small performance venues.
- Space for 1000 person standing
- Movable floor gala system within the performance hall to accommodate 1000 people standing
- Restaurant: 50-75 seat restaurant with ability to function independently to ensure space is active all of the time.
- 600-seat proscenium performance hall, including feasibility assessment and costing of a flexible flat-floor system.
- Multipurpose rehearsal, event, and flexible performance space accommodating 200 to 250 people.
- Lobby and patron services areas.
- Tenant restaurant and kitchen facilities.
- Backstage, production, and building support areas.
- Exterior features, including main entrance, drop-off areas, loading zones, and a terrace.

**A Rough Order of Magnitude Cost Estimate is a preliminary, high-level assessment of project costs prepared at an early stage of design.** This estimate provides only general cost guidance and is subject to significant variability, typically within a range of 30-35% accuracy, due to limited design detail. The cost estimate is developed based on cost per square foot with an understanding of use, location and timing. It includes design, escalation and construction contingencies. The next level of costing will evaluate particular systems, materials and building structure and will bring further refinement to the budget.

**Based on the schematic design, HPA has estimated the preliminary building cost to be in the order of \$64,998,143.** This estimate includes:

- Hard construction costs.
- Development and building permit fees.
- Soft costs, including consultant fees and municipal staff time.

The primary source of uncertainty in the estimate is related to hard construction costs, as key project details such as structural systems, material selections, equipment selections and finishes have not yet been fully defined at the schematic stage.

**To improve the level of cost certainty and further refine the project scope, it is recommended that the project advance to the 50% Design Development stage, supported by an expanded team of consultants.** This stage will enable greater coordination of major building systems and critical stakeholder requirements while addressing key cost drivers.

The following consultant disciplines will be engaged as part of this next phase:

- Architectural

- Structural
- Mechanical
- Electrical
- Audio-Visual (AV)
- Theatre Planning and Design Acoustics
- Landscape
- Civil
- Cost Consulting
- Code Consulting

Certain additional specialty consultants required for the completion of detailed design will be deferred until Council consideration of full project approval. These include:

- IT/Security
- Elevator
- Food Service Design
- Signage
- Energy Modeling
- Building Envelope
- Hardware
- Transportation – On-site Loading and Servicing Design

**Advancing to the Design Development phase at this time will support the development of a more accurate Class C cost estimate.** This information will inform a subsequent report to Council for further consideration and decision.

**Several site due diligence studies have been undertaken and are being planned to further inform the design and cost estimate of the PAC.** Studies completed to date include: Geotechnical Study, Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA), site surveys, and a Stage I Archaeological Assessment. A Phase II ESA, and Hydrogeological Study are currently underway, to further support design considerations of structural elements and building orientation on site. Additional site investigations will continue throughout the design process.

### **Financial Implications:**

Harari Pontarini Architects were originally engaged to complete pre-design and schematic design services along with a rough order of magnitude cost estimate for a new Performing Arts Centre on Barrie's waterfront, at a value of \$200,000. Additional funding in the amount of \$455,000 is required to advance the centre's design and costing to the 50% Design Development stage, bringing HPA's total contract value to \$655,000. The recommended funding source for this additional work is the Theatre Reserve.

### **Alternatives:**

The following alternatives are available for consideration by General Committee:

**Alternative #1 – Proceed directly to Full Design Development and Construction Documentation.** General Committee could direct staff to proceed with the full Design Development and Construction Documentation stages of the Performing Arts Centre

project, based on the existing schematic design and Rough Order of Magnitude Cost Estimate completed by HPA.

This alternative is not recommended, as the current schematic design does not provide sufficient detail or cost certainty to support such a commitment. Proceeding without further refinement of the design and scope could result in significant cost risks and scope changes during later project phases.

**Alternative #2 – Engage a New Consulting Team to Advance the Design.** General Committee could direct staff to procure a new consulting team to advance the Performing Arts Centre design from the current schematic design stage.

While this option is available, it is not recommended, as engaging a new Architect would require duplication schematic design efforts completed by HPA to date. This would result in increased costs and potential delays, with little added benefit at this stage of the project.

#### **Strategic Plan Alignment:**

Affordable Place to Live		
Community Safety		
Thriving Community	<b>x</b>	Endorsement of the Performing Arts Centre would increase economic activity by attracting visitors who support local businesses, while enhancing the city's cultural identity and vibrancy.
Infrastructure Investments	<b>x</b>	Building a Performing Arts Centre downtown stimulates infrastructure investment by encouraging upgrades to transportation, utilities, streetscapes, and public spaces to support increased activity
Responsible Governance	<b>x</b>	Building a Performing Arts Centre in the downtown demonstrates responsible governance by aligning with long-term planning goals, maximizing use of public space, and leveraging public-private partnerships to deliver community value.

#### **Additional Background Information and Analysis:**

As outlined in Staff Report ACC001-24, a report was prepared by Mr. Marshall Green to gather information and feedback from a range of stakeholder groups and organizations to help inform the vision for the waterfront and downtown area. On August 14, 2024, Mr. Green presented his report titled The Southshore, Barrie Sports, and a Revitalized Downtown. The report included a series of strategic recommendations related to the Barrie waterfront. Recommendation #6 specifically proposed that the former Sea Cadets site, along with the necessary surrounding City-owned lands, be designated as the location for Barrie's new Performing Arts Centre. Council subsequently provided the following staff direction under motion 24-G-223:

- i. Retain HPA be to complete a schematic design for a new Performing Arts Centre at the current Sea Cadets site at an estimated cost of \$200,000, and

that the design be prepared with the following considerations:

- An approximately 45,000 sq. ft facility that includes both larger (600 seat) and smaller (250 seat) performance spaces
  - The facility be designed with a maximum total building cost of \$65M in hard and soft construction costs for the building itself including fit out of all seating and audio-visual components
- ii. That staff undertake the required site due diligence (including but not limited to geotechnical investigations) to determine the feasibility of utilizing the current Sea Cadets site and any required surrounding City lands for a new Performing Arts Centre, up to a maximum cost of \$375,000
- iii. That staff report back to General Committee with the results of the due diligence work and schematic design as well as the estimated required site works and a potential implementation plan

### **Consultation and Engagement:**

No public consultation required in relation to this staff report. Prior public consultation was conducted by Mr. Marshall Green which has been highlighted in Staff Report ACC001-24.

### **Environmental and Climate Change Impact Matters:**

There are no environmental and/or climate change impact matters related to the recommendation.

### **Appendix:**

Appendix A – Barrie Performing Arts Centre Schematic Design

### **Report Author:**

J. DeVroom, Senior Project Manager, Facilities Planning and Development

### **File #:**

Not Applicable

### **Pending #:**

Not Applicable