

Applicant Outreach Summary



Community Outreach for Planning & Development Applicant-led Outreach Summary

Project name: Arts Commons Transformation (ACT) Expansion

Did you conduct community outreach on your application? YES or NO

If no, please provide your rationale for why you did not conduct outreach.

Outreach Strategy

Provide an overview of your outreach strategy, summary of tactics and techniques you undertook (Include dates, locations, # of participants and any other relevant details)

As ACT development manager, Calgary Municipal Land Corporation led an engagement program— seeking and collecting input from area stakeholders, the arts community and the public at large on the most important features and considerations for ACT. Between January 26 and May 31, 2021, CMLC engaged virtually with thousands of people who shared their ideas and aspirations for a future Arts Commons. Engagement was conducted virtually due to COVID-19 health and safety considerations at the time.

Two dozen stakeholder representatives attended a series of virtual roundtable sessions, and nearly 2,000 people completed an online public survey. These two components were conducted in different formats (interactive vs one-way responses) with different groups of people (an invited pool of community members and arts stakeholders vs the public at large); however, notably, the feedback from all interested parties landed on the same broad themes and, at times, on the exact same details.

Affected Parties

Who did you connect with in your outreach program? List all groups you connected with. (Please do not include individual names)

In collaboration with the rest of the ACT team, CMLC engaged with key stakeholders and user groups through four distinct events between January and May 2021.

1 January 26–29: Resident company engagement — one-on-one meetings with each of seven Arts Commons resident companies.

2 March 19–30: Stakeholder virtual roundtable sessions (three sessions: 24 individuals representing civic partners, advocacy groups, arts and culture organizations, community associations/BIAs, educational

institutions, entertainment promoters, theatre companies and festival organizers, arts and performance venues.

3 April 16–May 31: Public online survey (1,910 responses)

What did you hear?

Provide a summary of main issues and ideas that were raised by participants in your outreach.

Broadly, engagement underscored the following themes:

- Building comforts and access: the importance of washrooms, parking, more comfortable seats, improved wayfinding, improved accessibility.
- Amenities that enhance experience: the significance of an arts destination that creates an experience, with amenities for gathering, eating and drinking.
- Flow of indoor and outdoor spaces: integrating Arts Commons with adjacent Olympic Plaza to create spaces for sitting, socializing and passing through.
- Programming: more variety and diversity in the offered programming.
- Sense of arrival: create a strong first impression with improved pick-up/drop-off areas, accessibility and common spaces for gathering before/after shows.
- Sense of belonging: removing barriers to access and making the building and its programming more accessible, affordable and inclusive.

See the full What We Heard Report here:

<https://www.calgarymlc.ca/resources/arts-commons-transformation-engagement>

How did input influence decisions?

Provide a summary of how the issues and ideas summarized above influenced project decisions. If they did not, provide a response for why.

The themes heard through the interested party and public engagement are reflected in the programmatic and architectural design of the ACT expansion in a number of ways, including, among others:

- Supported by an accessibility consultant, the expansion's design includes at-grade entry points at street-level and universal access to all levels of the building and all theatres and gathering spaces.
- The expansion's mix of venues and gathering spaces enable Arts Commons to accommodate more and more diverse programming and events that promote inclusivity and remove barriers to entry.
- The expansion is integrated with the adjacent Olympic Plaza to facilitate flow between indoor and outdoor spaces, and promotes connectivity between the ACT expansion and the surrounding public realm, retailers and cultural destinations.

- The expansion provides a variety of gathering places, including a striking Gathering Circle in the southwest corner of the main floor lobby, which facilitates a range of programming and gathering, and a lobby bar that enables food and beverage offerings.

How did you close the loop ?

Provide a summary of how you shared outreach outcomes and final project decisions with those who participated in your outreach. (Please include any reports or supplementary materials as attachments)

Following engagement, CMLC shared the findings of engagement through a comprehensive What We Heard report that was shared with engaged interested parties and, through an integrated marketing and communications program, with Calgarians at large.

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