

## CIVIC PARTNER 2020 ANNUAL REPORT SNAPSHOT- ARTS COMMONS

### ARTS COMMONS

**Mission:** To bring the arts...to life.

**Mandate:** To foster, present and promote the arts; to provide and care for our assets; to ensure optimal utilization of our assets.

**One Calgary Line of Service:** *Economic Development and Tourism*

*Registered Charity*

### 2020 City Investment

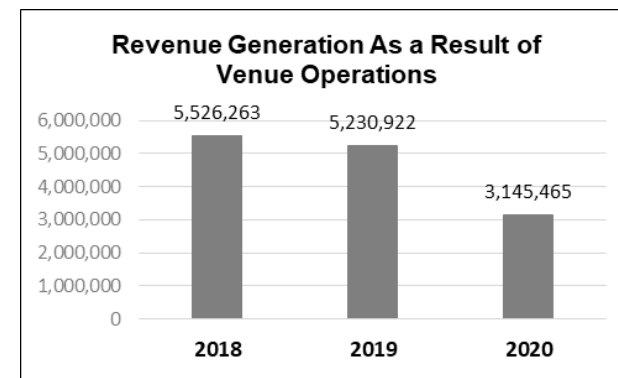
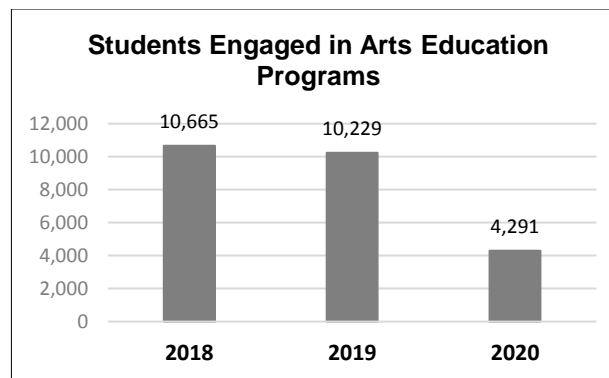
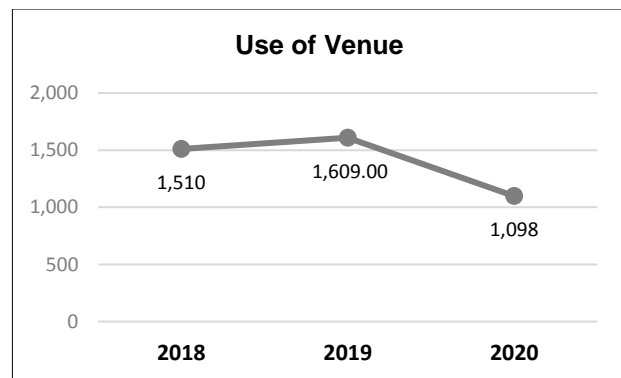
**Operating Grant:** \$2,546,543

**Economic Resiliency Fund:** \$523,000

**Capital Grant:** \$3,123,434

City owned asset? Yes

### 2020 Results



### The story behind the numbers

- Arts Commons is a key contributor to the social, economic, cultural, and intellectual life and wellbeing of Calgarians and visitors.
- Arts Commons works collaboratively with the Calgary Board of Education and the Calgary Catholic School District to bring high-quality and immersive learning experiences to Calgary students and their teachers.
- Arts Commons successfully monetizes the asset (venues) to support the economic resiliency and sustainability of the 560,665 square foot facility.

### Current state 2021: COVID-19 impact

- As of March 2021, Arts Commons remains closed due to public health measures, with all but essential personnel working remotely.
- Arts and culture institutions, and by extension, artists and support personnel are particularly hard-hit as most revenue generating activities are shut down.
- A revenue loss in excess of \$4.9 million for the 2020-21 season is forecasted

**Service impact:** Severe (Unable to meet normal objectives due to serious extended disruption. (e.g. full facility closure, major decrease in users)

**Current demand for services:** Demand has decreased notably.



## ARTS COMMONS Civic Partner 2020 Annual Report

**Organizational Structure:** Independent External Organization

**Fiscal Year:** August 31, 2020

**Manage/Operate City Owned Asset:** Arts Commons

### STRUCTURE

#### 1. Vision, Mission and Mandate:

**Vision Statement:** A creative and compassionate society, inspired through the arts.

**Mission Statement:** To bring the arts...to life.

**Mandate:**

- To foster, present and promote the arts.
- To provide and care for our assets.
- To ensure optimal utilization of our assets.

**Our Values:**

- Do the right thing - behave with integrity, apply professionalism, be honest, and err on the side of grace.
- Be our best always - in service, in leadership, in professionalism, and in providing a quality experience.
- Open our minds, hearts, arms - through empathy, openness, trust, and collaboration.

### 2020 RESULTS

#### 2. What key results did your organization achieve in 2020 that contributed to one or more of the [One Calgary Citizen Priorities](#)? (*A Prosperous City, A City of Safe & Inspiring Neighbourhoods, A Healthy and Green City, A Well Run City*)

- Arts Commons played a critical role in the sustainability of 200 organizations (resident companies, not-for-profit and others) by maintaining the complex's 560,665 gross square feet of space that houses six performance venues, rehearsal halls, shops, a variety of public engagement spaces and administrative spaces.
- Arts Commons completed an extensive program of lifecycle maintenance initiatives valued at more than \$6 million to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the complex. Please refer to question 12 regarding Arts Commons' capital and asset management accomplishments.
- Arts Commons subsidized the cost of venues and facility utilization for its resident companies: Alberta Theatre Projects; Arts Commons Presents; Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra; Downstage; One Yellow Rabbit; Theatre Calgary; and numerous community user groups; serving as incubator and facilitator and increasing access to venues and services.
- Arts Commons is a major presenter of the performing arts in Canada. Under the banner of 'Arts Commons Presents', Arts Commons presented the award-winning BD&P World Stage, Classic Albums Live, *National Geographic Live*, PCL Blues, TD Jazz, and a number of other single engagements, welcoming thousands before the facility was closed in March 2020, due to COVID-19.

- Arts Commons is a significant employer of performing and visual artists; engaging hundreds of artists annually to support our artistic, education, and community engagement programs. As the pandemic took hold and all performance activity was suspended, Arts Commons took the decision to pay all Alberta-based artists the full value of the contracts that could not be fulfilled (\$47,355).
- Arts Commons played a key role in fostering and promoting the development and delivery of educational programs by partnering with the Calgary Board of Education, the Calgary Catholic School District and delivered the *National Geographic Live* student matinee series, One Day Art School, Artist-in-Residence, and the ConocoPhillips Hub for Inspired Learning prior to the suspension of such programs due to the pandemic.

**3. Briefly describe how your key results in 2020 contributed to Council approved strategies (Select up to three that are most applicable.) For example: Calgary in the new economy; An economic strategy for Calgary; Calgary Heritage Strategy; Climate Resiliency Strategy; Resilient Calgary; Enough for All poverty reduction strategy; Cultural Plan for Calgary; Downtown Strategy; Calgary's Corporate Affordable Housing Strategy; Open Spaces Plan; Recreation Master Plan; Sport for Life Policy.**

**Calgary in the new economy: An economic strategy for Calgary - The strategy is intended to align The City of Calgary, its civic partners, the private sector, educators, and other community stakeholders to achieve economic competitiveness while building long-term prosperity and a stronger community. To become the most livable city in Canada, we intend to expand and enhance tourism, cultural and recreational assets.**

While the existing facility has been enormously successful, it is working much harder than the design intended, bringing all the major infrastructure to the end (and beyond) of lifecycle. The Arts Commons Transformation (ACT) project is our collective vision for a world class home for arts and culture in Calgary's downtown. ACT will both expand capacity in an adjoining new building and renew the existing facility, bringing it up to today's standards and creating a more sustainable future for all resident companies.

As the stewards of a critical city-owned asset, Arts Commons appreciates the importance of ACT in the context of Calgary's future. We also recognize that our vision must coincide with the vision and priorities identified by Council, specifically with regards to The City's objectives for community renewal, infrastructure investment, placemaking and urban densification. With the creation of the Arts Commons Advisory Committee, we have been able to better integrate our visions, reaffirm our resident companies' commitment to this project, and more directly involve Council in the process.

This season, we collectively achieved the following major milestones:

- On September 30, 2019, Calgary City Council approved releasing \$25 million of previously allocated funding from the Council-Approved and Committed Cultural Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) so the detailed design phase of ACT could commence.
- On January 23, 2020, the City of Calgary confirms \$135 million through the Community Revitalization Levy (CRL) for Phase I of ACT. These funds along with \$25 million in MSI funding represent The City's and Government of Alberta's contribution to Phase I of ACT.
- On October 9, 2020, along with our partners the Calgary Municipal Land Corporation (CMLC) and The City of Calgary, Arts Commons announced the completion of a tri-party development agreement that will initiate the design process for ACT and position CMLC as development manager responsible for stewarding the design process on behalf of the partners.

With this agreement in place, the first step in the design process will be a competitive procurement process to assemble the design team that will be responsible for the design

development over the next 18 months so ACT can move forward in full alignment with Calgary's economic strategy, *Calgary in the New Economy*.

**Climate Resiliency Strategy - The Climate Resilience Strategy outlines The City's strategies and actions to:**

- **Reduce our contributions to climate change by improving energy management and reducing greenhouse gas emissions (climate change mitigation); and**
- **Respond to a changing climate by implementing risk management measures to reduce the impact of extreme weather events and climatic changes on infrastructure and services (climate change adaptation).**

The Max Bell and Engineered Air Theatres received important upgrades with new LED stage lighting which will provide a wider range of artistic options, as well as increased reliability and energy savings.

**Resilient Calgary - Pillar 2: Inclusive Futures - The goal of this pillar is that Calgary institutions (including public, private, not for profit, etc.) have trusted and informed relationships with Calgary's equity-seeking communities.**

The unjust killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota—as well as the countless other manifestations of harassment, abuse, and violence against unarmed black people — reflect just one example of the deeply ingrained racial prejudice and injustice that still exists in our world today.

As a member of Calgary's diverse arts community, Arts Commons recognizes the vital role we play in shaping the narrative through the stories we tell—and those we choose not to tell. Arts Commons has made the following commitments: to champion more artists of colour by providing a safe space for their expression; actively inviting them to create, perform, gather, and share their stories; to reflect the diversity of our communities on- and off-stage; and to use our leadership positions to demonstrate and embody our values – Do the Right Thing, Be Our Best Always, Be Open – Hearts, Minds, Arms.

Over the past few years, we have been guided by these values to effect change and to elevate the voices of marginalized communities by partnering with organizations like ActionDignity, Calgary Pride, Making Treaty 7 Cultural Society, the Philippine Festival Council of Alberta, and others. We have facilitated, sponsored, supported, programmed, and promoted events that provide local artists of colour, and other underrepresented artists from marginalized groups, with opportunities to express themselves artistically in an accessible public forum, with the end goal of celebrating diversity and promoting understanding. Internally, we have also established a committee, comprised of staff from all levels of the organization who meet regularly and help advance initiatives around inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA).

Over the past three seasons alone, Arts Commons has hired a total of 571 Black, Indigenous and People Of Colour (BIPOC) artists of various disciplines. This represents 45% of all the artists we work with. Arts Commons believes it is essential to continue to champion diversity on our stages, now and into the future.

While we are proud of the efforts we have made, we know we need to do more. We must strengthen our commitment to IDEA within our institution, engage directly with marginalized communities to better understand their unique challenges, continue to create opportunities for the underrepresented, and keep the conversation going about social justice and racial inequality, until we start to bring about real progress.

In the short term, we are going to take the time needed to engage with our community partners, to educate ourselves as much as possible, and to thoughtfully consider how we can contribute to

this necessary change. We each have a role to play in making the world a better, more just place for all.

In the 2020-21 Season, we will begin consulting with Indigenous cultural and spiritual leaders towards the multi-year development of an Indigenous Strategy. This will not end with our Indigenous community and we will look at this strategy as an entry point into a much greater commitment to all marginalized, ethnic community groups.

A new Arts Commons website to be unveiled by June 2021, will also include a section dedicated to I.D.E.A., and while it began as a grass roots staff effort over a year ago, the I.D.E.A Committee will take on a more formal 'think tank' structure to guide change more intentionally from within the organization. This 'think tank' will connect us to the community outside our walls, ensuring that we do not make any decisions in a vacuum. We will focus on learning what we do not know and growing an authentic appreciation and inclusion of all voices.

We are on a journey towards our vision of a "creative and compassionate society inspired through the arts".

**Cultural Plan for Calgary - The Cultural Plan for Calgary is a roadmap for the planning and use of cultural resources to strengthen our economy and improve the quality of life for our residents.**

As stewards, we like to take this opportunity to recognize the incredible work of our artists, staff, patrons, donors, sponsors, and resident companies, and celebrate the collective impact of all those who contribute to the success of the Arts Commons ecosystem.

The 2019-20 Season has been like no other, and although there were challenges, we can't deny that the season began with a bang! Alberta Theatre Projects broke ticket sales records as they presented *The Lion*, *The Witch*, and *The Wardrobe* to huge acclaim and success.

Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra put a spotlight on Canadian talent as they presented Polaris Prize and JUNO Award-winning tenor and pianist Jeremy Dutcher in Concert. And Downstage premiered what is sure to be a new Canadian classic shocking us all with the bold truth that even *Men Express Their Feelings*. It was praised as "Wildly funny" and an "Instant Canadian classic".

One Yellow Rabbit's High Performance Rodeo demonstrated once again that excellent theatre never gets old with the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary presentation of *The Land*, *The Animals* starring Denise Clarke, Christopher Hunt, and Andy Curtis, and Blake Brooker directed Keith Alessi in a "riveting solo performance" with *Tomatoes Tried to Kill Me but Banjos Saved My Life*.

And finally, to round out the season, Theatre Calgary's top selling show of the year, *The Louder We Get*, brought to life a true story of standing up for what you believe in, even when all the odds seem to be against you.

The Arts Commons Presents 2019-20 Season may have been cut short, but the time we had together was well spent. The powerful and expressive voice of Rosanne Cash launched our BD&P World Stage series, filling the Jack Singer Concert Hall with deeply emotive music that garnered an enthusiastic standing ovation from the nearly sold-out crowd.

Opening our *National Geographic Live* season, National Geographic Explorer Damien Mander and Sgt. Vimbai Kumire told the inspiring story of mobilizing, training, and deploying Africa's women warriors, the *Akashinga: The Brave Ones*, and their fight against the poaching of some of the world's most endangered animals. Survivors of domestic violence, single mothers, abandoned wives, and AIDS orphans; according to Mander, they were some of the toughest rangers he has ever trained. The powerful presentation initiated several heartfelt emails from patrons thanking us for bringing this kind of programming to Calgary.

Founders Circle, Arts Commons' premier membership program, kicked off its 2019-20 Season of events with an intimate Q&A session in the Engineered Air Theatre with GRAMMY Award-winning artist Maria Muldaur as part of the PCL Blues series. Guests were able to gain a new perspective on the life of a legendary songstress with the ups and downs in her career, guided by the expert interview style of CKUA's Holger Peterson.

The new year started off with an unconventional performance on the Jack Singer Concert Hall stage, with Canadian circus troupe Cirque Flip Fabrique's beautifully choreographed production, *BLIZZARD*. That night it snowed both inside the Jack Singer Concert Hall and out, as the talented acrobats of Cirque Flip Fabrique celebrated winter in high-flying style. Founders Circle members also got a sneak peek behind-the-scenes with a demonstration from members of the troupe of their juggling, acrobatic, and athletic prowess.

From cold wintery wonderland, to hot, spicy dance party, The Hot Sardines returned to Calgary as part of Arts Commons Presents TD Jazz. Their vintage jazz style effortlessly channelled New York speakeasies, Parisian cabarets, and New Orleans jazz halls, transporting the audience to another time and place, and inspiring many to jump up and swing dance in the aisles.

During Black History Month, we welcomed the gospel-infused *We Shall Overcome: A Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.* as part of BD&P World Stage. Created by Jazz at Lincoln Centre's Damien Sneed, *We Shall Overcome* uplifted us with the iconic music of Aretha Franklin, Nina Simone, and Stevie Wonder. Part of what made this musical celebration so unique was the inclusion of the Calgary Gospel Choir, led by Jamie Browne with over 60 local community performers assembled for this one-night-only performance.

Classic Albums Live also brought huge excitement to this season as it was the first subscription year for the series. Both Pink Floyd's *The Wall* and Tom Petty's *Damn the Torpedoes* were successes, leaving jubilant fans hungry for more.

There were more stories to share, and more cherished moments to look forward to, but the season took an unexpected turn in March as the rise of COVID-19 necessitated not only the cancelling of any further performances, but also the temporary closure of Arts Commons.

To share all of these wonderful stories, Arts Commons launched a new blog, sharing educational activities for young people, interviews with artists, profiles on exceptional individuals and businesses, and ideas for how to continue to infuse the arts into life. Since its launch in March, the blog has received over 18,000 page views.

**Downtown Strategy - Downtown is the economic and cultural heart of Calgary, and when our Downtown thrives, so does the rest of the city. It's vitally important for The City and the community to invest its support in planning and creating a livable, thriving, and caring core. To help support Calgary's economic recovery, we've created a downtown strategy that brings together our civic and community partners through coordinated and collaborative work. We are committed to making life better every day for citizens, customers, residents, and businesses through our focus on the following four pillars.**

Greater Downtown is the economic engine of Calgary and Arts Commons is its cultural heart.

Built in 1985, Arts Commons is the third largest art centre in Canada and a key contributor to the social, economic, cultural, and intellectual life and well-being of Calgarians and visitors. As stewards of an artistic ecosystem, Arts Commons supports, elevates, and showcases the work of six resident companies who call Arts Commons home, including Alberta Theatre Projects, Arts Commons Presents, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Downstage, One Yellow Rabbit, and Theatre Calgary. Approximately 200 community groups also make use of the 560,665 square foot Arts Commons complex every year. In response to the growth of our city over the past 35 years, the Arts Commons Transformation (ACT) project will provide artists, arts organizations, and

audiences a world-class home where arts can be created, shared, and supported in innovative ways.

As part of undertaking these activities, Arts Commons and our resident companies incur annual operating expenditures, including spending on staff salaries and wages, materials and equipment, professional services, utilities, maintenance, and others. In addition to its annual operating expenditures, Arts Commons invests in significant lifecycle projects.

Arts Commons and resident companies' annual operations economic contribution to Calgary (pre-pandemic) is as follows:

- \$50 million annual GDP contribution;
- 628 (FTEs) sustained jobs;
- \$32 million in labour income; and,
- \$1 million in revenues to the City of Calgary.

**4. Using the chart below, please report your 2020 performance measures that demonstrate: how much you did, how well you did it, and how Calgarians are better off. Please identify through **BOLD font**, 1-2 measures that are most significant and could be presented in a chart.**

	Performance Measure Name	2018 results	2019 results	2020 results (COVID-19 Impacted)	What story does this measure tell about your work?
<b>How much did you do?</b>	Use of Arts Commons' venues (Arts Learning Centre, Big Secret Theatre, Engineered Air Theatre, Jack Singer Concert Hall, Martha Cohen Theatre, Max Bell Theatre, Motel, and The Hub	1,510 performances concerts or events held by 179 community organizations	1,609 performances concerts or events held by 200 community organizations	1,098 performances concerts or events held by 82 community organizations	Arts Commons is a key contributor to the social, economic, cultural, and intellectual life and wellbeing of Calgarians and visitors.
	Number of students engaged in arts education programming, including participation in the <i>National Geographic Live</i> Student Matinees Series, ConocoPhillips Hub for Inspired Learning, One Day Arts School, and Artist-in-Residence.	10,665 students attended youth-oriented programs performances or events.	10,229 students attended youth-oriented programs performances or events.	4,291 students attended youth-oriented programs performances or events.	Arts Commons works collaboratively with the Calgary Board of Education and the Calgary Catholic School District to bring high-quality and immersive learning experiences to Calgary students and their teachers.
<b>How well did you do it?</b>	Revenue Generation as a result of venue operations.	\$5,526,263	\$5,230,922	\$3,145,465	Arts Commons successfully monetizes the asset (venues) to support the economic resiliency and sustainability of the 560,665 square foot facility.
	Revenue generation from the public and private sectors in alignment with Arts Commons' operating priorities.	\$4,407,263	\$4,323,502	\$4,205,489	Arts Commons maintains meaningful relationships with the public and private sectors that support provision of programs and services by Arts

					Commons for the benefit of the community.
<b>How are Calgarians better off?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Arts Commons Supports Community</b>            Key to everything that happens at Arts Commons is our connection to our community. These efforts can be felt on a daily basis through our work with community groups, local artists and musicians, and cultural organizations.   <i>"It's amazing to have an arts organization that truly puts their support behind local musicians. Arts Commons has done exactly that. My band and I are all full-time musicians, and our livelihoods are from performances that are currently on hold indefinitely. With the bleak prospects for the next several months it was a true godsend to have our contract fulfilled despite the closure. Every dollar counts and this means the world to me and my band."</i> Musician, Keith O'Rourke   <i>"We would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your team for having us. It's amazing and we are grateful to have worked with your group of professionals that is so helpful and understanding. Our performance shined because of your team's dedication and passion."</i> Flip Fabrique BLIZZARD, BD&amp;P World Stage         </li> <li> <b>Arts Commons Inspires Learning</b>            The education of students and the professional development of teachers and emerging artists is integral to our commitment to the community.   <i>"As a choir student, the experience of getting to see a community getting together to sing about the importance of freedom is incredibly majestic and pleasurable. It was a great time to remember how our generation has the advantage of getting to hear beautiful songs that portray history to modern day. The interaction between audience and musicians is beyond words. It was a space where individuals felt connected in all senses. I know all my peers and teachers appreciate these unique experiences."</i> Student   <i>"Never have I been as challenged yet supported in my artistic career as I have with the RBCEVAP. Our mentors and guest lecturers have intensely encouraged us to truly define who we are as an artist and describe ourselves more comprehensively than we have before. These exercises have not only resulted in a more professional tool-kit to utilize when presenting myself to galleries, grants, and prospective exhibitions, but have allowed me to dive deeper into what truly motivates and inspires me as an artist. I have rediscovered myself and love what I have found."</i> RBC Emerging Visual Artist, Nicole Wolf         </li> <li> <b>Arts Commons Welcomes All</b>            Arts Commons worked with several of Calgary's equity-seeking communities to build trust and meaningful relationships that help strengthen our community. Arts Commons LGBTQ 101 &amp; Allyship Training sessions provided positive education sessions for free to employees from over 53 organizations. And, over the past three seasons alone, Arts Commons has hired a total of 571 Black, Indigenous and People Of Colour (BIPOC) artists of various disciplines. This represents 45% of all the artists we work with. Arts Commons believes it is essential to continue to champion diversity on our stages, now and into the future.   <i>"When offered the space at Arts Commons it was great because then we were able to have those drum circles, have smudging, rapping, and dancing, and the different things the kids wanted to do. It really saved us because I wasn't sure how we were going to continue to program going forward."</i> Action Dignity   <i>"It was wonderful to know that I was valued as an artist, and the impacts I was facing were not forgotten. I felt as if I was supported as part of a greater community in recognition of the work, I have done alongside Arts Commons over the past several years."</i> Chantal Chagnon         </li> </ul>				

## 5. Briefly describe the key impacts of COVID-19 on your operations in 2020.

In February 2020, as the COVID-19 pandemic began to take shape, our Health and Safety team moved quickly to implement our pandemic plan. Unfortunately, what the plan could not predict was the magnitude of its impact on our business, our community, and our people.

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization characterized the outbreak of a strain of the novel coronavirus ("COVID-19") as a pandemic, which has resulted in a series of public health and emergency measures that have been put in place to combat the spread of the virus. These public

health and emergency measures have resulted in an economic slowdown, restrictions on public gatherings and activities. The duration and impact of COVID-19 is unknown. In accordance with government guidelines, Arts Commons closed the facility to the public and will remain closed for an undetermined period of time until indoor gathering numbers are increased to the point of it being financially viable to re-open the facility.

Despite significant losses to our revenues, we chose not to make hasty decisions around cutting personnel in the short term. With labour costs over 40% of our budget, this would have been devastating to our people. Instead, we focused on three primary objectives:

- To remember that we are a values-led organization - our decisions in times of crisis must not stray from our values.
- To protect and retain staff - they are the lifeblood of our organization and we must come out of this situation as strong as we went into it.
- To remain focused on the future - by living our values and keeping staff engaged and connected.

The final test for our decision making was: Will we be ready to reopen? Over the last six months of the fiscal year, we spent significant time building scenarios, researching options for accessing government support programs, budgeting, forecasting, and then doing it all over again. Through all of these efforts we were able to:

- Retain 93% of our salaried staff, at full pay, shifting all but essential workers to work remotely. Our essential workers stayed in our building to keep it safe, keep it running efficiently, and to complete capital projects.
- Update and improve processes, work on the ever shifting 2020-21 Season and seasons into the future, and to look at ways we can evolve and provide value to our community going forward.
- Implement organization-wide projects with staff from any department; institute LinkedIn Learning to provide professional development opportunities; and allow staff to take some of their paid time to volunteer in the community. Our ability to keep our core staff fully employed was made possible through the Federal Government's Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) programs, resulting in recoveries of \$957,267.
- Provide our casual Front-of-House and production staff with a week's pay and, with the generous support of Board members, we have been able to provide casual staff with access to our Employee Family Assistance Program (EFAP). This provided them with free, confidential counselling services on a wide range of topics such as health and wellness, financial planning, elder care, and more.
- Support the resident companies by waiving all venue occupancy fees from April through August 2020, which reduced their monthly occupancy costs from 63-89% and resulted in savings to them of \$487,058. While this meant an immediate loss to Arts Commons' revenues, fortunately we were able to recover \$249,004 in the form of forgivable loan through the Canadian Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA) program.
- Not only pay all Alberta-based artists the full value of the contracts that could not be fulfilled, but Arts Commons also created ArtsXpeditions a series of pop-up performances during the summer throughout Calgary and hired more artists and technical support staff, providing \$19,045 in payments to them.

**6. Are there any program or service changes made in response to COVID-19 that you plan to integrate into longer term operations? For example, shifting some programming online, or modifications to your delivery model or operations.**

It has been said many times over: when the COVID-19 pandemic landed on our doorstep, live arts were the first to shut down and will be the last to return. Although many arts organizations have either been forced or have chosen, for a variety of reasons, to postpone their entire 2020-21 Season, Arts Commons and the resident companies have summoned all of their energy and influence to continue to bring the arts to the lives of all Calgarians at a time when we have needed the power of the arts the most. While most of us understand that our lives have been forever altered by the pandemic, and a return to “the way things were” is unlikely to happen, we also recognize that times of greatest hardship often hold some of the greatest opportunities.

Our investment in our workforce means that when we reopen our doors to the public, we will be able to hit the ground running and provide you - our patrons, donors, sponsors, artists, and community groups - with the creativity, knowledge, understanding, and innovation that this time has allowed us to develop. The support we have been able to offer the resident companies and local artists means that they have been able to and will continue to create and develop meaningful arts experiences for our community.

We are looking forward to continuing to engage with our community in new ways. We are in the final stages of establishing a partnership with Canon to professionally stream, capture, and broadcast some of our performances in order to further break down the barriers to participation in the arts. Implementing some of Canon’s most recent technologies, this will become a resource that we can share with the resident companies and community groups that use our space, facilitating a further reach of the arts into lives near and far.

By the spring of 2021, in time for the announcement of the new 2021-22 Season, we will also launch a new website. Focused on enriching the patron experience, the new website will be more reflective of all the activities in our complex, including the work of the resident companies, as well as convey the greater Arts Commons story, providing more insight and access to the things that are most important to our community.

**7. Briefly describe any quality improvement changes or operational efficiencies your organization was able to achieve in 2020.**

Due to the majority of our staff working from home, and our venues not in use, we have seen significant savings in both power and water use. During the six months of the lockdown from March to September 2020, our power consumption was reduced by 781,505 kWh (38%) compared to the same time period from the year before.

To decrease our water use, we also shut off most of the automated flushers on the 220 toilets throughout the building. Combined with the building being less occupied, this resulted in a savings of 2,914 cubic meters of water, reducing our consumption by 69%.

**8. Briefly describe some success stories in 2020 that demonstrates how your organization worked in partnership with other community, private or public organizations to achieve shared results for Calgary and Calgarians.**

Arts Commons strives to bring a breadth of programming to our community that complements the offerings of our fellow cultural organizations, creating a more diverse mix of the arts in our city. These programs and series would not be possible without the generous support of our sponsors and include Black History Month Cabaret and our TD Amplify Cabaret series, BD&P World Stage, Classic Albums Live, *National Geographic Live*, PCL Blues, and TD Jazz as well as seven art galleries, six education programs, and seven access programs for artists and community.

While there was so much more activity planned, when the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to close our doors we needed to take a fresh approach to how we would fulfil our mission of bringing the arts to life.

As we all adjusted to our new reality, Arts Commons still found a way to share the transformative nature of the arts with our community. Right on the heels of the shutdown, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra made international waves with an online collaboration with Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, recording a virtual performance of the hauntingly beautiful Elgar's *Nimrod* from the Enigma Variations. The video went viral, reaching more than 155,000 combined viewers on YouTube and Facebook.

In April, Theatre Calgary launched their TC Takeout series and now has 40 episodes to date. Employing theatre professionals, TC Takeout has featured local, national, and even a few international artists performing a song, dancing, showing off some unique skills, cooking, making crafts for kids, and reflecting on Theatre Calgary memories, through the virtual-scape into the homes of Calgarians, and those beyond.

As the warmer weather made it possible for us to gather safely apart outside, Arts Commons launched *ArtsXpeditions*, a series of surprise pop-up events that brought the arts to neighbourhoods, elderly care facilities, and even street corners in all quadrants of the city. With 35 performances including 45 artists (23 of which had 2 or more performances) and 6 technicians, *ArtsXpeditions* provided these individual artists and crew members with much needed employment and the opportunity to engage in their passion with a live audience.

These energizing and uplifting, powerful and beautiful performances were celebrations of the human spirit, commemorating the past, inspiring our present, and leading us into the future with a love of the arts and our shared humanity.

Over the summer, Theatre Calgary also launched a full online run of Shakespeare on the Bow, reaching over 2,000 homes and garnering a huge outpouring of support for the series.

Downstage circulated emotional and physical wellness videos, encouraging people to stay active and healthy in their homes through yoga, while Alberta Theatre Projects and One Yellow Rabbit worked industriously behind the scenes to prepare for a season that would be very different from anything that the arts have experienced in the past.

Through our partnership with National Geographic, Arts Commons Presents provided access to four *National Geographic Live*: Backstage events, featuring Carnivore Ecologist Dr. Rae Wynn-Grant, Wildlife Filmmaker Bertie Gregory, Egyptologist Dr. Kara Cooney, and Underwater Photographer, Brian Skerry. Our *National Geographic Live* subscribers and patrons were thrilled to have the opportunity to hear these great stories again directly from these intrepid Explorers.

## RESOURCES

9. Please estimate how The City's operating funding was allocated in 2020. Mark all areas that apply by approximate percentage. *For example, 45% allocated to staffing costs, 10% to evaluation or research, etc.*

%	Advertising and promotion
5%	Programs or services
%	Office supplies and expenses
%	Professional and consulting fees
%	Staff compensation, development and training
%	Fund development
10%	Purchased supplies and assets
85%	Facility maintenance
%	Evaluation or Research
%	<i>Other, please name:</i>

10. Did volunteers support your operations in 2020? If yes:

<b>How many volunteers?</b>	30
<b>Estimated total hours provided by volunteers:</b>	700

**11. What resources or funding sources did your organization leverage to support operations in 2020?**

Arts Commons received an operating grant of \$2,524,275.24 from The City of Calgary to assist in the fulfillment of its mandate to care for the facility and to foster, present and promote the arts. Arts Commons leveraged The City's operating grant to generate an additional \$6,620,162.76 in ticket sales and other earned revenues such as venue rental and parkade fees; contributions from other levels of government; and community support through corporate sponsorships, foundation partnerships, and philanthropic gifts from corporations and individuals in support of Arts Commons' operations (ratio of 1:2.6 in spite of the pandemic).

**12. Did your organization receive any awards or recognition in 2020 that you want to highlight?**

Arts Commons was one of Alberta's Top 75 Employers of 2020. Arts Commons was acknowledged for building a durable workplace and forward-thinking human resource policies that make a difference in the lives of our employees and that benefit all Albertans. Employers were evaluated by the editors at Canada's Top 100 Employers using the same criteria as the national competition: (1) Physical Workplace; (2) Work Atmosphere & Social; (3) Health, Financial & Family Benefits; (4) Vacation & Time Off; (5) Employee Communications; (6) Performance Management; (7) Training & Skills Development; and (8) Community Involvement. Employers are compared to other organizations in their field to determine which offer the most progressive and forward-thinking programs.

**13. CAPITAL AND ASSET MANAGEMENT (for Civic Partners managing City-owned assets)**

**Asset:** Arts Commons (205 - 8 Avenue SE)

**a) Provide a summary of your organization's 2020 capital work, including specific lifecycle/maintenance projects or capital projects.**

Though the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic presented many new and unprecedented challenges, for our production team it offered up a bittersweet opportunity. While significant capital projects were already planned for rapid completion over the quieter summer season, due to the generous support of all three levels of government, we were able to begin this work earlier, replacing, restoring, and refurbishing over 35 years of wear, tear, and outdated equipment in our many performance spaces.

The Jack Singer Concert Hall received the lion's share of the work, as the team took on the challenge of upgrading the sound system, in both the Hall and the Lobby. While the Lobby sound system was initially designed to support announcements only, the upgrade provided the desired sound quality for the live music performances that take place on the Lobby Duet Stage today.

The successful replacement of the Hall sound system was a careful balancing act by our technicians, to ensure the system would meet the nuanced requirements of the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, but also be able to support a full-scale rock performance. The result is extraordinary, and we cannot wait to share it with Calgarians.

Inside the Jack Singer Concert Hall, our production and technical crew worked harder than ever to implement a number of technological enhancements that included extensive electrical work, sixteen new monitor cabinets with eight new subwoofers, Front-of-House console upgrades with new technology to match the new monitor console, a wireless microphone system upgrade, and 10 new wireless personal in-ear monitor systems. Even the venerable Carthy Organ, which stands majestically behind the stage and above the choir loft, has received a beautiful visual upgrade. The previous lighting system for the Carthy Organ was made up of white halogen lights. The new system, made up of much more power efficient LED lights, can light the organ with

virtually any colour on the spectrum. Each lighting fixture can also be separately controlled, which makes for a huge array of customization.

The Max Bell and Engineered Air Theatres also received important upgrades with new LED stage lighting which will provide a wider range of artistic options, as well as increased reliability and energy savings.

**b) What funding did your organization leverage to support capital activities in 2020?**

This work was made possible with the generous support of the City of Calgary through the Civic Partner Infrastructure Grant Program (\$2,988,900), the Government of Canada through Canadian Heritage's Canada Cultural Spaces Fund (\$1,800,000), and the Government of Alberta through Culture, Multiculturalism, and the Status of Women's Community Facility Enhancement Program (\$1,000,000).

**14. CURRENT STATE: COVID-19 MARCH 2021 UPDATE**

The section focuses on the impact of COVID-19 in the month of March 2021, to provide a snapshot of your organization's current state.

**Impact**

Please choose the one option below that best describes the impact of COVID-19 on your programs or service in March 2021.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Negligible</b>	Minimal to no impact on service. Service is currently operating close to normal.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Minor</b>	Continuing to provide programs and services but some coping strategies required – able to be addressed with existing strategies and resources.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Moderate</b>	Some challenges on ability to achieve objectives. Some delay. Some aspects of the programs or service are only being met in part.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Significant</b>	Difficulties to achieve objectives. Delays or notable aspects of objectives not completed. Falling well-short of normal operations.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Severe</b>	Unable to meet normal objectives due to serious extended disruption. (e.g. full facility closure, major decrease in users)

**Impact Description:**

**Please briefly describe how your programs and services were impacted in March 2021.**

As of March 2021, Arts Commons 560,665 square foot facility remains closed due to public health measures ordered by the Government of Alberta (GoA) and all, but essential personnel are working remotely. We acknowledge that our closure is an important tactic to limit the spread of COVID-19 and its variants. Arts and culture institutions like Arts Commons, and by extension the artists and support personnel are particularly hard-hit as the bulk of our revenue generating capacity remains shut down given, we cannot access the facility or its venues. Arts Commons is forecasting revenue losses in excess of \$4.9M for the 2020-21 Season, and revenue losses will continue to accumulate until the GoA allows resumption of normal operations and the public deems it safe to attend performances once again.

**Current Demand for Service:**

**What is the current demand for your service compared to typical demand?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Demand is steady, largely business as usual.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Demand has increased notably.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Demand has decreased notably.
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**CALGARY CENTRE FOR PERFORMING ARTS (ARTS COMMONS)**  
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