

2015 Civic Partner Annual Arts Commons

---

1. **Arts Commons**
2. **Fiscal Year: September 1 – August 31**
3. **Latest Annual Report available and web address: 2013/14 Fiscal Year;**  
[www.artsccommons.ca](http://www.artsccommons.ca)

**GOVERNANCE****4. Current Vision, Mission & Mandate (include any proposed changes).**

Arts Commons has revised its existing vision and mission statements in alignment with its new brand. These new statements are currently before the Arts Commons Board of Directors awaiting approval. Until such time as they are approved, we've provided the existing Vision and Mission Statements as follows:

**Vision Statement:** To engage and inspire community through the power of art.

**Mission Statement:** To ignite imagination, co-create meaningful experiences of excellence with our internal and external communities, support artists and celebrate the artistic expression of everybody.

**5. Identify Board and senior management positions, incumbents and vacancies.**

**Arts Commons Board of Directors** – Fifteen (15) Members:

**Henry Sykes**, Chair; **Greg Kudar**, Secretary & Treasurer; **Angela Avery**, Director, **Ellen Chidley**, Director & Liaison for Theatre Calgary; **Laura Haynes**, Director, **R. Scott Hutcheson**, Director; **Arun Lakra**, Director; **Alex MacWilliam**, Director & Liaison for Alberta Theatre Projects; **Rodney McCann**, Director; **Jason McIntyre**, Director & Liaison for Calgary International Children's Festival; **John McWilliams**, Director; **James Morton**, Director and Liaison for Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra; **Holly Schile**, Director; **Dale Turri**, Director & Liaison for Downstage Performance Society; **Cameron Webster**, Director & Liaison for One Yellow Rabbit Performance Theatre

**Arts Commons Leadership Team** – Seven (7) Members:

**Johann Zietsman**, President & Chief Executive Officer; **Colleen Dickson**, Chief Financial Officer; **Greg Epton**, Director, Development & External Relations; **Wes Jenkins**, Director, Facility Operations; **Jennifer Johnson**, Director, Programming; **Tasha Komery**, Director, Marketing & Communications; **Leslie Biles**, Director, Venue & Event Management

**6. Discuss succession planning for Board and senior management.**

The average term for a member of the Arts Commons Board of Directors is three years, and the average term for a member of the leadership team is seven years. The terms of reference for the Board of Directors indicates that the process for the nomination and election of new members includes the recommendation of potential new members to the Board annually and not less than 30 days prior to the Annual General Meeting. We work deliberately on developing the leadership skills required for future executives among our Leadership Team, but recognize that succession often requires new, fresh ideas from "outside" the organization as well.

2015 Civic Partner Annual Arts Commons

**7. Summarize 2014 accomplishments (based on established goals or objectives).**

1. **CREATIVE AND ENGAGING** – Arts Commons is an inspirational gathering place for all Calgarians and visitors, where creativity is expressed daily in immersive and engaging ways. **2013/14 Accomplishments:** Entered into a Master Vendor Agreement with the CBE/CCSD and joined their Fine Arts Standing Committee, introduced exterior lighting of the Public Building, launched a new website purchase path/mobile website, and launched a new volunteer engagement program.
2. **LEADING FACILITY** – Arts Commons operated and maintained the facility at industry standards, providing a cultural and artistic anchor in the downtown core that energized the surrounding neighborhood and The City of Calgary as a whole. **2013/14 Accomplishments:** Arts Commons undertook 43 lifecycle projects worth \$2.3 million during 2014 to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the complex.
3. **QUALITY PROGRAMMING** – Arts Commons delivered engaging cultural and artistic experiences of the highest quality through presenting, producing and collaborating with partners; inclusive of arts learning and audience engagement opportunities. **2013/14 Accomplishments:** Launched the TD Jazz Series and grew the number of public presentations in the *National Geographic Live* speaker series and the number of concerts in the PCL Blues Series.
4. **SUPPORT ARTISTS** – Arts Commons supported artists and collaborated with internal and external communities to foster a supportive arts ecosystem to facilitate the creation of engaging and inspiring experiences. **2013/14 Accomplishments:** Entered into a Service Agreement with CICF to support the 2014 Festival; Secured a budget adjustment to Dec. 31, 2014 from The City to support the resident companies; and, provided a new studio space, the Lightbox, for emerging local artists.
5. **SUSTAINABLE** – Arts Commons operated in a manner which continued to strengthen its financial sustainability, as well as create an environment to enable our internal and external clients to operate and grow. **2013/14 Accomplishments:** We continued to focus on short and long-term revenue opportunities, while maintaining a competitive cost structure. Year over year we achieved a 34.7% increase in retail rent and facility earned income, a 22.7% increase in revenues through venue usage, 5.4% increase in ticket revenues and a 4.6% increase in fundraising revenues that helped create a modest operating reserve to help mitigate future challenges.

**8. Provide performance measures (targets and actual) used in 2014. Include any challenges in meeting targets.**

Arts Commons benchmarks itself externally against 34 comparable centres across North America and Australia, measuring more than 50 performance indicators, and internally by utilizing metrics that include both qualitative and quantitative measures. For the 2013/14 Season, examples of some of the performance measures utilized included the number of students engaged in Arts Learning programs; facility condition index, total ticket sales; website traffic and social media participation numbers; annual operating results; diversity of revenue streams; total number of artists employed, and total contributed revenues from the corporate community, foundations and individuals.

Challenges that exist include limited venue availability to add additional shows of popular programming, financial and facility limitations on booking tier one artists, and establishing a consistent methodology for obtaining patron and user feedback.

2015 Civic Partner Annual Arts Commons

**9. Describe how your organization's 2014 activities contributed to the economy and culture of Calgary, Calgary's environment and the well-being of Calgarians.**

(<http://www.calgary.ca/CA/cmo/Documents/TBL%20Framework.pdf>)

The following are notable examples of how Arts Commons made a meaningful contribution to the social, economic, cultural and intellectual life and well-being for the citizens of Calgary and its visitors during 2014:

- Arts Commons played a critical role in the sustainability of 160+ 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 subsidized the cost of venues and facility utilization for its resident companies, partners and numerous community user groups; serving as incubator and facilitator and increasing access to venues and services to all communities.
- Arts Commons undertook 43 lifecycle projects (such as upgrading the audio systems and theatrical rigging systems in our performance venues) worth \$2.3 million during 2014 to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the complex.
- Arts Commons is a major presenter in Canada. Under the banner, Arts Commons Presents, Arts Commons presented the award-winning BD&P World Music Series, PCL Blues Series, TD Jazz Series, *National Geographic Live* and a host of other single engagements.
- Arts Commons provided access to Tessitura Arts Enterprise Software (Customer Relationship Management) that helped users of the Arts Commons Box Office run their businesses more efficiently, work smarter, cut expenses and increase revenue. Through Tessitura we provided a comprehensive suite of ticketing, marketing and fundraising tools to share information, increase productivity, and provide complete customer relationship management.
- Arts Commons endeavored to explore meaningful opportunities to share services with other similar businesses in an effort
- to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of our industry. During 2014, Arts Commons entered into a Service Agreement with the Calgary International Children's Festival whereby Arts Commons provided all accounting, fundraising and marketing services in an effort to achieve a new and sustainable operating model for the CICF.
- Arts Commons played a key role in fostering and promoting the development and delivery of arts education programs and community engagement initiatives, including partnerships with the Calgary Board of Education, the Calgary Catholic School District and the Calgary Association for the Development of Music Education.
- Arts Commons also partnered with a significant number of artists and organizations to curate

**10. Indicate what resources were leveraged to support operational activities, providing examples.**

Arts Commons received a consolidated operating grant of \$2,358,978 from The City of Calgary to assist in the fulfillment of its mandate, to provide programs to the citizens of Calgary and to operate the facility. Arts Commons leveraged The City's operating grant to generate an additional \$10,539,035 in ticket sales and other earned revenues, contributions from other levels of government, and community support through corporate sponsorship, foundation partnerships, philanthropic gifts from corporation and individuals, and special event, in support of our operations and annual lifecycle priorities. Arts Commons also levered The City's operating grant to directly support the resident companies (Alberta Theatre Projects, Calgary International Children's Festival, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Downstage, One Yellow rabbit and Theatre Calgary) that collectively had an operating

**CAPITAL REPORTING****11. Provide an overview of your organization's capital development for 2014, including specific lifecycle/maintenance projects.**

The following highlights a few of the significant lifecycle/maintenance projects undertaken during 2014, which were done to address occupational health and safety concerns, improve energy efficiencies, and replace outdated performance equipment to ensure the ongoing operational viability of the complex and its venues for the benefit of Calgarians and visitors:

- Procurement of five audio consoles (taking us from analog to digital sound) - installation of three in the Jack Singer Concert Hall, one in the Max Bell Theatre and one in the Martha Cohen Theatre
- Procurement of three multi-format mixers - installation of one in the Jack Singer Concert Hall, one in the Max Bell Theatre and one in the Martha Cohen Theatre
- Procurement and installation of 44 new processors in the Jack Singer Concert Hall, Max Bell Theatre, Martha Cohen Theatre and the Engineered Air Theatre
- Procurement and installation of two new stage cranes for installation in the Max Bell Theatre and Martha Cohen Theatre
- Procurement and installation of moving LED lights for installation in the Jack Singer Concert Hall that reduce operating costs and environmental impact
- Installation of digital radios and radio wave repeaters
- Installation of fire panel software and hardware
- Internal and external trip hazards repaired
- Water infiltrations sealed
- Installation of glycol heating system within parkade heating ramp
- Replacement of worn rigging system components
- Addition of New Rigging System components
- Replacement of mechanical boiler burner controls
- Replace distribution amplifiers in video system

**12. Indicate what funding was leveraged to support capital activities in 2014.**

Arts Commons leveraged a grant of \$783,200 provided by The City of Calgary through the Capital Civic Partner Grant Program (CCPGP) in 2014 to secure a \$662,293 grant from the Government of Alberta through the Community Facility Enhancement Program (CFEP) and a grant of \$706,863 from the Government of Canada through the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund to undertake 43 priority lifecycle projects, some of which have been listed above.

Please note that while the three grants were awarded in 2014, Arts Commons only recognized that portion of each grant that reflected that portion of each project that was complete as of August 31, 2014, in accordance with GAAP.

- The City of Calgary (Capital Civic Partner Grant Program) - \$783,200 grant, booked \$612,914
- Government of Alberta (Community Facility Enhancement Program) - \$662,293 grant, booked \$662,293
- Government of Canada (Canada Cultural Spaces Fund) - \$706,863, booked \$636,177

2015 Civic Partner Annual Arts Commons

**13. Based on your business plans for 2015-2018, what are your priorities and deliverables for 2015-2016?**

1. **CREATIVE AND ENGAGING** – Arts Commons shall launch the Hub for Inspired Learning during the 2015/16 Season. The Hub for Inspired Learning will be an innovative curriculum-based program that moves the CBE/CCDS classroom into Calgary’s premier arts and cultural setting for an inspired week of experiential learning led by arts industry experts.
2. **LEADING FACILITY** – Arts Commons shall develop an Energy Management Plan and a new Asset Management Plan to better focus investments in time and dollars to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the facility. During the 2015/16 Season, Arts Commons will undertake approximately \$3 million in high priority lifecycle projects inclusive of the replacement of venue seating and aisle lighting in the Jack Singer Concert Hall (2,056 Seats), Max Bell Theatre (777 Seats), Martha Cohen Theatre (424 Seats), Engineered Air Theatre (195 Seats), and the Big Secret Theatre (190 Seats). (Please note that the JSCH will be completed by 2018 in an effort to minimize the closure of the JSCH.)
3. **QUALITY PROGRAMMING** – Arts Commons will complete the implementation of the Mutual Strategic Consulting Agreement with the Calgary International Children’s Festival Society (CICF) that will maximize efficiencies through shared resources, whereby Arts Commons will provide services in the areas of financial management, fundraising, marketing & communications, and the CICF will in turn provide programming assistance that will enable Arts Commons to develop new year-round youth and family programming.
4. **SUPPORT ARTISTS** – In 2015, Arts Commons will complete the phasing in of a new Occupancy Cost Recovery Model that will be based on venue and facility utilization by our resident companies (Alberta Theatre Projects, Calgary International Children’s Festival, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Downstage, One Yellow Rabbit and Theatre Calgary).
5. **SUSTAINABLE** – Arts Commons will implement the final step in a new venue use strategy to continue to improve the revenue generating potential (venue rent, bar and beverage sales, ticketing fees and parking lot charges) of the facility and its principal venue assets. Arts Commons shall pursue other additional revenue sources by offering access to Tessitura Arts Enterprise Software; its Customer Relationship Management platform to other Calgary-based organizations.

**14. Identify any changes to plans and/or budget projections for 2015-2018.**

Arts Commons will continue to look for ways to increase revenues by building relationships with private sector partners and ensuring that the facility and all its venues are working at or beyond industry-wide standards.

From 2015 to 2018, Arts Commons will focus on youth and family programming. The Hub for Inspired Learning will launch in September 2015 and will provide a full season (20 weeks) of experiential learning through the arts. In addition, Arts Commons will begin to test the development of a Youth and Family Series by presenting two shows during the 2015/16 Season.

Arts Commons will also continue to prioritize building improvements and projects that protect or enhance our revenue generating opportunities; and, we’ll explore the sale of naming rights of the complex and nontraditional private sector partnerships to advance the Arts Commons Transformation expansion ambitions.

---

2015 Civic Partner Annual Arts Commons

---

While it is Arts Commons' intent to continue to maximize existing revenue streams and diversify where possible, the physical confines of the facility, its purpose and operating model are significant limiting factors. In the event of a reduction to our operating grant by The City of Calgary we would have to once again reevaluate the costs of using the venues and pass these increases onto Calgary's charitable sector users while considering other cost cutting measures such as reduction or elimination of free public programming; postponing facility maintenance; suspending facility improvement projects; elimination of some visual arts/media programming; suspending select educational initiatives; elimination of professional development for staff; staff reductions to a workforce that was reduced by 25% in 2010; and, the potential implementation of a new access policy that could see community access restricted in favour of commercial users.

**16. Identify any specific opportunities/projects that would directly stimulate the Calgary economy if supported by a strategic investment by The City.**

Although Arts Commons makes a meaningful contribution to the Calgary economy by enabling the delivery of 1,800 performances and events in our seven venues to some 600,000 visitors annually, we believe that with a strategic investment there is an opportunity to grow and diversify our audience that will directly stimulate the Calgary economy and strengthen our sustainability.

Arts Commons proposes a targeted investment that would enable the presentation of "commercial tier one artists" year-round in a variety of artistic disciplines (all forms of music, dance, talks, family, etc.) in addition to a comprehensive regional advertising campaign that would grow over-night visitors to Calgary.

Arts Commons' sustainability will be strengthened by increased parking revenues, growth to food & beverage revenues and increased box office service charge revenues by presenting exceptional artists that would otherwise not visit Calgary because we cannot afford their fees.

Calgary businesses would directly benefit as a result of the sale of such goods and services as hotel rooms, restaurant meals, and retail shopping.

While no Alberta data could be found, according to Ontario Arts & Culture the impact of Arts and Culture Tourism is significant and suggests there is an opportunity to grow and diversify presenting activities at Arts Commons to directly stimulate and diversity the Calgary economy:

- 39% of all American overnight visitors, and 63% of overseas visitors engaged in an arts or culture activity during their trip in 2010;
- The average Ontario arts and culture tourist spends twice as much per trip as does a typical tourist - \$667 per trip versus \$374;
- On average, arts and culture tourists spend 4.4 nights in Ontario - 42% longer than the typical tourist at 3.1 nights;
- Spending in Ontario by arts and culture tourists totaled \$4.1 billion in 2010 - representing 36% of spending by all overnight tourists in the province that year;
- Many sectors of Ontario's economy benefit from arts and culture tourist spending. For example, Ontario's arts and culture tourists spent \$1.1 billion on lodging, \$1.1 billion on food and beverages, \$600 million on retail and \$500 million on recreation in 2010.
- Some culture activities are more likely to motivate trips than others. For example, 14% of these North American tourists were motivated to travel by music performances, 11% by theatre, and 8% by art festivals.