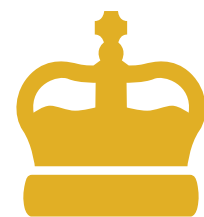




Council Workshop: Anvil Review Recommendations

July 15, 2024



NEW WESTMINSTER

Recommendations for Council

- That Council provide feedback on the proposed recommendations, which respond to Council and community input through the Anvil Centre 10-year Review process;
- That Council approve the recommendations, and direct staff to implement; and
- That Council direct staff to bring enhancement requests forward in the 2025 budget process for items that identify new resources.

Process to Develop Recommendations

- Engagement results presented to Council on May 6, and next steps endorsed
- Series of staff workshops in June to brainstorm, discuss and develop recommendations that respond to the engagement input
- Staff from several departments participated:
 - All Anvil Centre divisions
 - Library
 - Parks & Recreation
 - Corporate Communications
 - Public Engagement

Recommendation 1 ACTIVATION

- 1.1 Add mobile display cases to expand the community art and heritage exhibition programs to the ground floor, facilitate the exhibition of three-dimensional art works and artefacts, and support visual displays to celebrate various cultural holidays and commemorative occasions throughout the year. Explore opportunities to potentially rotate displays to other civic facilities.
- 1.2 Explore temporary public art opportunities through the atrium and lobby. This could include art wraps on structural pillars.
- 1.3 Work to regularly activate the ground floor with public activities and vibrant offerings that will bring people into the facility. This could include introducing unstructured, drop-in activities, interactive educational displays and creative events.

Recommendation 1 ACTIVATION

- 1.4 Expand on existing partnerships with Library Services to activate the ground floor space and respond to needs in the Downtown neighbourhood.
- 1.5 Establish a new interdepartmental staff working group to work with all Anvil departments to collaborate on new programming, including representation from Recreation and Library Services.
- 1.6 Continue to proactively work with community partners in activating the ground floor of Anvil Centre during street festivals and other outdoor events on Columbia Street; seek out new partners to plan and develop new and innovative ways to increase presence at all street festivals on Columbia.
- 1.7 Develop selected flexible/ephemeral programming such as screen-based, sound and light to activate the ground floor.

Recommendation 2 ACCESS

- 2.1 Develop a strategic plan for Anvil Centre to provide clarity of purpose and establish priorities and a clear framework for facilitating community usage.
- 2.2 Identify underutilized times and spaces within the facility. Develop internal programs and work with Recreation and Library staff to develop a plan and support the delivery of new recreation and leisure opportunities at Anvil.
- 2.3 Establish strategies to create more flexibility in accessing Anvil programs and services. Potential strategies could include:
 - Expand and diversify drop-in program opportunities;
 - Explore ways to align with other civic facility access programs (Active Pass);
 - Offer more satellite programming at other civic facilities to generate interest and awareness of existing programming at Anvil Centre
 - Work with other departments to develop a Pay-What-You-Can system.

Recommendation 2 ACCESS

- 2.4 Consider establishing a new funding stream in the City's grants program specific to Anvil Centre activation and use. This could include prioritizing grant funding for applicants who propose activation and utilization of the ground floor.
- 2.5 Develop strategies to simplify booking processes for community access:
- Streamline and centralize intake processes;
 - Reaffirm and clarify criteria for community use;
 - Establish priority use parameters for cultural and community activation;
 - Establish clear criteria for offering free community use (for example, specific spaces, specific days/times);
 - Where possible, align booking policies with other civic facilities.
- 2.6 Provide affordable and flexible catering alternatives for community users.

Recommendation 3 AWARENESS

- 3.1 Engage a consultant to develop a comprehensive communications plan for Anvil Centre that will:
- Maximize use of existing City communications channels;
 - Secure a prominent presence on the City's website for Anvil Centre and its programs;
 - Deliver cohesive, ongoing marketing of Anvil Centre and its offerings;
 - Explore ways that the building and downtown area can be used to facilitate communication.
- 3.2 Hire a communications and outreach specialist for the operation in order to action the communications strategy and ground level activations.
- 3.3 Strengthen internal communications processes to maximize opportunities for collaboration between all Anvil divisions.

Recommendation 3 AWARENESS

- 3.4 Develop and install new external signage that is eye-catching, supports the needs and aesthetics of each cultural division, and creates greater awareness of the programs and services offered by all Anvil departments.
- 3.5 Develop and install new internal signage to direct visitors and increase awareness of offerings throughout the facility.

Recommendation 4 EXPERIENCE

4.1 Engage a space planning consultant familiar with cultural and public assembly spaces to develop a space plan to establish a more welcoming presence at Anvil. Potential initiatives could include:

- Relocate the kiosk to a more central and visible location;
- Consider separating security and customer service functions in the redesign;
- Increase cultural services staff presence on the ground floor;
- Explore the introduction of new seating, work and passive gathering spaces in the lobby (the ground floor and all levels);
- Add a rigging system to support temporary décor install and strike;
- Add ambient sound through the space;
- Add colour to provide warmth and visual interest;

Recommendation 4 EXPERIENCE

- 4.2 Develop and implement an operational plan to identify what is working well, ways to improve guest experience and decrease any perceived/real barriers. Potential initiatives could include:
- Improve front line customer service presence and decrease security presence while maintaining the needed security function;
 - Develop a Facility Ambassador Volunteer Program with defined roles to augment the kiosk function;
 - Open the Columbia Street glass walls when possible to draw visitors into the facility.

Questions for Council

- How well do you feel the recommendations respond to what we heard through the engagement?
- Is there anything missing from the recommendations?
- Any additional feedback on the proposed recommendations?

Recommendations for Council

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- That Council approve the recommendations, and direct staff to implement; and
- That Council direct staff to bring enhancement requests forward in the 2025 budget process for items that identify new resources.