

APPENDIX "A"

Questions and Answers

1. Parking – Concerns that there will not be adequate parking at the site

The parking requirement for Fisher as a theatre and event centre is estimated to be 150 spaces based on the proposed size and programming. This will be confirmed once Council approves the proposal.

Discussions with the YMCA continue with respect to occupation of the land immediately east of Fisher. It is anticipated that the facility will require for approximately 200 parking spaces (to be confirmed with designs). Technical work continues on an open channel solution for Kidd's Creek in this area.

Given unknowns on the balance of the community hub lands, it is difficult to confirm how much parking can be provided on site for use by Fisher Auditorium and Event Centre.

Staff in Planning and Engineering are working on various offsite parking solutions that will be available to all tenants in the community hub concept. At this time, it is anticipated that:

- 70 to 90 spaces can be accommodated on site (sharing with YMCA to be determined)
- 100 spaces can be provided off-site, within 200 m of Fisher, subject to property and design work and budget allocations
- 30 to 50 spaces are available on street or in municipal lots within 400 m of Fisher.

We are confident that parking can be provided for Fisher Auditorium and Event Centre albeit using a collaborative and non-traditional standards approach. Details will continue to be confirmed as site design for the community hub lands evolves. In addition, staff in Planning continue to discuss parking with both the YMCA and Hip as they develop their development concepts for future consideration.

2. Benchmarking Analysis – How Do the Governance, Operating and Business Models Compare?

In order to validate the governance, operating and business models proposed for Fisher Auditorium and Event Centre, Cobalt Connects undertook a benchmarking exercise with six comparable facilities in municipalities of similar size in population to Barrie. The exercise included direct consultations, reviews of year-end reports, staffing models, operational budgets, governance and municipal subsidies. The benchmarking exercise included the following facilities:

- a) The Grand Theatre – Kingston
- b) Sanderson Centre – Brantford
- c) Burlington Performing Arts Centre
- d) River Run Centre – Guelph
- e) FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre – St. Catharines
- f) Oakville Centre

The review exercise also examined municipal contributions to theatres across Ontario and a number of key reports, including the Ontario Presents Municipal Theatre Study (2015) and the Charity Village 2017 Non-Profit Compensation Study.

The findings from the benchmarking study (found in Appendix C, the Cobalt Report, pages 37 & 38 of Cobalt's Appendix A) indicated that the three year operational plan being proposed for the W.A. Fisher Auditorium and Event Centre is aligned with these reference facilities. In particular, the benchmarking found that the annual funding amount from the municipality is on par with other municipalities, with an opportunity for a larger facility to generate more revenues, thereby decreasing the annual subsidy. Staffing costs for Barrie theatres currently were significantly lower than other municipal venues, but the projected staffing costs for the Fisher and Five Points theatres together are closer to the average cost. The CIF fees currently being charged are lower than the average, but the projected Fisher and Five Points CIF fee structure would bring it into parity. Finally,

the rental rate for the theatres is below average, with an opportunity in the Fisher and Five Points business plan to move to a combined fee and percentage of ticket sales.

The lower staffing levels are the key driver in calculating the staff/capita and staff/seat metrics. In both cases, Barrie Theatres show a marked deviation from the averages of the comparable theatres, with 58,000 people/staff person for Barrie, against an average of 19,447 for the comparable venues, and 352 seats per staff person against an average of 115 for the comparable venues.

3. Proximity to Fire Hall - Concerns about sound impacts

Consultations with Barrie Fire and Emergency Services (BFES) indicated that they respond to 3,244 call annually. In 2016, 2,488 of these calls occurred between 5-10 pm. Of these calls, approximately 1/3 depart from Station 1, and a further 60% of those calls head east bound on Dunlop, past the proposed site. This would result in approximately 497 calls per year passing the theatre between 5-10 pm.

Emergency response sirens tend to be in the 130dB range.

At a speed of 40 km/hr, an emergency response vehicle would pass in front of the W. A. Fisher Auditorium and Event Centre in under 20 seconds.

Consultation with acoustics experts, additional insight was gained regarding the acoustic properties of the exterior walls of the facility, and the new sound lock designed access doors and corridors proposed for the theatre space. Based on their assessment, there would be minimal disruption from passing sirens in the theatre. The event space and lobby, however, would hear the sirens at high levels in the direction of passing. This was not expected to impact the viability or attractiveness of the venue.

4. Market Considerations - Competition

Friday Harbour

Recent conversations with representatives of the Friday Harbour development revealed that Friday Harbour is not currently planning a theatre in their development. There are potential plans for a hotel development, but details are not yet finalized. At this time, there are no competitive dynamics anticipated with Friday Harbour. Discussions regarding strategic collaboration for audience sharing and development are ongoing. These efforts could result in increased audiences and overall utilization for the W. A. Fisher Auditorium and Event Centre.

Kempenfelt Conference Centre

During the course of this project, the Kempenfelt Conference Centre ceased operations. While the facility offered unique amenities that are not provided within the W. A. Fisher design, the Kempenfelt Conference Centre did have a steady client base of organizations renting their meeting rooms for training and conferences. While the existing local market will likely absorb some of this business, there remains a market gap both for meeting spaces in the downtown area of Barrie, as well as large events venues with robust technology and catering infrastructure. As such, the closing of Kempenfelt Conference Centre will likely support the conference and events business in the W. A. Fisher venue.

Casino Rama

Exploratory discussions with professional producers and consultants in the cultural and entertainment sectors, the consensus view was that Casino Rama would not be considered competition for the Fisher facility. Casino Rama's performance space is significantly larger than Fisher, drawing specific productions that are geared to audiences of that size. Based on that feedback, along with the audience age restrictions for Casino Rama performances, it was assessed that Casino Rama would not be a competitor to the Fisher venue.

5. Market Data– Cultural Spending Patterns from Barrie Community Survey

Cobalt Connects conducted a broad community survey in Barrie to gauge cultural preferences and spending habits, and what the potential market would be for a larger venue with more diverse programming and higher quality audience experience. The survey was based on standard questions used in other Ontario municipalities, and was available for 2 weeks and generated 588 responses from City of Barrie residents. The survey results and analysis are included in Cobalt's report, Appendix C.

Some key findings of note:

Only 12.7% of survey respondents find 80-100% of their cultural activities within Barrie, spending an average of \$26-\$50 per typical cultural activity. This results in out-migration of cultural spending of more than \$50M by Barrie residents, in other communities.

42.8% of Barrie residents participate in cultural activities 1 time per month, while 35% participate in cultural activities 2-3 times per month. A focused effort to cultivate the once a month participants to the twice a month category would shift \$4.4M into the local economy in both cultural spending and associated food, retail and travel spending.

6. Demolition – What would it cost for the City to demolish the Fisher structure, should the proposed project not proceed?

Should the City move forward with the land acquisition, but the proposed Fisher Auditorium and Events Centre project not proceed, the estimates for the cost of demolition of the structure are based on a rate of \$15 per square foot. The recommended footprint option is 32,000 square feet, which would result in a demolition cost of \$480,000. Adding in a 10% contingency factor for potential scope and cost escalations, and the potential cost of demolishing the structure is estimated to be \$550,000. This figure will be incorporated into the 2019 capital planning process, should Council proceed with the land acquisition.

7. Kitchen Facilities for Conference and Events Centre – Should there be a full commercial kitchen or a catering kitchen?

After polling the community and potential stakeholders, it was suggested by Cobalt Connects and Lett Architect that a full scale multi-purpose catering kitchen would be the best option for the events centre. The model of a fully operational commercial kitchen was considered, but upon further investigation it was deemed inappropriate as it would limit the number of potential users of the space.