
2025 OPERATING BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE

Community Space Usage at Civic Centres Before and After the COVID-19 Pandemic

Issue/Background:

At its meeting on January 17, 2025, the Budget Committee requested the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management (CREM) to provide a briefing note with data on community space usage in each of the Civic Centres including:

- Usage on evenings and weekends before and after COVID-19
- Summary of average rates paid to book Civic Centres
- Cost to restore staffing on evenings and weekends that would restore community access, providing disaggregated data by Civic Centre location.

This briefing note provides the requested information on all interior Civic Centre public spaces for 2019 and 2024, which respectively represent the periods before and after COVID-19.

Key Points:

Evening and weekend public space usage in Civic Centres: 2019 versus 2024

- In 2019, the standard hours of operation for booking public spaces at Civic Centres were Monday to Friday from 7:30 AM to 9:30 PM and on Saturdays, Sundays, and statutory holidays from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM.
- As part of CREM's affordability measures to offset inflationary pressures, the 2023 budget included a reduction in operating hours and public access at corporate facilities, including City Hall, Metro Hall, and Civic Centres. Revised hours are detailed in Appendix A.
- In second quarter of 2023, the hours of operation for public meeting and event spaces at City Hall, Metro Hall, and Civic Centres were reduced to align with the facilities' revised operating hours.
- The reduced hours of operation do not apply to requests from qualified organizations (per requirements detailed in Appendix A) with an active Civic Centre Public Space Account established prior to June 5, 2023, the date of implementation of the reduced hours of operation. i.e., if an organization successfully registered a Civic Centre Public

Space Account prior to June 5, 2023, it could continue to utilize the Civic Centres' 2019 standard hours of operation until the expiry of its account. All Civic Centre Public Space Accounts expire at the end of each Council term.

- Table 1 details the number of evening and weekend bookings for each Civic Centre, Metro Hall and City Hall in 2019 as compared to 2024.
- The increased prevalence of virtual meetings following the COVID-19 pandemic may also be a factor in the reduced use of physical space to host meetings and events as demonstrated in the 2024 bookings numbers.

Table 1: Evening and Weekend Bookings for all Civic Centres – 2019 versus 2024

Civic Centre	2019			2024		
	Number of Evening Bookings	Number of Weekend Bookings	Total	Number of Evening Bookings	Number of Weekend Bookings	Total
Scarborough Civic Centre	337	278	615	99	200	299
East York Civic Centre	167	103	270	7	33	40
Etobicoke Civic Centre	407	340	747	210	181	391
York Civic Centre	47	63	110	4	5	9
North York Civic Centre	739	528	1,267	20	13	33
City Hall	763	197	960	338	115	453
Metro Hall	415	157	572	80	44	124
	2019 Total		4,541	2024 Total		1,349

Average public space booking recovery costs at Civic Centres: 2019 versus 2024

- It is important to note that when booking public space in Civic Centres, venue rental fees have historically not been applied, and this practice continues to this day.
- Cost recovery fees only apply for events that require additional staff, such as audio-visual support, setup, or additional security. Each booking request, along with its staffing and service requirements, is reviewed on a case-by-case basis. When additional staff are required, they will be provided as needed and charged to the organization making the booking request.
- Table 2 outlines the 2025 staffing rates to support events. These staffing rates are approved annually by City Council through the budget process. The 2025 rates are included as part of the [“2025 User Fee Automatic Adjustments”](#).

Table 2: Staffing Costs for City Venues for 2025

Fee description	Fee basis	Fee
Facility Event Coordinator	Per hour	\$77.88
Security Guard	Per hour	\$82.02
Building Operator	Per hour	\$62.82
Custodial and Event Logistics Personnel	Per hour	\$56.53
Foreperson	Per hour	\$94.22
Electrician	Per hour	\$188.45
Audio Visual Technician	Per hour	\$106.79

Cost to restore operating hours for evenings and weekends at Civic Centres (not including Metro Hall and City Hall)

- There are estimated incremental costs to restore hours of operations for evenings and weekends in the amount of approximately \$450,000 total, or \$90,000 per Civic Centre per year, excluding Metro Hall and City Hall.
- Restoring the hours of operations for Civic Centres will not eliminate the cost recovery for events that require additional staff beyond those typically present during normal hours of building operation, such as audio-visual support, setup, or additional security.

Cost to restore staffing for evenings and weekends at Metro Hall and City Hall

- The estimated cost to restore evening and weekend hours of operation in 2025 is approximately \$575,500.
- Most of this cost is related to restoring a security services, at the standard operational level, to the previous hours.

Attachments:

Appendix A – Booking Requirements

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Appendix A: Booking Requirements

- To book a venue, an organization must have an active and up-to-date Civic Centre Public Space Account, and must be Toronto-based, belonging to one of the following categories:
 - Registered Charity (organization must have a Registered Charitable Number)
 - Not-for-Profit (organization must have Provincial or Federal Letters of Patent or Articles of Incorporation)
 - Government (Provincial, Federal levels of Government or a Consulate)
 - Community Organization (organization is community based)
 - Agency or Corporation (organization must have a not-for-profit and/or registered charity component)
- Organizers must have an active and up-to-date Civic Centre Public Space Booking Account ensuring compliance with City Policies such as the Terms and Conditions for Use of Public Space, Save Hold and Harmless Clause, Declaration of Compliance with Anti-Harassment/Discrimination Legislation and City Policy, and the Corporate Facilities Display and Fundraising Policy.
- Details of the booking process and requirements are listed in the City’s [“Book City Hall or a Civic Centre”](#) webpage, including the 2025 staffing costs for City venues as part of the cost recovery program.
- As of the second quarter of 2023, all public space booking requests, made with Civic Centre Public Space Accounts established after June 5, 2023, for interior meeting and event spaces at City Hall, Metro Hall and Civic Centres are accepted as per the hours of operation detailed in Table 1.

Table 2: Current Civic Centre Hours of Operation established in second quarter of 2023

Scarborough Civic Centre	East York Civic Centre	Etobicoke Civic Centre	North York Civic Centre	York Civic Centre	City Hall	Metro Hall
Weekdays: 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.	Weekdays: 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.	Weekdays: 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.	Weekdays*: 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.	Weekdays: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Weekdays: 8 a.m. – 8 p.m.	Weekdays: 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Saturdays: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.	Saturdays: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.	Saturdays: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.	Saturdays*: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.	Saturdays: Closed	Saturdays: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.	Saturdays: Closed
Sunday and statutory holidays: Closed						

*North York Civic Centre hours have been temporarily modified over the past year to accommodate an ongoing construction project. Standard hours of operation will resume at the end of February of 2025. Accommodations where possible have been made to support the hosting of events in the publicly available spaces through the construction project.