

Pathways to seeding the Cultural Land Trust

**825 Pacific Street:
From Municipal Ownership to
Community Stewardship**



**CULTURAL
LAND TRUST**

Acknowledgements

Land

This booklet was crafted in the area known as Vancouver, on the unceded Indigenous lands belonging to the xʷməθkwəy̓əm, Skwxwú7mesh, and səliwətaʔ Nations. The Cultural Land Trust (CLT) recognizes that the colony of British Columbia was created through organized dispossession and colonial violence. As an organization focused on re-commoning land and buildings, our relationship to First Nations' territories is inherent. Our responsibility to honour and uphold Indigenous rights to self-determination and sovereignty is inextricable with our work, which operates within colonial property conventions in the radical hope of stabilizing the arts sector and decolonizing property relations.

Fiscal Sponsor

221A is the fiscal sponsor of the Cultural Land Trust (CLT), supporting the research, planning, and startup phases of the CLT. 221A is a non-profit operator of housing, workspaces, and cultural facilities. 221A envisions a pluralistic society in which all people have the means to access and make culture. The CLT is envisioned as an entity independent from 221A with a separate board of directors.

Masthead

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Introduction

This booklet explores how cultural spaces delivered through Vancouver's Community Amenity Contributions (CAC) from the rezoning process can potentially seed the Cultural Land Trust (CLT), a community-governed organization designed to steward long-term cultural infrastructure and cultural sector reinvestment.¹ Focusing on the case of 825 Pacific, it examines a model in which city-owned cultural spaces are transferred to the CLT through a long-term ground lease or an ownership transfer. While the City of Vancouver has generally retained ownership of CAC amenities to protect against market speculation, ensure accountability for public assets, and maintain affordability, this exploration examines the potential advantages of turning ownership of these community assets to the mission-driven, non-profit CLT.

Key questions examined include: What are the pathways through which 825 Pacific can seed the CLT that secures lasting public benefit, fulfilling the intention behind CAC? Once the CAC-delivered cultural space is created, what unique role can the CLT play in managing and expanding the City's cultural infrastructure?

While this booklet uses 825 Pacific as the case study through which to explore potential pathways, it has implications for other CAC cultural spaces across the City and contributes to broader discussion around the role of the CLT in stewarding cultural amenities to compliment the current model based on municipal ownership and management.

¹
See 221A, "Cultural Land Trust,"
accessed May 1, 2026, <https://221a.ca/project/cultural-land-trust-study/>;

Cultural Land Trust, "Cultural Land
Trust," accessed May 1, 2026,
<https://culturallandtrust.ca/>.

The booklet is organized in four parts:

1. A brief background on 825 Pacific, a cultural hub operated by 221A, and the current model of CAC amenity delivery.
2. A discussion on the role of the Cultural Land Trust as cultural asset steward.
3. An exploration of the pathways to seed the Cultural Land Trust with 825 Pacific.
4. A reflection on the implications the recent provincial legislation introducing the Amenity Cost Charges may have as well as a reflection on mortgageability.

Brief Background on 825 Pacific Cultural

ABOUT 825 PACIFIC

825 Pacific is a purpose-built seven-storey, 21,000 sf cultural facility created through a \$15.7 million CAC from a rezoning project.² Completed in 2023, the facility is owned by the City of Vancouver and operated by 221A Artist Society (221A) under a 30-year lease, with a 30-year renewal option. The cultural hub includes 23 artist studios and nonprofit offices, 3 fully-subsidized 221A fellowship studios, a coworking space, a library, and a gallery-like space for presentations and events. To achieve this programming, 221A raised an additional \$2.5 million to complete the building's interior fit-out, funded primarily through grants from all three levels of government and private philanthropy.

Following an open call and City-led selection process for a nonprofit operator, BC Artscape Society was selected. BC Artscape had also been engaged early in the development process to determine the operational viability of the site for a cultural facility and to conduct a community needs assessment. Then, as part of a joint venture between BC Artscape and 221A, the lease agreement was transferred to 221A as the nonprofit operator.

825 Pacific is unique in several respects. First, the facility was conceived as a hub that serves artists and nonprofit organizations, not just one organization. As such, it brings together diverse forms of cultural production, including making, collaboration, organizing, community dialogue, research, and public exhibitions.

Second, 825 Pacific was delivered as a warm shell, whereas CAC cultural amenities are typically delivered turnkey to specifications negotiated between City staff and the developer. A turnkey facility is typically favoured because it minimizes the need for additional

²
City of Vancouver. CD-1 Rezoning:
(i) 1380-1382 Hornby Street and (ii)
801 Pacific Street Policy Report from
the General Manager of Planning,
Urban Design and Sustainability to
Vancouver City Council, RTS No.
11757. January 24, 2017.
<https://council.vancouver.ca/20170124/documents/p3.pdf>

capital fundraising and reduces the risks associated with shifting construction timelines and delays. Although 221A was required to fundraise for the tenant improvements, the warm shell allowed the organization to shape the fit-out according to evolving programming and operational needs, including decisions related to unit sizes, shared spaces, fixtures, and specialized equipment.

Lastly, 825 Pacific operates on a cost-recovery basis in which rents and other building revenues are used to cover operating expenses. This has enabled 221A to supplement grants to fund fellowships to support artists and cultural workers historically excluded from arts and culture. In this way, the hub functions not only as affordable cultural space but also as a platform for greater cultural production, capacity-building, and knowledge sharing.



Figure 1
Building at 825 Pacific, Vancouver. 2023

ABOUT COMMUNITY AMENITY CONTRIBUTIONS AND THE CREATION OF 825 PACIFIC

CACs are in-kind or cash contributions provided by property developers when Vancouver City Council grants development rights through rezoning. The mechanism was created in the late 1980s with large redevelopment projects, such as the former Expo 86 lands, to capture a portion of the land value created

through rezoning and direct it toward public benefit. Unlike Development Cost Levies (DCL), which are standardized charges applied broadly to development projects, CACs are tied specifically to rezoning. Historically, the City has generally sought to recover approximately 70–80% of the newly created land value for public benefit.³

Initially, CACs were primarily used to secure civic amenities such as community centres, parks, childcare, and non-market housing. However, in 2008, with the adoption of the Vancouver Cultural Plan, the focus shifted toward strategically framing cultural needs as core infrastructure along with economic development, social wellbeing, and environment. During the 2010s onward, the City increasingly used CACs and other land-value capture tools to secure dedicated cultural spaces. The scale and real estate value of CAC-delivered cultural spaces are significant. According to the City 2019 Culture Plan, over the last several decades, the City has secured close to 20 affordable arts and cultural spaces totaling close to 200,000 square feet through CACs and density bonusing.⁴ These spaces represent almost a quarter of the 830,000 square feet City-owned or leased affordable cultural spaces by square footage.⁵

³ Neal LaMontagne, “Negotiated Value: Community Amenity Contributions and Value Capture in the City of Vancouver” (Cambridge, MA: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, 2019), 4, https://www.lincolnst.edu/app/uploads/legacy-files/pubfiles/2019_descriptive_negotiated_value_lvc_vancouver_lamontagne.pdf.

⁴ CAC and density bonusing are developer contributions toward community amenities. CACs apply to developments that are being granted development rights through rezoning. Density bonusing applies to developments seeking additional floor area within certain zones. For more information see City of Vancouver, “Community benefits from development,” accessed June 17, 2026, <https://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/how-development-funds-communities.aspx>.

⁵ City of Vancouver, *Making Space for Arts and Culture: Vancouver Cultural Infrastructure Plan* (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2019), 5 and 15. <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/making-space-for-arts-and-culture.pdf>

⁶ City of Vancouver, “Community Amenity Contribution (CAC),” accessed May 1, 2026, <https://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/community-amenity-contributions.aspx>;

City of Vancouver, *Community Amenity Contributions Policy for Rezoning* (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2025) <https://guidelines.vancouver.ca/policy-community-amenity-contributions-for-rezonings.pdf>

The delivery of CAC cultural amenities in Vancouver typically involves two separate but overlapping City-led processes: (1) the negotiation of the amenity through the rezoning process; and (2) the selection of a nonprofit operator to occupy and manage the space. During rezoning, the developer and the City negotiate the type, size, and delivery conditions of the cultural amenity as part of the CAC package. If the City Council approves the rezoning application, the amenity is secured through legal agreements tied to the development, although the space itself may not be constructed for several more years.⁶

Parallel to the development process but closer to project completion, the City undertakes a separate operator-selection process, typically through an Expression of Interest (EOI) or a Request for Proposals (RFP). This process is usually initiated once the project is well into construction and occupancy timing is more certain. A committee composed of cultural sector

peers and City staff evaluates potential operators based on factors such as organizational capacity, financial stability, programming, and alignment with public cultural objectives. Following selection, the City negotiates lease terms and operational requirements with the successful organization.⁷

CHALLENGES OF CITY OWNERSHIP AND OPERATOR LEASE MODEL

For the City of Vancouver: Typically, once the in-kind cultural facility is completed, the developer transfers the ownership title to the City of Vancouver. Through a subsequent selection process, the City identifies a nonprofit cultural organization to lease and operate the space at nominal rent (e.g. \$10 per year). During the lease term, there are requirements such as annual program reporting, budget review, and lease renewal negotiations. While the nonprofit operator is responsible for day-to-day operations and routine maintenance, such as mechanical servicing, the City, as the landlord, remains responsible for major capital repairs and replacement of core building systems, such as heat pumps at the end of their lifecycle.

One challenge of this arrangement is that the day-to-day experience and operational knowledge of the facility resides primarily with the nonprofit operator rather than the City. The operator develops direct relationships with the building's tenants and users, yet does not fully control capital planning decisions. At the same time, as the building ages and lease terms approach renewal, the City ultimately assumes increasing financial responsibility for maintaining the asset. This can create a disconnect critical for strategic planning between those managing the space on a daily basis and those responsible for the long-term ownership of the facility.

For the nonprofit operator: With the City retaining ownership, the main role of the nonprofit operators is typically to manage programming and subleases or licenses to Vancouver-based artists and cultural organizations. As discussed previously, the timing of the operator selection process, combined with the turnkey approach used for CAC amenities, often limits

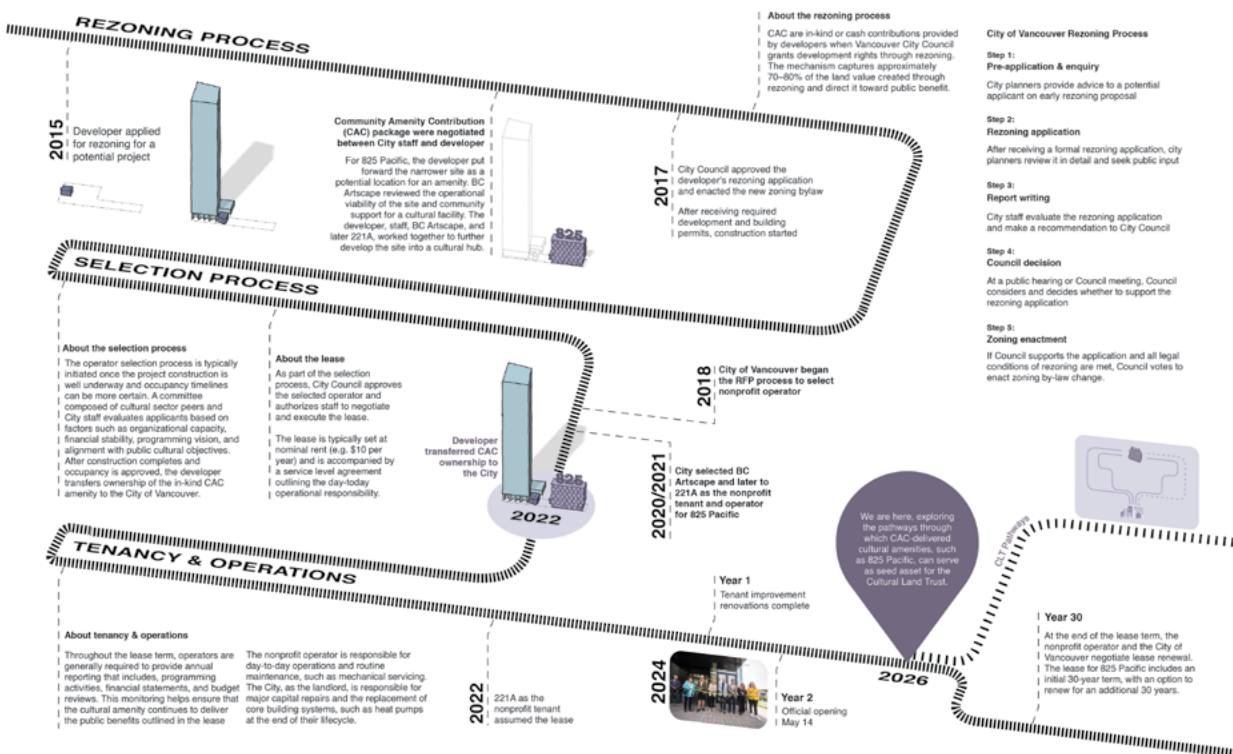
⁷
City of Vancouver, "Lease Opportunity: Multi-purpose Arts and Culture Hub at 825 Pacific Street," accessed May 1, 2026, <https://vancouver.ca/parks-recreation-culture/lease-opportunity-at-82-pacific-street.aspx>;

City of Vancouver. *Cultural Services – 825 Pacific Street Multi-Purpose Arts and Culture Hub Cultural Amenity – Tenant Selection and Lease Terms*, Administrative Report from General Manager of Arts, Culture and Community Services in consultation with the General Manager of Real Estate and Facilities Management to Vancouver City Council. RTS No. 13033. March 10, 2020. <https://council.vancouver.ca/20200310/documents/r9.pdf>

the operator's ability to meaningfully influence the design and development of the cultural space. This can be particularly challenging given that cultural facilities range from theatres to artist studios, each with distinct technical and operational requirements, requiring specialized sector knowledge and expertise.

Under the current model, the policy objective is primarily focused on securing lasting public benefit through the provisions of affordable cultural spaces, rather than enabling nonprofit operators to design, develop, and manage the capital asset and to grow the organization. In contrast, private sector property owners and lease holders routinely use the equity in their buildings to secure funding and loans to expand operations, plan for major renovations, or acquire additional properties. By comparison, the City's lease agreement prioritizes municipal ownership and generally restricts mortgaging. While the structural constraints protect the cultural asset from privatization and preserve its ongoing cultural use, they also limit the operator's ability to undertake strategic capital planning, build organizational equity, and expand its portfolio over time. Consequently, nonprofit operators often remain dependent on grants, fundraising, and private philanthropy for organizational stability and growth.

Figure 2
About Community Amenity Contributions and
the Creation of 825 Pacific. 2026. By Leslie Shieh
& Jessica Hanzelkova.



Cultural Land Trust as Cultural Asset Steward

The 825 Pacific case study invites consideration of a broader systemic shift in which the CLT owns and stewards CAC-delivered cultural assets over the long term. At its core, the land trust model is intended to acquire and protect land as a shared resource for community benefit in perpetuity by removing it from the speculative real estate market and protecting tenants and users from gentrification and displacement.⁸ In this respect, the objectives of the City of Vancouver CAC Policy and the CLT are closely aligned.

Under this model, the role of the CLT would extend beyond property management. As a mission-driven asset steward, the CLT could strategically leverage long-term leases and stabilized assets to support financing, capital planning, and future acquisitions that expand cultural infrastructure Province wide. Rather than treating each CAC-delivered cultural space as a standalone amenity, these spaces become part of an interconnected portfolio capable of generating broader community benefit. In doing so, it advances the City's "no net loss" cultural space objectives toward a more proactive model of community wealth building and intergenerational stewardship.

More than securing square footage, the land trust model encourages us to consider how CAC-delivered cultural spaces could function as permanent community assets. Through financing and capital planning, these spaces could help seed the creation of additional cultural infrastructure, create opportunities for mission-aligned capital stacking, and support community-based and intergenerational stewardship. Each of these is discussed below.

1. Seeding the creation of a portfolio of cultural spaces

Granting a long-term head lease of a CAC-delivered cultural space to a land trust can help catalyze the

⁸
For an in-depth discussion, see 221A and Cultural Land Trust, *What Is a Cultural Land Trust?* 2026.

creation of additional cultural infrastructure by aligning stewardship with capital planning. Because the trust's mission is permanent stewardship rather than short-term operation, it has a strong incentive to reinvest financial capacity into the expansion and preservation of cultural space. The ability to borrow against a long-term lease allows the land trust to use one publicly delivered space as the foundation for future growth. In this way, a single CAC-delivered asset can function as seed infrastructure to build a broader portfolio of cultural spaces, multiplying the impact of the original public benefit investment over time.

2. **Creating opportunities for mission-aligned capital stacking**

One structural limitation of the CAC system is its dependence on private rezoning proposals. As a result, the creation of new cultural spaces is partly dependent on the pace, geography, and priorities of the real estate market. A land trust introduces a stewardship model through which cultural spaces can be expanded beyond the rezoning process.

Capital stacking describes the layering of different funding sources contributing to a development project. A land trust can combine multiple sources of funding that share a cultural mandate. These may include municipal contributions, provincial and federal cultural infrastructure grants, philanthropic capital, and low-interest loans from mission-oriented lenders. Because the land trust holds secure tenure and manages assets collectively, it is better positioned to structure projects that layer these funding streams together. Small arts nonprofits operating a single facility often lack the capacity to undertake this type of financing independently.

3. **Community wealth building and intergenerational land stewardship**

Many arts and cultural nonprofits operate in spaces they do not own. This can leave organizations vulnerable to rent increases, displacement, and the loss of accumulated community investment. By holding property and leasehold interests collectively, a land trust can provide long-term leases, shared-equity arrangements, or other forms of secure tenure that allow smaller organizations to stabilize and grow

over time. Rather than remaining perpetual tenants, nonprofits may gain pathways toward greater tenure control over their spaces and, in some cases, partial or full ownership of their premises.

This model reframes City-owned cultural real estate into a shared community asset. Instead of being used solely to provide nominal rent occupancy, the CAC-delivered cultural spaces become part of a broader strategy to strengthen the cultural sector's financial resilience. As the land trust accumulates properties and leaseholds, the collective value of those assets can be reinvested into the sector through new acquisitions, favourable lease terms, and support for emerging cultural organizations. In this way, the Cultural Land Trust functions as a form of intergenerational stewardship in which assets secured today are permanently protected for community benefit while supporting younger generations of cultural organizations to establish and sustain their own spaces.

Pathways to Seed the Cultural Land Trust

INTRODUCTION: PATHWAYS TOWARD OWNERSHIP

Currently, the lease and operating agreement for 825 Pacific is between the City of Vancouver and 221A. This section explores potential pathways through which 825 Pacific can be stewarded by the CLT, either through a long-term lease agreement or through ownership transfer.

The pathways are organized according to the extent they can be supported by existing legal and policy frameworks, as well as precedents.

Pathway 1 proposes replacing the existing lease and operating agreement with a long-term ground lease between the CLT and the City of Vancouver. This pathway examines the key differences between the current lease-plus-operating-agreement and a ground lease model. Under this approach, the City would retain ownership of the property, while the CLT would assume greater decision-making authority and responsibility for financing, asset management, and capital planning.

Pathway 2 explores the provision of a cash grant from the City of Vancouver to the CLT to facilitate the purchase 825 Pacific. Under this pathway, the City could continue to secure public benefit objectives through legal mechanisms such as covenants to regulate use, management, and affordability. The discussion focuses on the types of legal covenants that could be used to protect the public benefit intent of CAC-delivered cultural spaces following ownership transfer.

Pathway 3 considers the disposition and sale of 825 Pacific to the CLT. Because the sale of CAC-delivered assets is rare, this pathway questions the feasibility

within the current policy context, understanding that it is an unlikely immediate option. However, as aging assets become increasing financial and operational liabilities, the precedent from the City of Toronto demonstrates how the land trust can partner with a municipality to steward and reinvest in a portfolio of aging and underutilized properties.

Pathway 4 explores the future possibility of conveying CAC-delivered cultural spaces directly to the CLT, instead of to the City of Vancouver. While this pathway is not applicable to 825 Pacific, which has already been constructed and transferred to City ownership, it highlights a broader policy direction enabled by recent changes to the City's CAC policy that permits direct conveyance to nonprofit organizations.

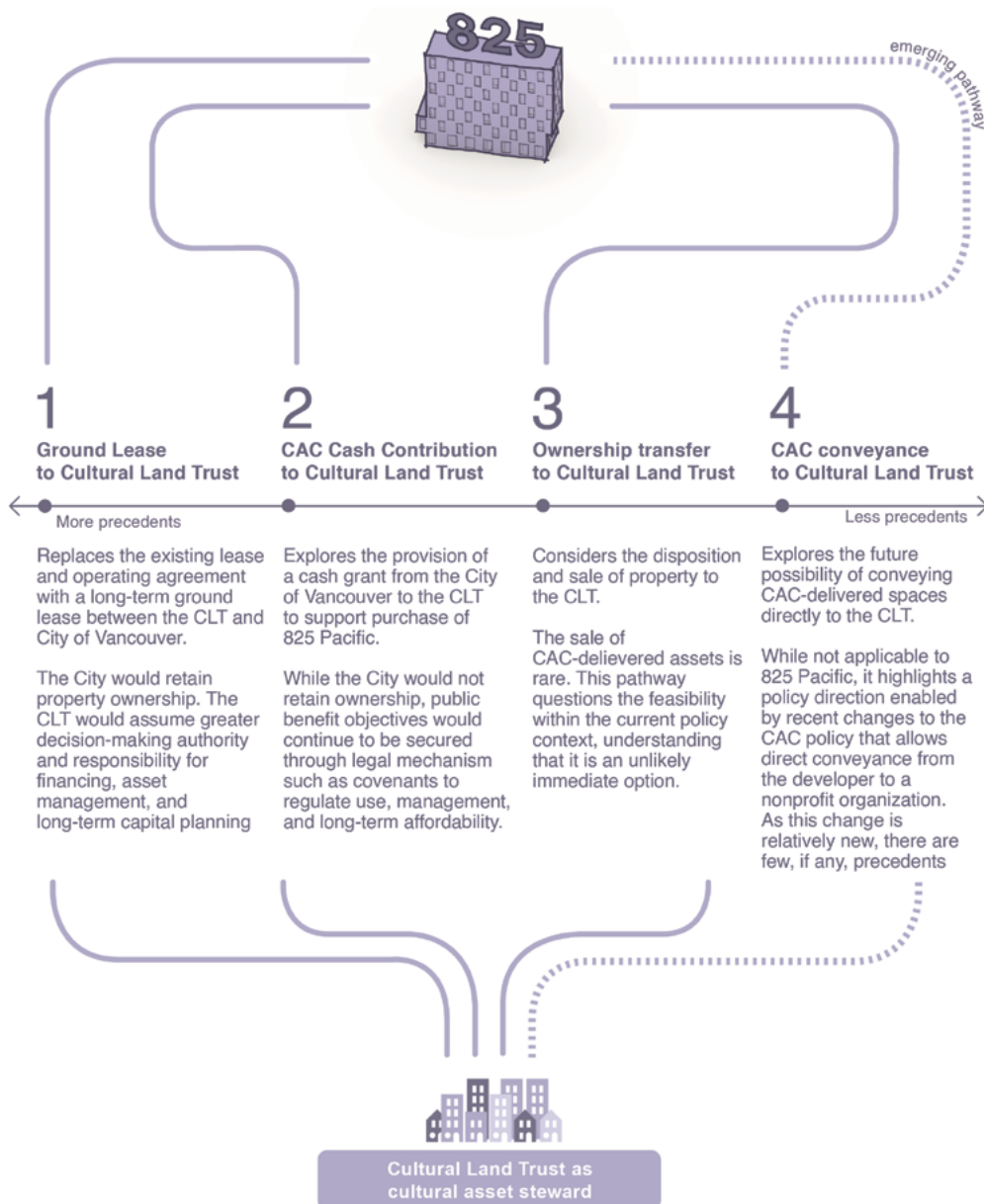


Figure 3
Pathways through which 825 Pacific can seed the CLT. 2026. By Leslie Shieh & Jessica Hanzelkova.

PATHWAY 1: GROUND LEASE TO THE CULTURAL LAND TRUST

The current 825 Pacific lease structure is primarily focused on cultural service delivery and building management under City oversight. By contrast, long-term ground leases are structured to transfer greater property control and stewardship responsibility to the nonprofit leaseholder. Based on ground lease research on the Yee Project,⁹ under this pathway, the City of Vancouver would retain ownership of 825 Pacific and the CLT would become the leaseholder. Compared to the current operator lease 221A currently holds, there would be some key changes:

1. **Relationship with City of Vancouver**
 - Under the current lease agreement, 221A is the tenant and operator of 825 Pacific. Under the long-term ground lease structure, the CLT would become the leaseholder, and 221A would be redefined, for example, as a subtenant or operating partner.
 - As operator, 221A currently shares responsibility for repair, maintenance, and facilities operations with the City under the Service Level Agreement. Under a ground lease structure, these responsibilities would shift more fully to the CLT as leaseholder, including capital planning, building maintenance, and lifecycle replacement.
2. **Legal structure**
 - Under a long-term ground lease, the City would continue to own the property and the CLT would hold a long-term right to use and manage it. If the lease is registered on title, that right becomes a legally recognized interest in the property. This can give the CLT a more secure form of tenure. Furthermore, depending on the terms of the lease, the registered leasehold interest may support financing or a mortgage.
 - In brief, a registered leasehold interest is the CLT's legally recognized right to use and occupy a property for the duration of the lease.

⁹
For more on 221A's Yee Project see 221A, "Yee Project: A Community Co-Development Model," accessed May 27, 2026, <https://221a.ca/project/yee-project/>;

3. **Lease terms**
 - The current agreement with 221A consists of an initial 30-year term, with a 30-year renewal option. Ideally, a ground lease would replace this with a longer, more secure single term, typically 60 years or longer.
 - Although a 30-year lease with a 30-year renewal option may appear similar to a single 60-year lease, lenders may not view them as equivalent. A continuous 60-year lease provides greater certainty because the full term is already secured. By contrast, a renewal option may introduce uncertainty if the renewal is subject to conditions, future rent adjustment, and other approvals by the landlord. For financing purposes, these uncertainties can affect whether the lender considers the lease secure enough to support long-term financing.
4. **Financing and mortgage rights**
 - A registered long-term ground lease may permit the CLT to borrow against its leasehold interest, using the lease as security for a loan. Landlord consent to financing is common and the degree of discretion can vary affecting how readily financing can be secured.
 - For a lender to provide financing secured by a ground lease, two things generally matter. First, the remaining lease term should typically extend beyond the end of the loan. Second, the lease should include protection for the lender if the CLT defaults under the lease or the mortgage. These protections may include the lender's right to receive any default notices, an opportunity to step in and fix the default, and, if necessary, take control of the leasehold interest. The concern for the lender is that the registered leasehold interest used as security could be terminated or lose value before the loan is repaid.



OPERATOR LEASE (30 yrs + 30 yrs renewal)

LONG-TERM GROUND LEASE (60 to 99 yrs)

FEE SIMPLE OWNERSHIP

Tenure	Right to occupy a building or space	Long-term leasehold interest in land	Full ownership of land and improvements
Ownership	City of Vancouver is property owner; nonprofit is tenant and operator	City of Vancouver is property owner; CLT holds long-term leasehold interest	CLT is property owner
Term length	E.g. 30-year initial term plus renewal option; renewal terms may be subject to conditions	60–99 years typical	No expiry
Control over property	Operational control, subject to lease terms	Significant control over use, financing, and capital planning, subject to lease terms	Full control (subject to zoning and law)
Assign/sell interest	Assignment typically restricted and subject to landlord consent	Leasehold interest may typically be assigned or transferred, subject to landlord consent	Can sell property outright
Mortgageability	Generally not structured for conventional financing	Leasehold interest can typically be mortgaged with landlord consent; lenders typically require substantial lease term remaining	Can mortgage land and improvements
Maintenance costs	Often shared with landlord	Tenant typically responsible for all operating, maintenance, and capital costs	Owner responsible
Property taxes	Usually paid by landlord (or passed through NNN lease)	Typically assumed by tenant, subject to exemptions or lease terms	Paid by owner
End of term	Tenant vacates	Improvements commonly revert to landowner at lease expiry	N/A
Public asset protection	City retains ownership and operational oversight	Mechanisms such as lease restrictions, reversion rights, and step-in provisions may be used to protect public interest	Mechanisms such as covenants registered on title may be used to protect public benefit

Figure 4
Comparison of Tenure Models.
2026. By Leslie Shieh & Jessica
Hanzelkova.

10

This section provides a brief summary of the Vancouver Community Land Trust model. See Kristin Patten, *Vancouver Community Land Trust Foundation: Examining a Model for Long-Term Housing Affordability* (master's case study, School of Community and Regional Planning, University of British Columbia, 2015), https://newmarketfunds.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/VCLT_Case_Study_April_2015.pdf;

Jason Spicer, Lindsay Stephens, and Anna Kramer, "Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit: The Publicly Owned Variety of Community Land Trust," *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 44, no. 3 (2024): 1775–90;

Penny Gurstein, *Community Land Trust Foundation of British Columbia: A Case Study* (2024), https://bsh.ubc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Community-Land-Trust-Foundation-of-British-Columbia_Digital.pdf

PRECEDENT STUDY: COMMUNITY LAND TRUST FOUNDATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Today's Community Land Trust Foundation of BC (CLTFBC) grew out of earlier initiatives led by the Co-operative Housing Federation of BC (CHF BC).¹⁰ In 1993, CHF BC incorporated the Community Housing Land Trust Foundation to acquire and hold housing assets for the cooperative housing sector. Almost two decades later, a City of Vancouver Mayor's Task Force on Housing Affordability identified community land trusts as a potential model for securing long-term affordability on City-owned land. In response, CHF BC and its nonprofit housing partners advanced a land trust proposal for the several City-owned sites

identified for affordable housing development, leading to the formal creation of the Vancouver Community Land Trust Foundation in 2014. Following this, CLTFBC was established in 2015 as a vehicle for future projects.

Since then, CLTFBC's land trust structure has evolved into a broader portfolio-based model within the CHF BC group. Rather than operating as a single neighbourhood-based land trust, CLTFBC functions as a management community land trust that supports a network of related land trust societies and project societies. Today CLTFBC's portfolio includes more than 34 properties across several communities in British Columbia.

A defining feature of the CLTFBC model is its partnership with municipalities, housing co-operatives and nonprofit housing providers. In Vancouver, CLTFBC's best-documented projects are on City-owned land provided through long-term ground leases. Under this structure, the City retains ownership of the underlying land and grants the CLTFBC long-term ground leases at nominal or below-market rates to CLTFBC or related land trust or project societies. Depending on the project, CLTFBC or a related society may then enter into subleases, operating agreements, or partnership arrangements with housing co-operatives and non-profit housing providers to operate the buildings. These agreements can embed the affordability requirements, such as income targets, rent restrictions, and reporting obligations, helping ensure the housing remains affordable over the long term.

One outcome of this structure is that the CLTFBC's long-term leasehold interests can support institutional financing. While lenders are often reluctant to extend financing where lease terms are short, uncertain, or restrictive, long-term ground leases, particularly those extending 60 years or longer, are more likely to support a leasehold mortgage when they are paired with other financing requirements such as lender protections.

CLTFBC's growing portfolio of owned and leased assets, and revenue streams has strengthened its

ability to secure financing for expansion and capital repairs. Over time, the organization has been able to draw on a combination of credit union financing, government housing programs, partnership funding, and other social finance tools. This portfolio-based structure has enabled CLTFBC to support housing development at a scale and offer a range of affordable housing options that would likely be more difficult for individual nonprofit housing providers acting alone.

Railyard is a housing cooperative incorporated by CLT. The focus is on affordable homes for families. Of the 135 homes, over half are family units (two-bedroom or three-bedroom units). It was delivered to the City of Vancouver as a Community Amenity Contribution. Following a City's selection process, the building is now held by CLT on a long-term lease, with the housing cooperative serving as the operator.

East 3rd Avenue provides 30 non-market homes for artists, with monthly rents capped at 30% of household income. The ground floor is home to Ethos Lab, an innovation academy for youth. The property is owned by the City of Vancouver, with a long-term lease held by CLT, and 221A as the operator.

North Arm is a housing cooperative incorporated by CLT. Aimed at the 55+ community, the seven-storey building offers studio and one-bedroom homes. The main floor houses the 411 Seniors Centre Society's senior centre. The land is owned by the City of Vancouver, and CLT holds a long-term lease.

Tung Sam Lau, a name in Cantonese phonetic meaning "of the same heart," provides 76 fully furnished, independent housing units for Chinese senior women and elders from the Downtown Eastside community. The land is owned by the City of Vancouver, with CLT holding a long-term lease.

Figure 5
Diversity in the Community Land Trust Portfolio. 2026. By Leslie Shieh & Jessica Hanzelkova.

PATHWAY 2: CAC CASH CONTRIBUTION TO THE CULTURAL LAND TRUST

CAC values are negotiated and may be provided either as in-kind amenities or as cash payments to the City. In Vancouver, cash contributions are often allocated to dedicated reserves and have, at times, been used to provide capital grants to nonprofit organizations to support the acquisition or improvement of community-serving facilities, including cultural spaces.

This pathway explores the possibility of a cash grant from the City of Vancouver to the CLT to facilitate the purchase of 825 Pacific. While the ownership of the property would transfer to the CLT, the City could continue to secure lasting public benefit objectives through legal mechanisms such as title restrictions,

contractual agreements, and financial controls. These mechanisms operate at different levels and are often used together to create multiple layers of protection.¹¹ Some tools regulate the ongoing use and operation of the property, while others protect the public investment financially or provide mechanisms for intervention. Together, they can allow greater nonprofit stewardship while maintaining public accountability.

MECHANISMS TO SAFEGUARD PUBLIC BENEFIT

COMMUNITY USE AGREEMENT AND TITLE-BASED PROTECTIONS

Community Use Agreements (CUA) are often used by the City of Vancouver to establish how publicly supported cultural or community spaces are to be operated, managed, and protected over time. A CUA may include requirements relating to nonprofit use, affordability, programming, public access, reporting obligations, and restrictions on sale or conversion. In some cases, such as securing the condition of rezoning, development permit, or capital grant, the CUA may function as part of a broader legal protection that also includes Section 219 covenants, statutory rights of way, and other registered instruments.¹²

Section 219 covenants are frequently used alongside CUA to secure particular obligations directly against the property title. A Section 219 covenant allows the City to register obligations and restrictions directly on the property title.¹³ Because the covenant is registered on title, it runs with the land and generally remains binding even if ownership changes. This makes it a durable mechanism for securing lasting public benefit objectives without requiring ongoing municipal ownership.

FINANCIAL PROTECTION AND RECOVERY MECHANISM

In addition to regulating land use and operations, the City may also seek to protect its financial investment through grant agreements and repayment provisions. Grant agreements would establish the terms and conditions under which public funding is provided. These agreements may impose ongoing obligations relating to affordability, nonprofit use, reporting, and restrictions on future sale. A key feature of these agreements is the inclusion of repayment provisions.

11

Some of these mechanisms are referenced in the City's CAC policy framework. See City of Vancouver, *Community Amenity Contributions Policy for Rezoning*.

12

For an example of capital grant, see Eastside Arts Society in City of Vancouver, *2026 Cultural Grants (Projects, Advance, Multi-year, Spaces) and Social Policy Grant*, Administrative Report from the General Manager of Arts, Culture and Community Services to Vancouver City Council, RTS No. 18164 (January 8, 2026), <https://council.vancouver.ca/20260120/documents/r2.pdf>;

For an example of rezoning and development approval, see City of Vancouver, *CD-1 Rezoning: a) 2165-2195 West 45th Avenue and b) 2205-2291 West 45th Avenue; and Heritage Designation of the Ryerson Dunbar United Church*, Policy Report from the General Manager of Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability to Vancouver City Council, RTS No. 12163 (August 22, 2017), <https://council.vancouver.ca/documents/p5.pdf>

13

Land Title Act, RSBC 1996, c. 250, s. 219, https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96250_15

These provisions allow the City to recover all or a portion of the grant funding if the recipient fails to comply with the agreement or if the property ceases to serve its intended public purpose.

REVERSION AND LONG-TERM STEWARDSHIP MECHANISM

Another possible accountability mechanism is a repurchase option or other form of reversionary arrangement. This gives the City a reserved right to step back in if the property is no longer being used for the public purpose that justified the original public investment. The purpose is not to interfere with the nonprofit's operation, but to restrict the asset so that it cannot later be sold or converted to another use.

For instance, if the City provided significant grant funding to help a nonprofit acquire a cultural facility, the agreement could give the City the right to buy the property back if the nonprofit stops operating it as a public cultural space, sells it without approval, or fails to meet other agreed conditions. The repurchase price could be nominal, based on a pre-set formula, or calculated in another way agreed to in advance.

For our discussion on potential CLT ownership, these mechanisms raise important questions concerning nonprofit autonomy, financing, and ongoing governance. Restrictions that are too rigid may limit the ability of the CLT to refinance, adapt, or leverage assets to support future growth. As such, the structure of these agreements would require careful balancing between preserving public accountability and enabling sufficient organizational flexibility for the CLT to function as a cultural asset steward.

PRECEDENT STUDY: EASTSIDE ARTS SOCIETY

The Eastside Arts Society (EAS) is a long-standing arts nonprofit best known for its advocacy, producing the annual Eastside Culture Crawl, and supporting a broad range of contemporary arts programming. In January 2026, Vancouver City Council approved a \$2,665,000 Making Space for Arts and Culture capital grant to support the Society's acquisition of its longtime home on East Hastings Street in Downtown Eastside.¹⁴

The grant was funded from the False Creek Flats Amenity Share Reserve, a dedicated municipal reserve funded by community amenity contributions from rezoning projects in the False Creek Flats area. This reserve was set up specifically to address the need for long-term, affordable light industrial and cultural production space and help support the area's vitality and economic competitiveness. Staff therefore determined that supporting the Society's acquisition aligns with the intent and permitted use of the reserve. EAS further demonstrated capacity to steward the property by completing an acquisition feasibility study and operating plan, and pursuing additional funding from higher levels of government and private donors.

To ensure lasting public benefit and cultural use of the property, a central condition of the grant was the registration of a CUA on title. According to the staff report, the agreement is intended to secure the site for nonprofit shared artist production, presentation, and programming uses for the longer of the life of the building or 20 years.

Vancouver Eastside Arts Society Activities

Collage using images from Eastside Arts Society website, Eastside Arts Society Instagram account, and Eastside Culture Crawl website.



The crow has become an emblem of the Eastside Culture Crawl, reflecting Vancouver's Eastside urban ecology and character.

Eastside Arts Society has played an important role in shifting the policy conversation toward recognizing cultural production space as urban infrastructure, critical to the city's resilience. It has advocated for artist production spaces to be protected and expanded through planning tools, development contributions, and public investment. Through research initiatives, the Society has quantified the scale of artist displacement, linking it directly to redevelopment pressures, rising land values, and a loss of industrial space.

Every year, the Eastside Arts Society organizes the Eastside Culture Crawl, a multi-day open studio festival where artists across East Vancouver invite the public into their working spaces. Began in 1997 as an informal grassroots initiative by a few artists, the Crawl, as it is known colloquially, has grown to include over 500 participating artists across more than 80 buildings.

Figure 6
Vancouver Eastside Arts Society
Activities. 2026. By Leslie Shieh
& Jessica Hanzelkova.

PATHWAY 3: OWNERSHIP TRANSFER TO THE CULTURAL LAND TRUST

The CAC Rezoning Policy, updated in 2020, allows for in-kind CACs to be owned not only by the City, but also by senior levels of government, Indigenous organizations, and nonprofit organizations. However, according to the updated CAC policy, City ownership “will be sought as first priority.”¹⁵ Prior to the 2020 update, the City’s practice was generally to retain ownership of in-kind CAC-delivered amenities. As the policy change is relatively recent, there appear to be few, if any, publicly documented examples of a CAC-delivered cultural amenity transferred directly into nonprofit ownership.

Where ownership is transferred to a nonprofit or Indigenous organization, the CAC Policy requires the public benefit to be secured through legal agreements “as if it were a City-owned and operated facility.” The policy also restricts borrowing against nonprofit-owned in-kind amenities, stating that the “in-kind CAC must not be mortgaged or financed for any reasons other than for reasonable on-site capital renewal and improvement of the asset subject to Council approval.”¹⁶ While this provision protects public benefit, it may also constrain the ability of nonprofit organizations to use the property to secure financing for broader portfolio growth.

DISPOSITION OF CITY-OWNED PROPERTY AND CAC AMENITIES

Under the Vancouver Charter, Vancouver City Council has the authority to sell or dispose of City-owned land that is no longer required for civic purposes.¹⁷ Broadly, the process typically involves financial analysis, consideration of disposition methods, and Council approval with a two-thirds majority required in certain circumstances.

¹⁵
City of Vancouver, *Community Amenity Contributions Policy for Rezoning*, 7.

¹⁶
City of Vancouver, *Community Amenity Contributions Policy for Rezoning*, 8.

¹⁷
See, generally, City of Vancouver, “Council Policy for the Sale of City-owned Lands,” memorandum from the Director of Real Estate Services, December 20, 2023 <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/council-policy-for-the-sale-of-city-owned-lands.pdf>

The sale of CAC-delivered amenity spaces may be more constrained than the disposition of other City-owned real estate for several reasons:

First, while the CAC Policy governs the negotiation and delivery of amenity spaces through rezoning,

it does not establish a clear framework for their later disposition or transfer once secured.

Second, CAC-delivered amenities are generally treated as civic infrastructure, rather than as real estate assets held primarily for financial return or strategic planning purposes.

Third, these amenities are often secured through covenants, agreements, and zoning bylaw conditions that restrict use and require the continuation of the original public benefit. As a result, the range of eligible purchasers is likely limited to organizations capable of maintaining the required public use, and the market value of the property is likely to be lower than that of comparable unrestricted real estate.

Finally, because CAC amenities are the result of negotiated public benefits tied to rezoning approvals, any sale or transfer would likely require strong justification demonstrating how the public benefit would be maintained, replaced, or enhanced.

PRECEDENT: NEIGHBOURHOOD LAND TRUST AND CIRCLE COMMUNITY LAND TRUST, TORONTO

The City of Toronto adopted the *Tenants First* strategy in 2016–2017 to restructure the way social housing is delivered through the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC). The strategy aimed to improve tenant services, strengthen accountability, and address capital repair backlogs by reorganizing TCHC's portfolio and transferring certain housing assets to more specialized operators. One key recommendation was that scattered single-family homes and small residential buildings could be better managed by community-based nonprofit housing providers rather than a centralized public housing corporation.¹⁸

¹⁸ City of Toronto, "Tenants First," accessed May 27, 2026, <https://torontohousing.ca/about-us/our-mission-and-vision/tenants-first>;

City of Toronto. "EX30.2 – Implementing Tenants First: Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) Scattered Portfolio Plan and an Interim Selection Process for Tenant Directors on the Toronto Community Housing Corporation Board." Adopted January 31, 2018. <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2018.ex30.2>.

In 2022, the City transferred approximately 760 scattered homes from TCHC to two community land trusts. The first phase transferred about 80 homes in Toronto's west end to The Neighbourhood Land Trust (NLT), a charitable arm of The Parkdale Neighbourhood Land Trust, operating in partnership

with YWCA Toronto. Subsequent phases transferred properties in the east end, Scarborough, and other neighbourhoods to the Circle Community Land Trust (Circle CLT), a nonprofit formed for the purpose of receiving and stewarding this portfolio. The final phase was completed in late 2022 and announced by the City in December of that year.¹⁹

Title to the properties was transferred from TCHC to the receiving land trusts. However, affordability protections were secured through Social Housing Agreements registered on title and through ongoing City oversight. Existing tenants remained in place and rent-geared-to-income subsidies continued uninterrupted. Substantial repair funding accompanied the transfers. NLT's home repair program received \$25 million in funding and financing from CHMC and the City of Toronto to bring the homes into a state of good repair and support sustainability retrofits.²⁰

The City's rationale for the transfer was threefold. First, smaller mission-driven nonprofit organizations were in a better position to provide responsive, tenant-focused property management for geographically dispersed homes. Second, transferring ownership to community land trusts was viewed as a way to protect the homes from future market disposition, as land trusts are mandated to steward affordable housing in perpetuity. Third, the transfers were intended to build organizational capacity within Toronto's nonprofit housing sector while allowing TCHC to focus on its larger multi-unit residential buildings.

Public debate around the transfers were shaped in part by earlier controversy surrounding the sale of the scattered homes to private investors, which generated tenant organizing and public opposition.²¹ Concerns focused primarily on questions of governance, organizational capacity, and accountability rather than outright opposition. Some observers questioned whether newly established land trusts had sufficient organizational capacity to manage hundreds of units. Some raised concerns over relinquishing direct municipal ownership of public housing assets. However, because the homes were transferred to nonprofit, mission-locked entities, and because affordability and tenant protections were

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For background on the transfer process and the receiving land trusts, see City of Toronto, "City of Toronto Delivers Final Phase of Tenants First Plan by Transferring 760 Homes to Community Land Trusts," December 2022, <https://www.toronto.ca/news/city-of-toronto-delivers-final-phase-of-tenants-first-plan-by-transferring-760-homes-to-community-land-trusts/>;

Parkdale Neighbourhood Land Trust, "81 Single-family Homes and Small Buildings Now in Community Ownership," accessed May 27, 2026, <https://pnlt.ca/news/81-single-family-home-and-small-buildings-now-in-community-ownership>;

Circle Community Land Trust, "The Circle Story," accessed May 27, 2026, <https://circlelandtrust.ca/the-circle-story>;

The Neighbourhood Land Trust, *The Path to a City-CLT Partnership* (2024), https://pnlt.ca/cms/custom/uploads/2025/02/The-Path-to-a-City-CLT-Partnership_The-Neighbourhood-Land-Trust_2024-1.pdf

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Neighbourhood Land Trust, "Scatterhomes," accessed May 27, 2026, <https://pnlt.ca/land/scatterhomes>

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For discussions on public concerns surrounding the transfers, see Jason McBride, "Meet Your new Landlord: a Local Non-Profit," *The Local*, April 20, 2023, <https://thelocal.to/neighbourhood-land-trust-affordable-housing-toronto/>

Circle Land Trust, "The Circle Story";

The Neighbourhood Land Trust, *Scaling the Community-Based CLT: A Case Study of The Neighbourhood Land Trust*. Toronto: The Neighbourhood Land Trust, 2024. <https://pnlt.ca/learn/research/scaling-the-community-based-clt-a-case-study-of-the-neighbourhood-land-trust>

secured through legal agreements and regulatory oversight, the initiative received Council approval without major organized opposition despite some public concerns.

Since the transfers, both organizations have expanded their stewardship capacity. Circle CLT has since been recognized for its long-term approach to capital repair. Its Expanding Possible program uses permanent ownership it has to plan for 50-year and 100-year homes, elevating the standard for affordable housing retrofits that focuses durability, sustainability, labour practices, and future community benefits.²²

NLT has also continued to grow as a municipal partner. In 2025, the City of Toronto selected NLT, in partnership with St. Clare's Housing to lease and develop the Parkdale Community Hub West Block. The proposed project includes approximately 175 rental homes and 23,300 square feet of community space to support local services and programs.²³ The post-transfer activities suggest that even within a couple of years, the scattered-homes transfer has supported not only the preservation and improvement of existing affordable housing, but also the growth of nonprofit land trust capacity in Toronto.

EMERGING PATHWAY: CAC CONVEYANCE TO THE CULTURAL LAND TRUST

The recent CAC policy update allowing nonprofit ownership introduces the possibility of a different governance model. Rather than the City taking ownership and leasing it to an operator, the CLT could potentially receive the ownership directly, with public benefit obligations continuing to be secured through legal agreements registered on title.

Historically, Vancouver's CAC framework has operated through a relatively clear division between public ownership and nonprofit operation. Across sectors such as housing, childcare, and cultural facilities, nonprofit organizations have frequently partnered with developers during the rezoning process and they commonly operate CAC-delivered amenities. However, ownership of CAC-delivered assets has generally

²²

Circle Community LandTrust, *Retrofit & Renew 2024: Capital Repairs Beyond Rent-Ready in 600+ Homes*. Toronto: Circle Community LandTrust, 2024, 8, 17, <https://circlelandtrust.ca/our-work/capital-repair-program/>

²³

The Neighbourhood Land Trust, "Parkdale People's Place," accessed June 18, 2026, <https://pnlt.ca/land/parkdale-peoples-place>

remained under City ownership. As a result, direct nonprofit ownership of in-kind CAC amenities remains largely uncommon.

Under this emerging pathway, one possible scenario, informed by the earlier discussion of other pathways, could involve the following. A rezoning applicant proposes an in-kind CACs, such as a cultural facility, and, as part of the rezoning process, negotiates with the City and the CLT, regarding the ownership and stewardship structure. The CLT would demonstrate organizational capacity, financial viability, and alignment with City objectives around public benefit and cultural access. Long-term affordability, cultural use, and public access could be secured through legal instruments registered on title. The City could also retain fallback protections, such as repurchase rights and reversionary provisions, in situations where the nonprofit is no longer able to operate the facility in accordance with the intended public benefit objectives. In this way, the public benefit objectives of the CAC policy could be secured while enabling greater nonprofit control, stewardship, and financing flexibility.

While this emerging pathway could create opportunities for greater nonprofit stewardship and expansion of community-owned cultural assets over time, it would also introduce new risks and governance challenges. One key concern that has run through this discussion of CLT ownership of CAC-delivered cultural space is the tension between public accountability and nonprofit autonomy. Questions may arise concerning the financial and organizational capacity of nonprofit owners, as owning and managing a cultural facility requires expertise in asset management, capital planning, financing, and building maintenance in addition to cultural programming. Under the land trust model, the CLT, while itself still an emerging organization, would focus primarily on asset management, and cultural organizations would focus on programming. That said, although the policy framework may now permit nonprofit ownership, the success of the land trust model would depend on building organizational capacity, careful legal structuring, strong governance, and alignment between public benefit objectives and nonprofit stewardship.

At the time of writing, no clear precedents were identified within Metro Vancouver municipalities where a CAC-delivered cultural amenity was directly conveyed to nonprofit ownership rather than retained under municipal ownership.

Discussion

IMPACT OF PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION BILL 46

The introduction of Amenity Cost Charges (ACC) through provincial Bill 46, the *Housing Statutes (Development Financing) Amendment Act* in November 2023 represents a significant shift in how growth-related amenities may be funded and delivered. Currently, in Vancouver, CACs are negotiated, site-specific contributions secured through rezoning applications and may take the form of either cash or in-kind amenities. In contrast, ACC are standardized, bylaw-based charges applied more broadly and predictably, similar to Development Cost Levies (DCL). Whereas CAC offerings apply to rezoning projects, ACC can be imposed on developments that generate additional residents or workers. Compared with DCL, ACC can fund a wider range of amenities, including community centres, senior centres, libraries, and cultural spaces.²⁴

In 2026, City of Vancouver is expected to introduce an updated financing growth framework clarifying how development contribution tools, including DCL, CAC, ACC, inclusionary zoning, and density bonus, will operate together. The City is currently undertaking a comprehensive review of these tools and related capital programs in response to the new legislation.²⁵

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Province of British Columbia, *Amenity Cost Charges: Best Practices Guide*, released April 10, 2025, updated August 25, 2025, https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/housing-and-tenancy/tools-for-local-governments/and-housing/acc_best_practices_guide.pdf

Province of British Columbia, "Amenity Cost Charges," updated February 24, 2025, <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/local-governments/finance/local-government-development-financing/amenity-cost-charges>

25

City of Vancouver, "2026 Financing Growth Update," accessed May 27, 2026, <https://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/2026-financing-growth-update.aspx>

It is important to note that in addition to Bill 46, the Legislature at the same time introduced Bill 44 (Residential Development) and 47 (Transit-Oriented Areas), both aimed at increasing housing supply by enabling greater density and reducing reliance on site-by-site rezoning. As a result, it is anticipated that rezoning and CAC offerings may play a reduced role over time. Together with the introduction of ACC, developers may be expected to contribute primarily through standardized cash payments. This will then shift greater responsibility to the City to plan, prioritize,

and deliver amenities using the pooled revenues collected across multiple developments.²⁶

It remains unclear how these legislative changes and the City's policy response will affect the future delivery of cultural spaces and the role of nonprofit organizations within that process. While a more standardized system may improve transparency, predictability, and city-wide coordination, questions remain as to whether it could reduce opportunities for more customized amenities traditionally secured through rezonings, such as 825 Pacific. Certain cultural facilities may be difficult to standardize because they often emerge through negotiated arrangements tailored to opportunities of specific sites, operators, and community cultural needs.

A FINAL REFLECTION: MORTGAGEABILITY IS MORE THAN BORROWING

A common thread running through the discussion of the possible pathways to seed the land trust with 825 Pacific, or any CAC-delivered cultural asset, has been the question of whether these assets should be mortgageable, given concerns that the public benefit could be compromised in the event of default. The preceding pathway discussions have explored a range of legal and governance mechanisms intended to protect the public interest. In closing, it is worth emphasizing that mortgageability is about more than borrowing capacity and default risks. More fundamentally, it changes how a one-time CAC-delivered cultural asset can function as seed infrastructure capable of supporting future cultural space development over time.

Mortgageability allows a cultural asset to participate in broader forms of capital stacking where project funding is assembled through layered financing structures, rather than a single funding source. Grants, subsidies, donations, social finance, and conventional lending can each play different roles at different stages of the project.

For example, a land trust may secure a long-term mortgagable interest in land, such as a 99-year lease,

²⁶
City of Vancouver, *Response to New Provincial Legislation: Bills 44, 46 and 47*, Administrative Report from the General Manager of Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability to Vancouver City Council, RTS No. 16232 (March 26, 2024), <https://council.vancouver.ca/20240423/documents/r1.pdf>

and use it as a foundation for a strategic financing. Early-stage grants or pre-development funding may support planning work, such as a feasibility study. When the land trust is ready for financing, even where the lease is mortgageable, financial institutions may remain cautious where covenants, use restrictions, or consent requirements significantly constrain the asset. In this context, social impact investors may help reduce lender risk through guarantees or subordinated financing. Once the project is operational and financially stable, additional provincial or federal funding may later be layered in through refinancing, capital renewal programs, or operating support.

Viewed in this way, mortgageability can create institutional and financial possibilities that do not currently exist under the conventional operator-lease model. The Cultural Land Trust supplements the existing CAC delivery model by leveraging existing assets to seed new projects through coordinating sources of capital and partnering with governments, funders, and nonprofit operators.

Conclusion

Using 825 Pacific as a case study, this booklet has put forward three possible pathways for the CLT to steward CAC-delivered cultural amenities. These pathways represent a spectrum of increasing nonprofit control, ranging from long-term ground lease, to nonprofit acquisition from the City, to ownership transfer. The pathways explore varying degrees of ownership, mortgageability, and financial autonomy, and importantly, mechanisms for securing public benefit. Ultimately, these pathways point toward a scenario in which seeding the CLT with 825 Pacific could help establish a foundation for future growth and community asset development.

The pathway discussions do not suggest that greater ownership or financial leverage necessarily produces better outcomes. As the pathways move toward increasing nonprofit control, they also introduce greater governance responsibilities, financial risks, and questions concerning public accountability and the protection of public benefit. The challenge, therefore, is not simply whether cultural assets should become mortgageable, but how legal agreements, governance structures, and public oversight mechanisms can evolve to support stewardship while continuing to safeguard public interest.

Across all four pathways, the broader proposition is that the CLT could serve a function beyond that of a conventional nonprofit operator. Rather than acting solely as a tenant responsible for programming and day-to-day operations, the CLT may also serve as a long-term steward and intermediary institution capable of coordinating financing, managing assets, supporting recapitalization, and building the organizational capacity of arts nonprofits over time.

This outcome is far from guaranteed, and would depend on sustained public oversight, careful legal

structuring, and strong organizational capacity. The intention is not that all CAC-delivered cultural spaces be transferred to the CLT, but that even one or a small number of strategically structured assets could help seed future cultural space development. In this way, individual CAC-delivered spaces could become part of a broader community-owned cultural infrastructure. Over time, this creates the conditions for intergenerational stewardship and wealth building, where community assets are not only preserved but strategically expanded.

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221A is supporting the research, planning, and startup of an independent Cultural Land Trust (CLT).

The CLT builds a future where artists and cultural organizations in B.C. have collective ownership of land and buildings. A community model for artists and non-profit arts organizations—especially low-income, disabled, LGBTQ2IA+, and Black, Indigenous and people of colour—that opens pathways to sustainable stewardship of cultural spaces, rent stability, and collective wealth.