



AGENDA

Council Workshop **Thursday, 23 October 2025**

I hereby give notice that a Council Workshop meeting will be held on:

Date: Thursday, 23 October 2025

Time: 11:30 AM User Fees & Charges Bay Court

**Location: Tauranga City Council Chambers
Tauranga City Council Chambers
L1 90 Devonport Road
Tauranga**

Please note that this meeting will be livestreamed and the recording will be publicly available on Tauranga City Council's website: www.tauranga.govt.nz.

Marty Grenfell
Chief Executive

Order of Business

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1.1 User Fees and Charges - Baycourt 4

1 BUSINESS

1.1 User Fees and Charges - Baycourt

File Number: A19148225

Author: Holly Riddell, Corporate Planner

Authoriser: Christine Jones, General Manager: Strategy, Partnerships & Growth

Presenter(s): Reena Snook and Gareth Wallis

Workshop information

Purpose of workshop

1. The purpose of this workshop is to provide Council with information related to the user fees and charges for Baycourt to inform any proposed changes to the Fees and Charges Schedule for the 2026/27 financial year.

Attachments

1. Council Workshop - 23 October (Baycourt) - A19148208 [↓](#) 

Fees and Charges Review 2026/27



- Baycourt Community & Arts Centre

23 October 2025



Baycourt Community & Arts Centre

Reena Snook

Baycourt Community & Arts Centre Manager

&

Gareth Wallis

Head of Community Hubs, Arts, Heritage and Events

Setting the stage / What is Baycourt?

- Tauranga's premier performing arts facility, opened in 1983 by the then-Prince and Princess of Wales. 
- A treasured community asset, with a third of its original funding raised through community contributions.
- A champion of local creatives/artists.
- Nationally recognised for local and sector leadership, actively contributing to Aotearoa's creative ecosystem.
- An industry and community educator, mentor, and cultural steward.
- A bridge between professional and grassroots practice.



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

14th April, 2023.

Dear Mr. Tolley,

The King has asked me to thank you for your kind letter sent on behalf of Tauranga City Council on the occasion of the Fortieth Anniversary of Baycourt Community and Arts Centre which is being marked from 21st to 29th April with a programme of art, exhibition and performance events.

His Majesty fondly remembers officially opening the Centre on 26th April, 1983 and was interested to learn of its progress since his visit and of the role it plays in Tauranga's and New Zealand's cultural identity.

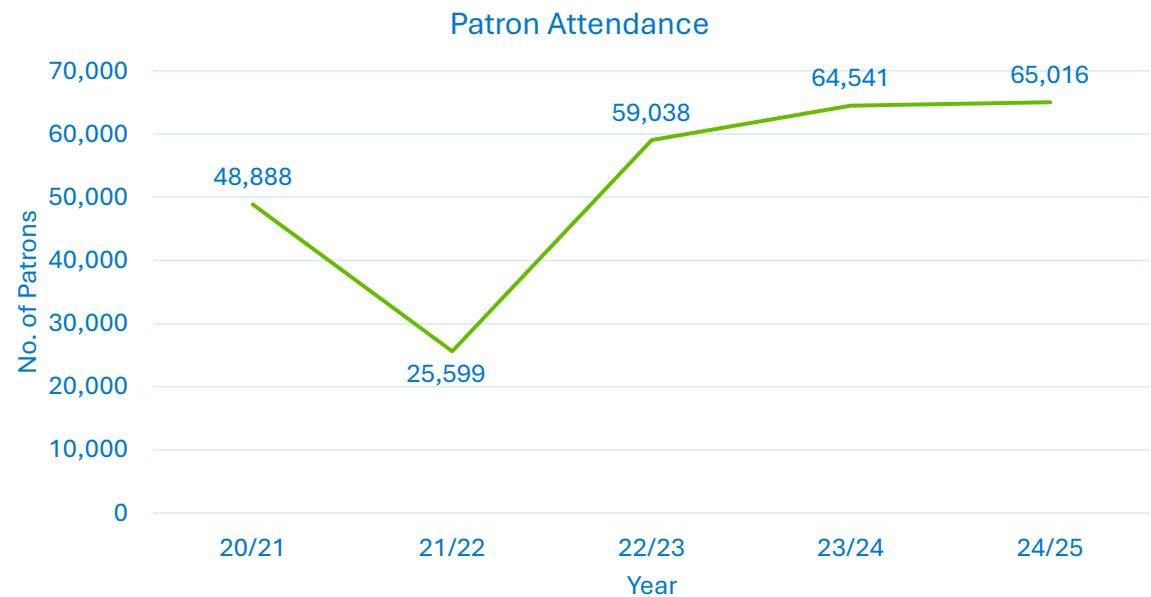
Your thoughtfulness in writing and in keeping The King informed is much appreciated. In return, His Majesty sends his best wishes to all concerned for a most memorable and enjoyable series of celebrations and the continued success of Baycourt.

*Yours sincerely,
Miranda Hansen Lise*

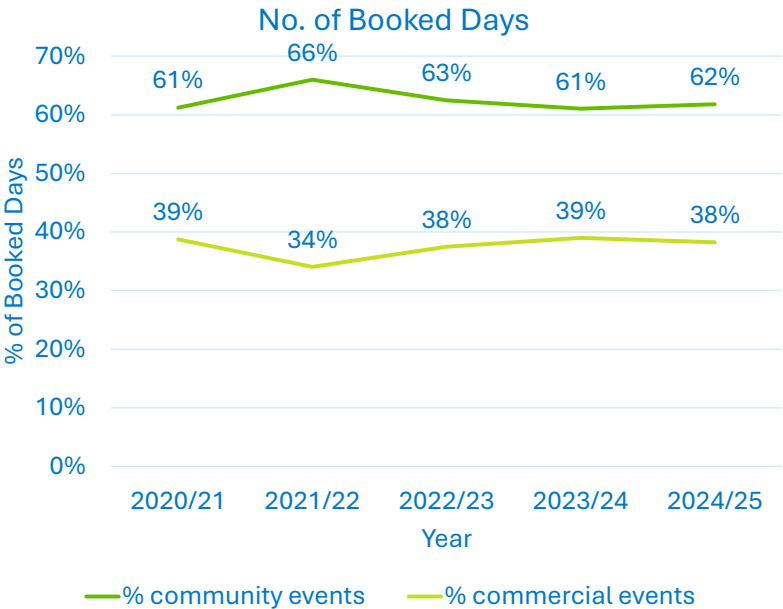
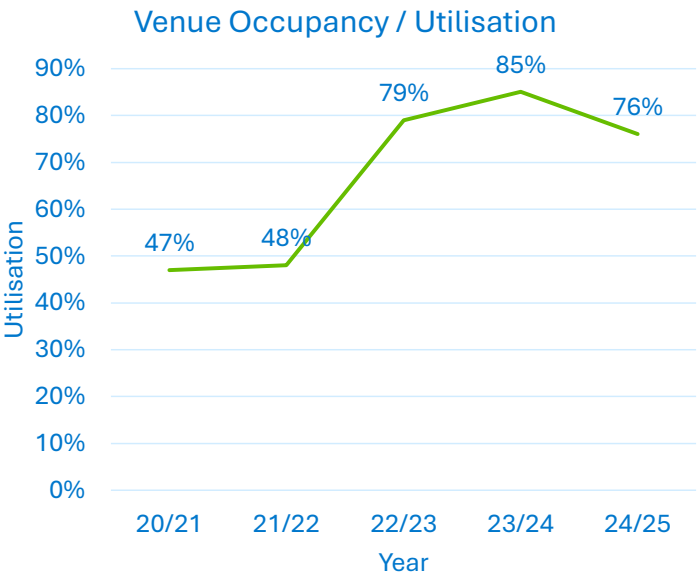
Miranda Hansen Lise
Loyal Greetings Officer



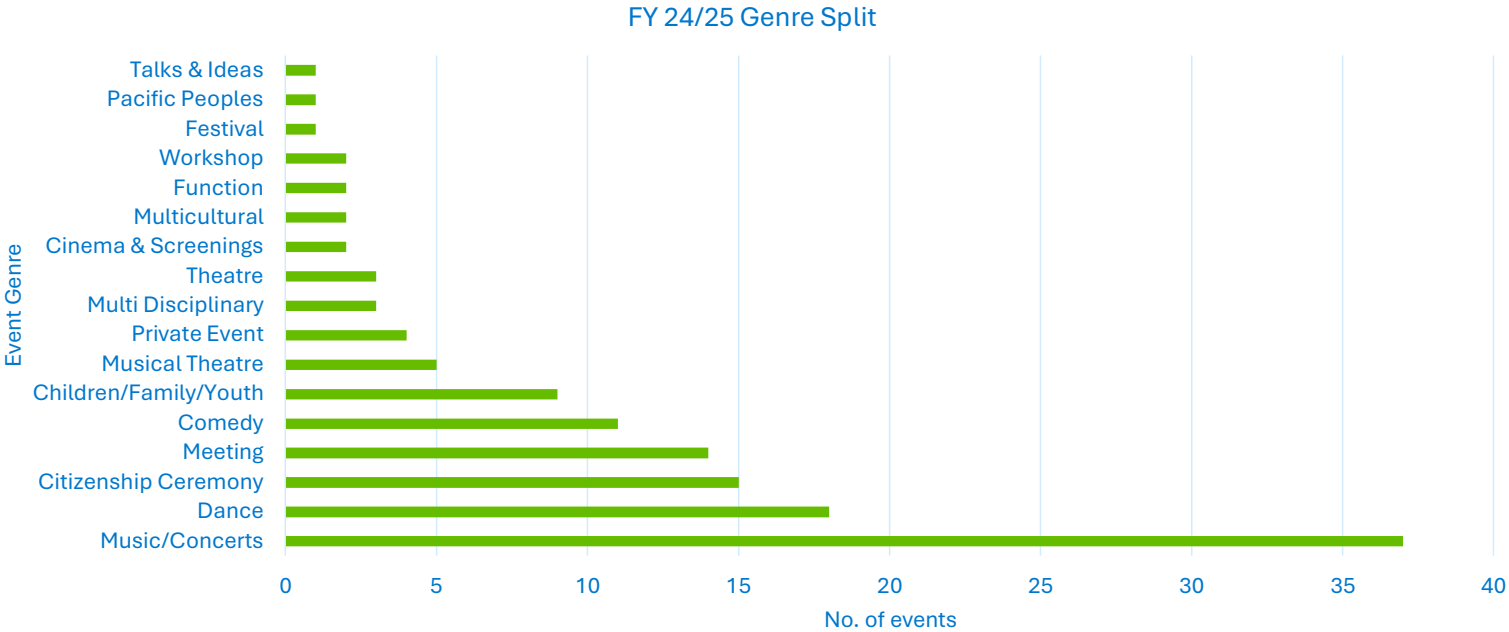
Standing room only / Attendance



Full house / Utilisation



Repertoire rundown / Genre



In the spotlight / Baycourt hire fees

Baycourt operates under a two-tier venue hire model, structured by user type (community or commercial booking) and nature of event (performance or non-performance event):

- 1. **Community hires**
 - a) Live performance events e.g. ticketed music concerts/dance/musical theatre/drama etc.
- 2. **Commercial hires**
 - a) Live performance events
 - b) Non-performance events e.g. meetings/conferences/dinners/tradeshows/exhibitions etc.

Below are the venue hire fees for FY 2025/26 (exclusive of GST):

	Addison Theatre	X Space	Full Facility
COMMUNITY			
Live performance (per show)	\$ 1,350.00	\$ 550.00	\$ 2,000.00
COMMERCIAL			
Live performance (per show)	\$ 2,700.00	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 4,000.00
Non-performance (per day)	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 4,300.00



Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? / How we stack up nationally

This table compares a selection of prominent regional theatres across Aotearoa, ranking them from least to most expensive in respect of commercial venue hire fees.

City	Venue	Venue hire fee (Commercial)	No. seats	Cost per seat	Council owned / operated
Palmerston North	Regent on Broadway	\$ 1,750.00	1,362	\$ 1.28	✓
Whanganui	Royal Whanganui Opera House	\$ 1,999.00	800	\$ 2.50	✓
Oamaru	Oamaru Opera House	\$ 1,750.00	548	\$ 3.19	✓
Hastings	Toitoe - Opera House	\$ 3,300.00	979	\$ 3.37	✓
Napier	Napier Municipal Theatre	\$ 3,485.22	985	\$ 3.54	✓
New Plymouth	TSB Showplace - Theatre Royal	\$ 2,008.70	527	\$ 3.81	✓
Kerikeri	Turner Centre - John Dalton Auditorium	\$ 1,550.00	400	\$ 3.88	
Kāpiti	Te Raukura ki Kāpiti - Coastlands' Theatre	\$ 1,320.00	331	\$ 3.99	
New Plymouth	TSB Showplace - TSB Theatre	\$ 3,675.00	915	\$ 4.02	✓
Rotorua	Sir Howard Morrison Centre - Sir Owen Glenn Theatre	\$ 4,150.00	918	\$ 4.52	✓
Christchurch	Isaac Theatre Royal	\$ 5,900.00	1,292	\$ 4.57	
Tauranga	Baycourt Community & Arts Centre - Addison Theatre	\$ 2,700.00	582	\$ 4.64	✓
Tauranga	Baycourt Community & Arts Centre - X Space	\$ 1,100.00	220	\$ 5.00	✓
Wairarapa	Wairarapa Events Centre - Taratahi Auditorium	\$ 1,950.00	370	\$ 5.27	✓
Nelson	Theatre Royal	\$ 1,780.00	337	\$ 5.28	
Hamilton	Clarence St Theatre	\$ 3,330.00	550	\$ 6.05	



Support act / Community discount

Baycourt's longstanding commitment to supporting local organisations is reflected in its 50% community hire discount. This practice is understood by current staff to have been in place for at least 30 of the venue's 42-year operating history.

City	Venue	Venue hire community discount	Operating model
Hamilton	Clarence St Theatre	30% discount (on average)	Owned/operated by Charitable Trust
Kerikeri	Turner Centre	30% discount (+ variety of others)	Owned by Council, operated by The Centre at Kerikeri Ltd
Nelson	Theatre Royal	30% discount (on average)	Owned/operated by Charitable Trust
New Plymouth	TSB Theatre	40% discount	Owned/operated by Council
Carterton/Wairarapa	Taratahi Auditorium	40% discount (on average)	Owned/operated by Council
Hastings	Toitoti Opera House	50% discount	Owned/operated by Council
Tauranga	Baycourt	50% discount	Owned/operated by Council
Oamaru	Oamaru Opera House	60% discount (on average)	Owned/operated by Council



A glimpse at our back catalogue / Previous hire fees

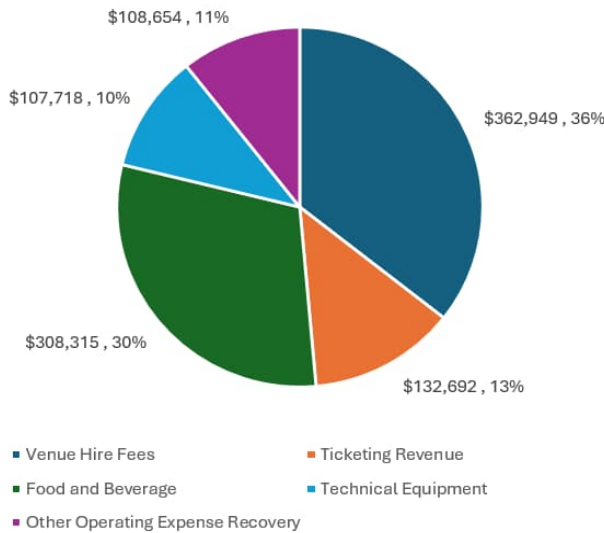
The table below provides a summary of Baycourt's annual hire fees over the past five years, including the current year, along with the corresponding percentage increases.

	2021/2022	2022/2023	% increase from previous year	2023/2024	% increase from previous year	2024/2025	% increase from previous year	2025/2026	% increase from previous year
COMMUNITY									
Live performance									
Addison Theatre	\$ 1,036.50	\$ 1,100.00	6.1%	\$ 1,166.50	6.0%	\$ 1,250.00	7.2%	\$ 1,350.00	8.0%
X Space	\$ 378.26	\$ 410.00	8.4%	\$ 438.00	6.8%	\$ 450.00	2.7%	\$ 550.00	22.2%
Full Facility	\$ 1,675.22	\$ 1,750.00	4.5%	\$ 1,855.00	6.0%	\$ 1,900.00	2.4%	\$ 2,000.00	5.3%
COMMERCIAL									
Live performance									
Addison Theatre	\$ 2,073.04	\$ 2,200.00	6.1%	\$ 2,333.00	6.0%	\$ 2,500.00	7.2%	\$ 2,700.00	8.0%
X Space	\$ 756.52	\$ 820.00	8.4%	\$ 870.00	6.1%	\$ 900.00	3.4%	\$ 1,100.00	22.2%
Full Facility	\$ 3,350.43	\$ 3,500.00	4.5%	\$ 3,710.00	6.0%	\$ 3,800.00	2.4%	\$ 4,000.00	5.3%
Non-performance (full day)									
Addison Theatre	\$ 2,143.48	\$ 2,300.00	7.3%	\$ 2,440.00	6.1%	\$ 2,800.00	14.8%	\$ 3,000.00	7.1%
X Space	\$ 771.30	\$ 850.00	10.2%	\$ 901.00	6.0%	\$ 1,000.00	11.0%	\$ 1,200.00	20.0%
Full Facility	\$ 3,463.48	\$ 3,700.00	6.8%	\$ 3,925.00	6.1%	\$ 4,000.00	1.9%	\$ 4,300.00	7.5%
AVERAGE INCREASE PER ANNUM			6.9%		6.1%		5.9%		11.7%

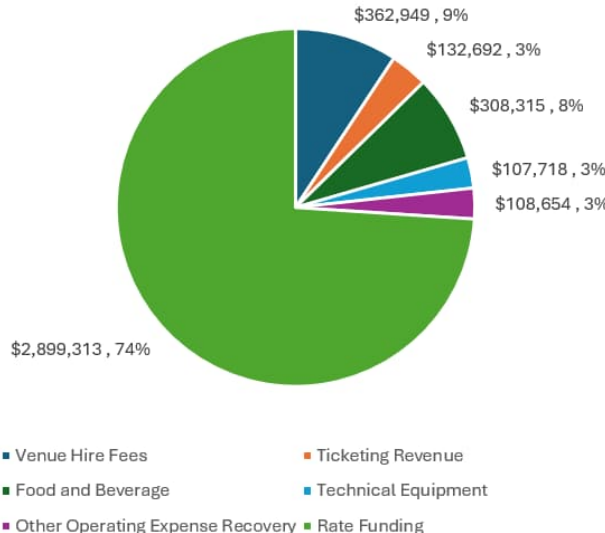


Behind the curtain / Revenue

Baycourt Generated Revenue - 2025 Actuals



Baycourt All Revenue - 2025 Actuals



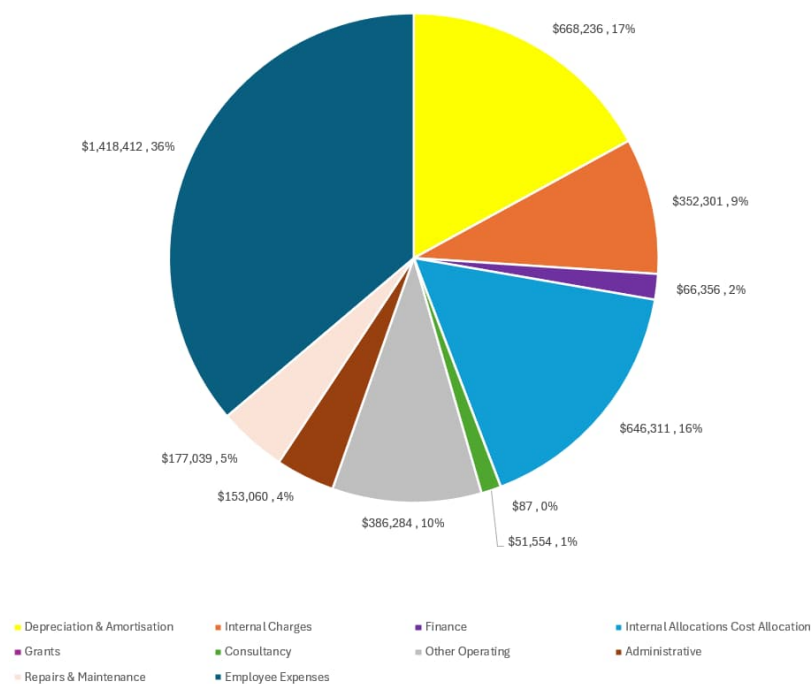
Behind the curtain / Expenses

In 2024/25, Baycourt's total expenditure was \$3.92M.

Of this, 44% or \$1.73M comprised indirect costs, including depreciation and internal allocations.

The remaining 56% or \$2.19M represents direct operating costs, which cover the day-to-day running of the facility and delivery of services.

Baycourt Expenses - 2025 Actuals



Why, you may ask, should rates subsidise this activity?

- Subsidies ensure community groups and not-for-profits can access a professional venue, regardless of financial means.
- Baycourt's limited seated capacity means that generating income is capped – local government funding is essential to keeping the doors open.
- Regional theatres serve a broad public benefit – supporting arts, culture, education, and community wellbeing. This rarely aligns with commercial profitability.
- Our community needs Baycourt – we bring the feels!
- Born from a shared community vision and effort, Baycourt remains a space the community feels deeply connected to – honouring that legacy is vital.
- Responsible asset stewardship – preservation of a purpose-built, Council-owned facility.
- City centre spending – events held at Baycourt stimulate local spending in the city centre.



Access all areas / Cost to open doors

The tables below break down the direct costs associated with staging a ‘standard’ performance in the Addison and X Space, offering a more granular view of our operations and how these costs compare to Baycourt’s current hire fees.

It’s important to note the variances below do not account for additional revenue streams earned during an event, such as technical equipment hire, food and beverage sales, various commissions etc. These figures offer a snapshot of the baseline cost-recovery position, not the final profit or loss of an individual event.

ADDISON THEATRE			
	Per hour cost	No. Hours	Total Cost
Ushers	\$ 29.81	14	\$ 417
Front of House Manager / Duty Manager	\$ 37.13	5.5	\$ 204
Venue Technician	\$ 35.52	10	\$ 355
Cleaning (average per show cost)			\$ 227
Power (average per show cost)			\$ 179
Event Coordination	\$ 43.00	20	\$ 860
Building maintenance & room set up	\$ 33.00	3	\$ 99
Box Office Ticketing Assistant	\$ 29.81	2	\$ 60
Per performance cost			\$ 2,402

Variance			
25/26 Hire Fee (Commercial)	\$ 2,700	\$ 298	
25/26 Hire Fee (Community)	\$ 1,350	-\$ 1,052	

X SPACE			
	Per hour cost	No. hours	Total cost
Ushers	\$ 29.81	7	\$ 209
Front of House Manager / Duty Manager	\$ 37.13	4.5	\$ 167
Venue Technician	\$ 35.52	6	\$ 213
Cleaning (average per show cost)	\$ -	0	\$ 100
Power (average per show cost)	\$ -	0	\$ 120
Event Coordination	\$ 43.00	15	\$ 645
Building maintenance & room set up	\$ 33.00	2	\$ 66
Box Office Ticketing Assistant	\$ 29.81	2	\$ 60
Per performance cost			\$ 1,579

Variance			
25/26 Hire Fee (Commercial)	\$ 1,100	-\$ 479	
25/26 Hire Fee (Community)	\$ 550	-\$ 1,029	



To change the fees, or not to change the fees? That is the question

As part of the Council-initiated review of Baycourt's fees and charges for 2026/27, several pricing adjustment options are presented below for consideration, including adjustments to the community discount model, commercial hire fees, and fees for operational services.

These options are designed to align with Council's directive to move toward a stronger 'user pays' approach, while also looking to preserve Baycourt's community-focused legacy.



Option / Opportunity		Financial Impact	Pros	Cons
COMMUNITY HIRERS				
1.	Maintain existing 50% community discount on hire fees into FY 2026/27	Status quo	Consistency for existing community hirers; demonstrates strong support for ensuring community access remains; high venue utilisation continues.	Doesn't support revenue generation directive; significant reliance on rates funding continues; places limitations on volume of commercial bookings that can be achieved.
2.	Increase community discount from 50% to 60% (or a different percentage)	An additional \$39,690 cost per annum to Council	Increased affordability for community groups.	Greater financial pressure on Baycourt's budget and reliance on rate funding; possible reduction in commercial revenue opportunities as community utilisation could rise as a result of increased affordability.
3.	Reduce community discount from 50% to 40% (or other percentage)	An additional \$39,690 in revenue per annum to Council	Increased revenue generation and small reduction in rate funding; more in line with national average for community discounts offered across regional theatres; if a decrease in community bookings occurs this may result in opportunities to increase commercial utilisation, which has a higher per performance return on investment.	Increasing fees would be a departure from Baycourt's long-standing community access kaupapa; it has a small rates impact yet the effect on community hirers, many of whom are budget-constrained, could be significant with an estimated \$270 or 13% increase per performance; may jeopardise ability for community groups to access the venue, leading to a decline in locally produced content – replacing this with touring or out-of-town programming would require additional investment and may not be viable in the short-term, potentially resulting in reduced venue utilisation.



Option / Opportunity		Financial Impact	Pros	Cons
COMMUNITY HIRERS				
4.	Reduce number of technical labour hours included in the venue hire fee on performance days : - Addison Theatre – 10 hours to 8 hours - X Space – 6 hours to 4 hours - Full Facility – 16 hours to 12 hours	An additional \$25,560 in revenue per annum to Council	Increased revenue generation to close the gap on cost to 'open doors' and the current fee structure; brings Baycourt more in line with the average number of 'included' technical hours offered by regional theatres across Aotearoa.	Minor financial impact on most hirers, but multi-day community bookings will be more significantly affected; potential reduction in venue utilisation if hirers are unable to absorb the additional cost; possible perception of reduced value in the base hire package.
5.	Reduce number of technical labour hours included in the venue hire fee on pack in/out/rehearsal/dark days by 50% : - Addison Theatre – 10 hours to 5 hours - X Space – 6 hours to 3 hours - Full Facility – 16 hours to 8 hours	An additional \$9,000 in revenue per annum to Council	Increased revenue generation to close the gap on cost to 'open doors' and the current fee structure.	Increased costs for hirers, particularly multi-day community bookings, which will be more significantly affected; potential reduction in venue utilisation if hirers are unable to absorb the additional expense (particularly long running community hirers); possible perception of reduced value in the base hire package.
6.	Increase hourly technical labour charge out rates from \$45 to \$48 (or other hourly charge)	An additional \$2,331 in revenue per annum to Council	Revenue generation (albeit modest), moves Baycourt closer to alignment with national benchmarks for technical labour charge-out rates (typically between \$50 and \$60/hour).	Minor financial gain may be offset by potential resistance from hirers (particularly community hirers).
7.	Increase technical equipment hire costs by 5% (or other percentage)	An additional \$4,893 in revenue per annum to Council	Increased revenue to support reinvestment in equipment.	Negative impact on hirers budgets (particularly community groups with limited financial resources); potential reduction in equipment hire if hirers seek to minimise costs. ~\$125k revenue earned in 2024/25.



Option / Opportunity		Financial Impact	Pros	Cons
COMMUNITY HIRERS				
8.	Reduce technical equipment discount from 25% to 20% (or a different percentage)	An additional \$4,727 in revenue per annum to Council	Increased revenue to support reinvestment in equipment and reduction in rates requirement.	For events with extensive technical equipment hire needs, this could have a moderate impact on their budgets; potential reduction in equipment hire if hirers seek to minimise costs.
COMMERCIAL HIRERS				
9.	Maintain existing commercial hire fees	Status quo	Consistency for existing regular commercial hirers; supports retention of repeat commercial business; if other regional theatres raise their hire fees, Baycourt may become more competitively positioned within the market (rather than the second most expensive).	Does not contribute to revenue generation targets; may create a perception of inequity if community rates are adjusted while commercial rates remain unchanged, potentially leading to concerns about fairness among community users.
10.	Increase commercial hire fees by 3% (or a different percentage)	An additional \$5,832 in revenue per annum to Council	Revenue generation and less reliance on rate payer funding.	Risk of reduced commercial bookings if commercial hirers seek more affordable alternative venues, impacting repeat business and long-standing relationships with regular commercial hirers; could affect Baycourt's position in the market if nearby newly refurbished venues (e.g. Sir Howard Morrison Centre in Rotorua and Waikato Regional Theatre in Hamilton) maintain lower rates.



Script notes / Key considerations

While Baycourt does not currently recover all of its direct costs through hire fees, simply increasing those fees is not really a viable solution. Baycourt already ranks as the second most expensive council-owned venue per seat in Aotearoa (based on commercial hire fees), and further fee increases risk pricing the venue out of the market.

Baycourt also has a unique operating context that requires consideration:

- **Limited seating capacity restricts Baycourt's competitiveness for larger commercial events.** Promoters of high-profile commercial tours often seek venues with greater capacity to maximise ticket revenue. Baycourt's relatively small seating inventory (~582 seats) means that even with premium ticket prices, the overall return may not justify the cost for these promoters. Raising commercial fees could further exacerbate this issue, making Baycourt less attractive for touring productions.
- **X Space's high per-seat cost is a function of its retrofit design and limited seating capacity**, not service quality. Its configuration makes it ideal for intimate performances and flexible use, but untenable for most commercial events.
- **Generating food and beverage income is constrained** by the limited physical footprint and layout for bar operations and corporate hosting activities. This restricts Baycourt's ability to maximise ancillary revenue opportunities that are often critical to venue sustainability.

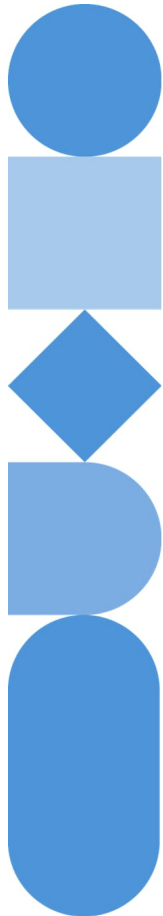


The directors cut / Officer recommendations

Following Council's direction to re-assess Baycourt's user fees and charges, the officer recommendation below attempts to balance market realities, operational constraints, and Baycourt's community-focused purpose.

	Category	User fee adjustment	Financial impact per annum
1.	Community	Reduce community discount from 50% to 40%	\$39,690 in revenue
2.	Commercial	Increase commercial hire fees by 3%	\$5,832 in revenue
3.	Community & Commercial	Reduce number of technical labour hours included in the venue hire fee on performance days	\$25,560 in revenue
4.	Community & Commercial	Reduce number of technical labour hours included in the venue hire fee on pack in/out/rehearsal/dark days	\$9,000 in revenue
5.	Community & Commercial	Increase hourly technical labour charge out rates from \$45 to \$48	\$2,331 in revenue
6.	Community & Commercial	Increase technical equipment hire costs by 5%	\$4,893 in revenue
TOTAL ADDITIONAL REVENUE TO COUNCIL PER ANNUM			\$87,306





Act II / Next steps

- Which of the options provided, if any, would you like us to pursue in preparation for the 2026/27 Annual Plan?
- Is there anything new you want explored?
- Is there any other information you want brought back to you?



