

Thank you to the committee for giving us the opportunity to speak with you today. We're always pleased to hear from our fellow civic partners and share how our efforts align with theirs.

At Calgary Arts Development, we work **on behalf of all Calgarians** and strive for a **creative, connected Calgary through the arts**.

When we speak about 'arts,' we're talking about a **huge range of artistic activity**, and this range is essential to a **healthy arts ecosystem**. Calgarians of all backgrounds should have the opportunity to connect with creative experiences in our city, and that means championing all artistic disciplines, small and large organizations, amateur and professional artists, and both formal and informal arts activities.

The arts have a powerful role to play in city-building. Arts **make connections**, building community and enhancing well-being; arts **boost the economy**, both as a sector and by making Calgary a great place to live; arts **shape our identity**, reflecting our character and the diversity of our citizens; and arts **inspire our youth** by developing essential skills like creative thinking and teamwork.

Last year, we commissioned a Calgarian Engagement survey, which found that **87% of Calgarians believe that arts help bring people together**, and **82% believe** that a strong arts and culture scene is key to creating a **vibrant, safe and prosperous city**.

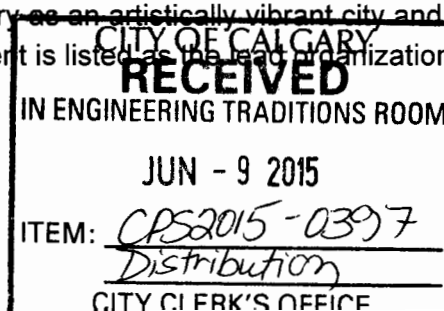
Furthermore, 87% of Calgarians engage with the arts in some way: **70% attend arts events**, and **almost 60% have a creative or personal practice**.

I invite you to read our **2014 Accountability Report** and the **Success Indicator Baseline Report** for more details, as well as our **2015 to 2018 Strategic Plan**.

Because there are in fact *too* many stories to tell about how the arts impact Calgarians, I'd like to share just a few examples of how we are working with our partners to build our city through the arts.

Calgary Poet Laureate derek beaulieu is in the second year of his term, and has participated in dozens of events since he took on the role. This past April, as part of National Poetry Month, he asked Calgarians to create a Calgary alphabet by taking photos of signs and letters throughout the city, and sending their images to him by social media. Not only did he collect submissions from across the city, but Reykjavik, Iceland, has expressed interest in duplicating his project with its citizens. **Arts make connections**.

Calgary's economic development strategy, Building On Our Energy, recognizes the importance of arts in attracting workers to our city. For example, one of the actions supporting the strategy's Community Energy focus area is to "Establish Calgary as an artistically vibrant city and cultural destination in Canada," and Calgary Arts Development is listed as the lead organization for this action. **Arts boost our economy**.



In May, Calgary hosted more than 600 delegates from across the country at the Community Foundations of Canada conference. We worked with the Calgary Foundation and Downtown Calgary to produce a street festival on Stephen Avenue called Animate the Avenue, which delighted the visitors to the city and local passers-by. **Arts shape our identity.**

The Calgary Board of Education is leading Alberta Education's Curriculum Development Prototyping project, collaborating with 16 other school jurisdictions. This prototype has arts at its core. The overall goal of students "living a creative life" will be achieved through encounters with art, art-making and artists. **Arts inspire our youth.**

For our part, in 2014, we also released our 2015-18 Strategic Plan, which outlined three priorities for Calgary Arts Development: to **raise the value of the arts** in Calgary, to continue to **build collaborative relationships**, and to **increase resources** for the arts sector. These priorities are informing all of our programs and activities.

You'll find details about current Calgary Arts Development activities in our Accountability Report. Programs and initiatives we're looking forward to delivering in coming years include **SpaceFinder**, a proven tool that connects arts spaces with renters; **New Pathways for the Arts**, a three-year program that develops innovative and adaptive skills among arts organizations; as well as a **redesigned Operating Grant Program** that will better meet the needs of Calgary's arts ecosystem.

Beyond that, we also connect the arts to the greater community by participating on the **Junos Host Committee**, The City of Calgary's **Culture Plan Steering Committee**, the CBE's **Fine Arts Advisory Council**, and the **Imagine Canada Advisory Council**.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak, and we'd be happy to take any questions.