



# Arts Commons Transformation Project

## Project Program Assessment Report

July 12, 2019





## **1.0 Report Overview**

### **1.1 Report Overview**

Calgary Municipal Land Corporation (CMLC) has completed a review of the Arts Commons Transformation (ACT) program needs and project goals through processes which included one-on-one interviews with Arts Commons and resident companies, and a review of past program project documents. Through this course, CMLC has compiled all comments, issues and opportunities for ACT and has identified several common themes that are presented in this document. These themes will serve as the baseline to create a vision for ACT and create guiding principles to help deliver the ACT project. As well, CMLC has completed an analysis of past Design Brief Schemes (Scheme E and Scheme F), with the intent to receive a new project cost for ACT. The updated project cost based on the most recent program requirements is presented in this report.



## 2.0 What We Heard

### 2.1 Themes

Through the interview process with resident companies, participants were asked to explain how their organizations operated, how they were a part of the Arts Commons Transformation (ACT) process throughout the previous years, what they found was successful and unsuccessful about the previous process, and ultimately what success looks like in this project along with their goals and ambitions as individual organizations. These themes were cross referenced amongst each resident companies' responses and the results are as follows:

#### 1.1.1 Arts Commons as a Catalyst

ACT has the potential to be a catalytic project that continues to keep the focus of the community downtown. It is about encouraging the connectivity to people and programs that nurture mental well-being and build a healthy and vibrant community. With Arts Commons being centrally located, it will further support walkable neighbourhoods, contributing to a complete community.

#### 1.1.2 Arts Commons as a Multi-Use Facility

Arts Commons will incorporate several uses inside of the building that operate unlike a typical theatre, such as a cafés, restaurants, co-working spaces and retail. Based on current market demand, this will help anchor Arts Commons as a node for different residents to visit the building for different reasons thereby stimulating the building as an activity center and not just as a performance venue.

#### 1.1.3 Arts Commons as a Hub for Community Development

How arts venues are used is changing. Historically they were performance spaces. Today, they are places where people gather and celebrate community and experience the arts. This can be achieved through event programming and designing multi-purpose flex spaces that can accommodate a range of uses (i.e. child minding, educational programs, multi-faith rooms, travelling art shows, etc). Creating more permeable buildings and creating interior spaces that are connected to the public realm.

#### 1.1.4 Arts Commons as an Accessible Community Asset

Access to Arts Commons venues, support spaces and amenities should be accessible to patrons, performers, staff and the public at large. Accessible design principles should be considered, and every space should enable non-discriminatory



use and ease of access for every user. Arts, culture and a vibrant urban environment can be promoted through the creation of an open and inclusive building.

## **1.2 Guiding Principles**

Each theme serves as a foundation for the project guiding principles. The interview process highlighted the amount of excitement resident companies have with the potential this project can deliver. The following guiding principles should serve as the baseline for the project team to reference during the next few steps in the project and further into the concept design and construction stages to ensure the project objectives are being met.

### **1.2.1 The Arts Commons Transformation Project will reflect the vision of Arts Commons as an organization:**

***“Vision:***

*A creative and compassionate society, inspired through the arts.”*

***“Mission:***

*To bring the arts...to life.”*

***“Values:***

*Do the right thing - behaving with integrity, applying professionalism, being honest, and erring on the side of grace.*

*Be our best always – in service, in leadership, in professionalism, and in providing a quality experience.*

*Be open: minds, hearts, arms – through empathy, openness, trust, and collaboration, seizing opportunities to impact our community in a positive way.”*

### **1.2.2 ACT will allow arts organizations to be innovative and meet the needs of a dynamic and growing arts sector within the community:**

Theatres of the future are adaptable with flexible, configurable spaces that reflect a growing and diverse arts community. This includes the most recent technologies that contribute to a sustainable building and ultimately ensuring safety for Arts Commons, resident companies, other user groups, and patrons.

### **1.2.3 Arts Commons will be a destination for all.**

Arts Commons must be inclusive and serve all abilities and demographics. It must be accessible to all. This also includes a level of community engagement and how the future building will include free programming spaces for all community members. These types of spaces include smudging rooms with appropriate ventilation for visitors and performers.



#### 1.2.4 Lastly, ACT will be experience oriented.

The Arts Commons Transformation will be about articulating an overall great user journey/experience through and around the building whether you're a visitor coming for a show, someone passing through the building, or preparing for a performance



## 3.0 Issues

### 3.1 Summary

Through the interview process with resident theatre companies, participants were also asked to express their thoughts on issues and spaces that were not working well in the current Arts Commons (AC). These issues were compiled, and the results are as follows:

#### 3.1.1 Accessibility

Existing Arts Commons performance and amenity spaces are accessible to varying degrees. Accessibility to facilities (i.e. washrooms, food/beverage, theatre levels), patron spaces and areas accessed by performers is inadequate. Vertical circulation within lobby spaces are particularly problematic.

#### 3.2.1 Wayfinding

AC is difficult to navigate with too many lobby spaces and access points. Improved wayfinding and definition of space is required.

#### 3.3.1 Safety

Security concerns exist around after-hours access, drop-off points, pedestrian & school children traffic vs. car traffic. As well, lacks acceptable stage equipment to keep stage workers safe.

#### 3.4.1 Technology

Lack of Technology and old technologies such as lighting and sound equipment are not up to industry standards and therefore discourages touring arts organizations from renting AC venues. Scenic automation would enable scheduling efficiency.

#### 3.5.1 Lobby Space

Too many access points and corridors make AC difficult to navigate. Combined lobby spaces would result in a more pleasant and characterized experience through AC.

#### 3.6.1 Office Space

Dispersed office spaces make for an inefficient workplace. Offices in closer proximity to the theatres would result in better collaboration.



### **3.7.1 Shop Space**

Inadequate amount of shop space. More overall space consisting of electrical, sound and stage workshop space is required.

### **3.8.1 Bars and Concessions**

Insufficient bar and concession spaces lacking accessibility and adequate cooled storage results in reduced sales, while bars and concessions are a primary driver of revenue during events.

### **3.9.1 Theatre Access**

Resident companies lack access to various size theatres/venues for assorted sized events.

### **3.10.1 Rehearsal Hall Access**

Resident companies would also want access to different size rehearsal spaces. Before and during performances, performers typically go through these different rehearsal spaces to warm up for their performance.

### **3.11.1 Unwelcoming**

AC's hours of operation, abrupt lobbies, and lack of public space all contribute to an unwelcoming environment. Isolated entry does not support a permeable building and restrict indoor/outdoor connection.

### **3.12.1 Environmental**

Being a facility of a considerable size, AC has an opportunity to be a greener building using clean energy to reduce impact on the environment and operating costs.

### **3.12.1 Sustainability**

The 1,200 seat venue will meet growing and unmet market demand, increase and diversify operating revenue streams.

### **3.13.1 Lack of Free Programming/Unengaging**

By creating free programming spaces, AC would be able to engage all demographics, resulting in a more energetic and activated community.

### **3.14.1 Lack of Back of House Space**

Inadequate amount of dressing rooms, change rooms, greenrooms, performers lounges, and SM offices. Number of rooms, size and quality of space is insufficient.



## 4.0 Design Brief Discrepancies

### 4.1 Summary

Throughout the previous ACT process, a design brief had been put together by Arts Commons in partnership with all resident companies and Bing Thom Architects, with the intent for it to be used as a detailed guide in developing an order of magnitude budget. As a way of improving understanding of the requirements and desires for ACT as well as understanding the process AC had previously completed and with the goal of providing a new order of magnitude cost, CMLC completed a review of Scheme E, dated August 3, 2011, Scheme F, dated April 2016, and Scheme F, dated July 20, 2016 to identify any discrepancies. The differences were then cross referenced with recent resident company comments and discussions with Arts Commons and CMLC regarding programming and the results are as follows:

### 4.2 Differences in Schemes

After review of Schemes E (August, 2011) & F (April, 2016 & July 2016), it is noted that there are no significant discrepancies in program requirements that would have a major impact on the order of magnitude of the ACT between the two Scheme F design briefs, however there were some significant program items added to Scheme F, following Scheme E. Minor differences between Scheme F (April), and Scheme F (July) included phasing, and sequencing of the breakdown in spaces. However, after meeting with individual resident companies, and Arts Commons, there are a number of items identified that resident companies require today that would impact overall cost. These items are as follows.

#### 4.1.2 Martha Cohen Theatre

For Martha Cohen theatre to continue their operations, an automated venue configuration system is required.

#### 4.2.2 Theatre Calgary – Stage Automation

Stage Automation equipment to allow for multiple performances within a single day and added safety for stage workers.

#### 4.2.3 New Road House - 1200 Person Theatre

Gala floor system to allow for maximum flexibility throughout the entire theatre space.





## 5.0 Costing Executive Summary

These preliminary hard construction cost estimates for the Arts Commons Transformation (ACT) project have been developed from historical costs for comparable facilities and/or amenities to those described in the Drawings and Design Brief Outline (dated July 20, 2016) and received on May 30, 2019 as prepared by Bing Thom Architects.

Project Phasing has been incorporated in keeping with the Construction Sequence provided by CMLC which includes phased construction over a four-year term. Site Development costs have been prepared taking into consideration requirements for surface works, landscaping, site fittings and site services.

Due to the preliminary nature of the available information, these estimates should be used as Order of Magnitude (OoM), budget guidelines only.

### 5.1. Notes and Assumptions

- Unit rates were developed based upon the space descriptions provided.
- All costs are shown in current June 2019 dollars.
- As the available information is preliminary, all estimates include a 15% contingency allowance.
- Estimates include for contractor overhead and fee based on a sequential tender approach using a Construction Manager.
- Final size, configuration and stacking of functions could significantly impact the estimated construction costs.
- New Building will generally meet LEED Gold standards; Net Zero Energy or Zero Carbon not anticipated.
- Furniture, Furnishings and Equipment is shown as an overall allowance on the Global Budget Summary.
- Adjusted escalation allowance to accommodate PHASED construction start dates.
- Included for the GALA floor system to the orchestra pit.
- Amounts carried for public art are calculated according to City of Calgary Public Art Policy.
- Hazardous material remediation cost are based on a cost/s.f. for area of Scheme F renovation.

### 5.2. Excluded from these estimates are:

- All work to existing Calgary Public Building, Burns Building, Teatro Building
- All work to existing LRT
- Land costs (acquisition, assessments, levies, etc.)
- Accommodations for future residential tower on top of the new theatre (parking, structure, impact to LRT)
- Art collections / theatrical lighting
- Unusual subsurface conditions
- All work beyond the construction boundary lines other than service connections



- Owner Internal Costs / Moving & Relocation Costs
- Operating and Lifecycle Maintenance Reserve Fund
- Post-disaster building requirements
- Goods and Services Tax

**While estimates are shown for individual components, these cannot be used as standalone estimates. They have been estimated based on inclusion in the total project.**



## 6.0 Appendix. A. - Order of Magnitude - Preliminary Functional Program Estimate

Cost Report Dated June 21, 2019.

Arts Commons Transformation

Preliminary Functional Program Estimate				
12-Jul-19				
Rounded to nearest \$100,000				
Budget Item Number	Overall Area Summary	Program Area Square Meters	Program Area S.F.	Phase 1 Costs
1A	Gross Facility Area	59,285	638,137	
	Total Hard Construction Costs			\$ 161,800,000.00
1B	Construction Contingency Sums			
	Total Construction Contingency			\$ 16,200,000.00
2	Consultants			
	Total Consultant Costs			\$ 26,000,000.00
3	Administration & Other Costs			
	Total Administration Costs			\$ 10,700,000.00
4	Furniture & Equipment			
	Total FF&E Cost			\$ 10,300,000.00
5	Total Costs			
	Total Project Cost			\$ 225,000,000.00
6	Escalation			
6.02	Cost Escalation to Time of Tender - Likely Range	2% Per Annum		\$14,700,000.00
	Project Total Budget			\$239,700,000.00