

**DATE:** June 4, 2021

**TO:** MAYOR AND COUNCIL

**NAME AND TITLE:** Blake McIntosh, Acting Director Civic Operations

**SUBJECT:** Prince George Playhouse Building Envelope Repair and Rigging Upgrade

**ATTACHMENT(S):** None

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That Council:

1. RECEIVES FOR INFORMATION the report dated June 4, 2021 from the Acting Director of Civic Operations titled “Prince George Playhouse Building Envelope Repair and Rigging Upgrade”.
2. APPROVES that the temporary repair of the Prince George Playhouse existing façade failure be added to the 2021 – 2025 Capital Financial Plan with a budget of \$140,000 to be funded by the Community Works Fund.
3. APPROVES that the upgrades to the theatrical rigging components in the Prince George Playhouse to current safety standards be added to the 2021 – 2025 Capital Financial Plan with a budget of \$271,500 to be funded by the Community Works Fund.

**PURPOSE:**

This report is to provide Council with the options and an estimated cost to repair the Prince George Playhouse building envelope failure that occurred in December 2020, and estimated costs to upgrade theatrical rigging in the Prince George Playhouse.

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

This supports Council’s priority for City Government and Infrastructure by maintaining fiscal sustainability and balance service levels with affordability of City Services, facilities, and operations.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Prince George Playhouse was constructed in the early seventies through the efforts of the Prince George Theatre Workshop Society. In 1996, the City funded a major renovation that took place to expand the footprint of the facility. This expansion included additional seating and the construction of a fly tower to support theatrical stage props, rigging and safety systems. The expanded building exterior was finished with a standard acrylic stucco treatment widely used at the time.

The building exterior was finished with a face sealed exterior insulation finishing system (EIFS) used commonly used in the 1990’s. Since this time, it has been discovered that this cladding system has

problems with water penetration and moisture not being able to escape. This problem inevitably results in damage and decay of the cladding system and wall system. This problem has occurred in a number of jurisdictions that used this product. This is one of several buildings in the City portfolio that was constructed using this type of cladding.

On December 4, 2020, during a serious storm, a portion of the stucco cladding on the PG Playhouse fell off onto the lower roof and nearby ground. Upon preliminary inspection, staff discovered extensive building envelope rot at the failure that was beyond minimal repair. Subsequent to the building envelope failure, a local contractor was employed to provide interim repairs and a building envelope specialist was procured to perform a condition assessment of the envelope with a focus on the condition of the exterior walls and a general visual review of windows, doors and roofs. The assessment included exploratory openings and moisture probing at select locations

At Council's February 8, 2021 meeting, Council received PG Playhouse Building Envelope Failure Update report (agenda item D.12). This report identified that an inspection report would be completed and that Administration would update Council on the results of the condition assessment, both interim and long-term repair strategies, and associated cost estimates for repairs and renewal.

At the conclusion of the condition assessment, it was evident that water is getting past the existing Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems (EIFS) throughout the building and the cladding system is not performing as intended. The condition assessment notes that the City could not have known of the degree of deterioration without failure or an invasive investigation.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

The financial considerations below include interim temporary repair estimated costs along with estimates for and future full building and surrounding site renewal requirements. Future estimates within this report represent the approximate magnitude of cost projected in 2021 dollars.

**Immediate Interim Measures**

Since 2020, the appropriate safety and hoarding precautions were installed at the PG Playhouse to ensure the safety in and around the building, as well as ensuring temporary measures to prevent further deterioration of the building envelope. To date, the expenses incurred for heating & hoarding, construction fencing and obtaining a building envelope report are \$90,000.

Table 1 below identifies costs for the completion of interim repairs. This estimate only addresses the repair of the current cladding issue. It is important to note, that even though the current opening will be repaired, there is still the potential for further envelope failure in other areas. Leaving the EIFS is not a long-term solution. This repair will not match existing but will be weatherproof. For safety, the City will leave construction fencing around the fly tower until the future use of the Playhouse is determined.

**Table 1**

<b>Interim Temporary Repair</b>	
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>Est. Cost</b>
Current expenses to date including heating/ hoarding and the building envelope report.	\$90,000*
Repair of current cladding failure on the west elevation of the fly tower. This repair will not match existing but will be weather proof.	\$140,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$230,000</b>

\*Expenses current to end of June 2021

**Parking**

Out of 135 former parking stalls, the Playhouse has approximately 65 parking stalls remaining. This is due to the new sub-divided properties adjacent to the playhouse property. Figure 1 below, reflects the new property line and portions of the existing parking lot now available. Further review is required to maximize the parking space and create a new entrance into the Playhouse property. The City has identified a \$1.5 million dollar project to address the parking but its implementation is contingent on an overall performing arts strategy. Also, the Playhouse currently doesn't have a tenant and it would be prudent to see what will be needed for parking.

Figure 1.



**Long-Term Building and Site Renewal Needs:**

Full building envelope repair would cost a minimum \$4,500,000, which includes replacement of all existing Exterior Insulation Finish System (EIFS) with new rain screen exterior insulated cladding, and roof. The replacement of the three HVAC units for \$580,000 are included as they are 25 years old and require replacement in 2023 and this work is best aligned with the roof replacement. A rigging system upgrade estimated at \$271,500 is also recommended for safety purposes prior to having arts & cultural users in the building.

A proposed parking lot was identified for the PG Playhouse to replace parking spaces that were lost due to subdivision of an adjacent parcel for multi-family development. This new parking lot would be inclusive of the Playhouse roadway, lighting, drainage, landscaping and irrigation. It is intended to improve accessibility, promote pedestrian safety and traffic circulation to access both the PG

Playhouse facility and Mr. PG. The new parking lot is estimated to be \$1.5M and would need to occur with any further investment and use of the Playhouse.

Table 2 below includes estimated current interim works and future capital costs required should Council determine to prioritize capital investment at this location and keep the PG Playhouse within its asset inventory. As the current construction labour market and material supply is experiencing price escalation and logistic challenges, the estimates for building renewal works will need to be revisited on an annual basis.

Table 2

<b>Building and Site Renewal</b>	
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>Est. Cost</b>
2021 Temporary Repair – includes current expenses to date	\$230,000
Rigging system upgrade	\$271,500
Future Building Envelope	\$4,500,000
Future Replacement of 3 Roof top HVAC Units	\$670,000
Future New Parking Lot	\$1,500,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,171,500*</b>
*Current labour and material shortages have made the construction market hard to predict cost. We would need to complete a detailed design to accurately set these budgets.	

**Other Financial Considerations**

Operating Costs

The PG Playhouse previous agreement with the City received \$29,000 annually intended to recover operating costs; however, annual operating costs have been approximately \$34,000-

Space & Theatre Equipment Upgrade needs

The PG Playhouse has additional challenges and deficiencies in its performance space structurally and in theatre equipment, based on feedback from additional arts & cultural users that have either used the facility or have considered its use. These costs have not yet been determined and are not included in costs within this report.

On Going Maintenance Needs

Additional building components requiring repair and/or renewal over the 10 years, beyond those identified in Table 3 as short-term need is estimated at \$1M, or \$100,000 Average Annual Reinvestment. The majority of this required spending over the medium to long term is on electrical, plumbing, and fire protection systems.

Table 3

Other Financial Considerations	
DESCRIPTION	Est. Cost
Annual Operating Expenses	\$34,000
Potential Annual Operating Revenue	unknown
Space & Theatre Equipment Upgrades (Other than theatrical rigging)	unknown
10 Year On-Going Capital Maintenance Needs	\$1,000,000

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:**

Administration recommends completing temporary repairs where the wall cladding failed. Fencing will be kept around the tower to keep people a safe distance away in the event that a future envelope failure occurs. It is also recommended that the rigging system upgrade be completed to improve safety and support theatrical events at this venue. Total cost of these recommendations is \$501,500. Administration recommends the temporary fascade repairs and the theatrical rigging upgrade be added to the 2021 – 2025 Capital Financial Plan and funded from Community works fund and will be completed in 2021.

Further planning in support of an overall performing arts strategy will be necessary to determine if the current playhouse will require dedicated reinvestment funds directed to the building and site renewal.

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:**

Blake McIntosh, Acting Director Civic Operations

PREPARED BY: [Leland Hanson, Manager Project Delivery]

**APPROVED:**

Walter Babicz, Acting City Manager

Meeting Date: [2021/06/14]