

REPORT FOR ACTION WITH CONFIDENTIAL ATTACHMENT

Exhibition Place Rental Rates for 2031 to 2035

Date: November 21, 2025

To: The Board of Governors of Exhibition Place

From: Don Boyle, Chief Executive Officer

Wards: Ward 10 Spadina-Fort York

REASON FOR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

The attachment to this report contains financial information that belongs to the Board of Governors of Exhibition Place and has monetary value or potential monetary value.

SUMMARY

This report recommends rental rate increases for meetings, conventions and exhibitions in all managed facilities within the Exhibition Place grounds for the period of 2031 to 2035.

The recommendation is in response to increases in operating costs to maintain profitability and while keeping rates competitive with other venues in Toronto and the GTA.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Chief Executive Officer recommends that:

1. The Board approve a market adjustment increase in rental rates for 2031 to 2035 inclusive, for meetings, conventions, events, and exhibitions in all managed facilities across the grounds as outlined in Confidential Attachment 1.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This recommendation will result in additional revenue streams which will offset anticipated normal annual increases to operating costs and maintain a competitive

position in the industry. The market adjustment will result in estimated increased revenues of \$2.026 Million over the five-year period from 2031 to 2035 which amount will be included within the annual operating budget.

DECISION HISTORY

The Exhibition Place 2022 -2026 Strategic Plan had a Business Development Goal to better understand our competitive positioning through a comprehensive cost study, and as a Strategy to support this Goal we will study our facility rental rate costs, services. and review our collective agreements to ensure competitiveness.

At its meeting of May 31, 2018, the Board approved a rental rate schedule for the period of 2026 to 2030 for meetings, conventions and exhibitions in all facilities across the grounds.

[Agenda Item History - 2018.EP11.9](#)

At its meeting of July 2013, the Board approved a rental rate schedule for the period of 2021 to 2025 for meetings, conventions and exhibitions in all facilities across the grounds.

[https://www.explace.on.ca/files/file/58bee12921c2b/Item-10-RentalRates\(1\).pdf](https://www.explace.on.ca/files/file/58bee12921c2b/Item-10-RentalRates(1).pdf)

COMMENTS

Toronto and the GTA is one of the most competitive markets for exhibitions and events. Exhibition Place competes mainly with two other major local facilities for this business, the Metro Toronto Convention Centre and the International Centre. To ensure the success of Enercare Centre, Exhibition Place, it is essential that our rental and service rates remain competitive, as clients typically compare pricing across venues before confirming contracts. It is our understanding that since the pandemic, local convention centres have not implemented consistent year over year increases, like we have done at Enercare Centre, and they are currently at a range of 21.2 to 23.2 cents per square foot, while 2025 Enercare Centre rate is 23.9 (Hall A - D, Heritage Court) at Exhibition Place.

The pandemic caused a significant disruption to the exhibition industry, and while the interest in shows seems to have rebounded, attendance figures in many sectors remain below pre-pandemic levels and some annual shows have reduced the number of event days in their show. Sponsorship opportunities, often a primary revenue source for the major shows, are harder to secure amid economic uncertainty driven by the U.S. geopolitical climate.

New show launches have been limited and generally smaller in scale. Exhibitions have also seen consolidation among exhibitors, with many opting to participate but purchasing less booth space or ordering fewer services. Although exhibitions remain one of the most effective marketing tools for companies, economic pressures and the

rise of online direct-to-consumer channels have led some businesses to reduce participation or withdraw entirely as they seek to cut overall budgets.

Staff recommends that the Board approve a 3% annual increase for 2031 to 2035 for Enercare Centre, Better Living Centre, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Grounds, as illustrated in Confidential Attachment 1.

For the Meetings and Convention segment of our business, we are competing with the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, the International Centre, and major local hotels such as the Sheraton Centre and Westin Harbour Castle. Beyond local competitors, we also compete nationally with Vancouver and Montreal, and in the US with several key Northeastern cities. None of the venues in our competitive set have collective agreements for AV/stagehands, and Automotive Building is at a competitive disadvantage due to our existing collective agreement. We have undertaken an analysis of the competitive venues, and determined that the 2025 daily rack rental rate of meeting rooms/ballrooms ranges from .69 to .91 cents per square foot. This rack rate is adjusted based on food and beverage spend as per industry standards, and on move in/out days. Both International Centre and Metro Toronto Convention Centre operate their Food and Beverage departments in house, while Exhibition Place earns commission from its third-party Food and Beverage providers.

Price sensitivity remains the dominant factor in the Meetings and Conventions market, with clients closely comparing meeting space rental rates, food and beverage costs, and event service charges across local venues and multiple destinations. Associations, while continuing to plan annual conventions, have shortened event durations and seek minimal year-over-year increases, which can lead them to consider secondary cities and alternative venues. Corporate meeting strategies differ according to sector, organizational priorities, and financial health. While some industries have scaled back the number, size, and scope of meetings, others have expanded meetings into larger events. Regardless, most corporations are hesitant to book meetings beyond an 18-month window, preferring flexibility to adapt to changing economic conditions and priorities.

Despite these challenges, planners in the Meetings and Conventions industry maintain high expectations for service delivery and customer experience, and they actively seek value-added options while competitively pricing multiple venues in each market.

Accordingly, staff recommend that the Board approve a 3% increase every other year for the Automotive Building, as illustrated on the table in Confidential Attachment 1.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Don Boyle
Chief Executive Officer

ATTACHMENTS

Confidential Attachment 1 - Rental Rates 2031 to 2035 by Building