

BRIEFING NOTE

Theatre Studies

Purpose:

This note responds to the Budget Advisory Committee's request for information on the status of the theatre study.

Discussion:

Three separate initiatives concerning the City's three large theatres are underway in response to individual directives from City Council.

- I The revitalization of the Hummingbird Centre was considered by City Council in June 2003. At that time, Council adopted, in principle, the Hummingbird's concept known as "CityCentre" and requested that Hummingbird refine that concept and submit a detailed business plan to the CAO for review and further reporting to Council. Hummingbird anticipates that its detailed business plan will be available for City staff to review by April 1st; the CAO, in consultation with Legal, Finance and the Culture Division, will report to the July cycle of City Council
- II The Toronto Centre for the Arts has requested funding as part of its 2004 Operating Budget to retain consultants to undertake a study of options for future service operations and for its main stage, and to investigate opportunities for collaboration with other theatre operators in the City. This study is expected to commence in April and is to be submitted to City staff for review and subsequent reporting in October 2004. The study is to be undertaken in three phases. The first phase, to be completed by June 30, will address options for the property and the main stage. The second phase, to be completed by September 30, will evaluate and recommend a new operating and governance model for the Centre. The final phase, to be completed in time for the 2005 budget cycle, will provide implementation plans for the recommendations of the first two phases of the study, should the conclusions of Phase I and II lead to Council approval of an implementation phase.
- III City staff were directed by City Council in October 2002 and again in April 2003 to obtain financial information from the St. Lawrence Centre for the Performing Arts to permit the Canadian Stage Company to prepare a proposal for management of the Centre to be submitted to the City for consideration. CanStage expects to submit this proposal to the CAO by the end of June 2004. Once the CanStage proposal is received, it will be reviewed by City staff and a report to Council prepared for the November Council cycle.

Conclusion:

It is anticipated that these individual studies will be completed by yearend 2004. Once the business strategy has been developed for each of the large theatres, there may be an opportunity to investigate synergies among them.

Date: March 2, 2004