



## POLICY REPORT

Report Date: June 11, 2018  
Contact: Branislav Henselmann/  
Alix Sales  
Contact No.: 604-679-1757  
RTS No.: 012420  
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20  
Meeting Date: July 10, 2018

TO: Vancouver City Council  
FROM: General Manager of Arts, Culture and Community Services  
SUBJECT: Making Space for Arts and Culture: 2018 Cultural Infrastructure Plan

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

THAT Council direct Cultural Services staff to:

- i. Develop a planning, support and decision framework as well as city-wide targets for arts and cultural spaces that consider community need, the pace of development, displacement and population growth;
- ii. Review and update the Cultural Infrastructure Grant guidelines to improve access, security of tenure, partnership and leveraging opportunities and funding levels for different types and scales of projects;
- iii. Work with Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability, Development, Buildings and Licensing, Long-term Financial Strategy, and Legal Services to explore policies, zoning, regulatory and other tools to enable partnerships to secure, enhance and develop affordable, accessible arts and cultural spaces citywide;
- iv. Work with Long-term Financial Strategy to:
  - (a) Continue to advocate to the Province for the "Split Tax Bill" approach;
  - (b) Explore options for a time-limited City stabilization fund to assist arts and cultural nonprofits in crisis due to escalating land values;
- v. Work with the Development and Building Regulatory Review and Development, Buildings and Licensing to explore opportunities to remove barriers and streamline regulations and processes for arts and cultural spaces and activities;
- vi. Develop a framework to engage with Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations and Urban Indigenous communities on ways to improve support for more visibility on the land and self-determined cultural spaces;

- vii. Work with Real Estate and Facilities Management to engage the community and partners on planning and feasibility studies of City-owned spaces, including Vanier Park cultural institutions master planning, Orpheum upgrades and Firehall Theatre renewal and renovation plans;
- viii. Work with other City teams and departments, as appropriate, to integrate cultural spaces into City-owned spaces such as community centres, housing projects, social spaces, libraries and other spaces; and
- ix. Explore opportunities and partnerships to support increased knowledge sharing and research that includes joining the World Cities Culture Forum.

### **REPORT SUMMARY**

This report is an update to the 2008 *Cultural Facilities Priorities Plan* and is being presented in advance of the completion of the Creative City Strategy. Staff request Council approval of priority/immediate recommendations to optimize City policies, tools, programs and investment priorities to secure, enhance and develop vibrant, affordable, and accessible arts and cultural spaces in Vancouver in partnership with the community, other agencies, levels of government and the private sector. Areas for future consideration noted in the report will be contemplated within the context of the upcoming Creative City Strategy.

### **COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS**

- In 2008, Council adopted the *Cultural Facilities Priorities Plan 2008* (RTS 07315) as a part of the implementation strategy of the *Culture Plan for Vancouver, 2008 –2018* (RTS 06994), which outlined strategies for enabling the sustainable creation and operation of cultural spaces.
- In 2013, *Vancouver's Culture Plan: Strategic Directions* (RTS 10309) was presented to Council providing a framework to support a diverse, thriving cultural ecology with a key objective to partner with the arts and cultural community and others, to retain, enhance and develop affordable, sustainable cultural spaces in Vancouver.
- In February 2016, Council passed a motion for a Music Strategy and directed staff to explore options for improving City support for musicians and the music industry.
- In December 2016, Council passed a motion to direct staff to update the Special Events Policy.
- On May 2, 2017, Council passed a motion to direct staff to develop a Creative City Strategy, which aims to develop a comprehensive plan and vision for arts, culture and creativity in Vancouver.

### **CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS**

On May 15, 2018, Cultural Services staff provided an update to Council on the early engagement and findings of the Creative City Strategy. As cities throughout the world experience a rapid growth in urbanism, there is a proportionate growth in the importance of arts and cultural expression, identity and liveability. Simultaneously, global cities are experiencing a dramatic loss of affordable and accessible cultural spaces.

This report provides recommendations and future considerations in respect to ways the City can partner to support vibrant, accessible and affordable spaces to produce, experience, share and

present arts and culture. This report is informed by the accompanying consultant report, *Key Gaps in Vancouver's Cultural Infrastructure* by AMS Research and Planning (see Appendix A for the full “AMS Report”) that identifies community issues, needs, and space priorities.

In 2019, with the Creative City Strategy report, staff will report back on cultural spaces incorporating considerations from related initiatives such as the Vancouver Music Strategy and other ideas that will arise through further community engagement and research over the next year.

## **REPORT**

### **CONTEXT**

Arts and cultural activities reflect our unique identity, serve residents, attract tourists, maintain businesses, and enhance our quality of life. In 2017 the World Cities Culture Forum stated “*Culture is an essential ingredient in the 21st Century city ... no global city can be successful without it ... contributing to city reputation, economic prosperity and quality of life.*”

It is essential that there are spaces where artists can live, work and share their work. The City needs to put the arts and cultural sector at the core of city building, reflecting Vancouver’s unique and diverse peoples, histories and futures; particularly the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations, and Urban Indigenous communities.

Ensuring access to appropriate and affordable cultural spaces in a global real estate crisis can be overwhelming. In 2017, the World Cities Culture Forum published *Making Space for Culture — A Handbook for City Leaders*, which identifies the affordability crisis in world cities as the largest threat the creative community faces. As stated by Justine Simons, Deputy Mayor for Culture and the Creative Industries, London, and Paul Owens, World Cities Culture Forum, “*The challenge of making space for culture is inseparable from the broader affordability crisis.*”

The affordability crisis puts a major strain on the arts and cultural sector. Increasing competition for resources and support has resulted in major issues: arts and cultural workers leaving cities for more affordable places to live and work, and the gradual loss of presentation, creation and administration spaces. In London, for example, it is reported that 35% of grassroots music venues have been lost over 8 years, and 30% of artist studios are likely to be lost by 2019.

### *Arts and Cultural Sector*

Cultural and creative industries have been recognised by the United Nations as one of the world’s fastest growing sectors. In 2007, the Conference Board of Canada noted arts and cultural workers contribute to 7.4% of real GDP — more than mining, forestry and fisheries combined. The Province of BC reports that “cultural” gross domestic product has grown a billion dollars to a total of \$6.7 billion from 2010 to 2014.

British Columbia has the highest number of artists in Canada, and Vancouver has the highest concentration of artists per capita among Canada’s major cities. In Vancouver, artists make up 2.3% of the labour force with the broader category of cultural workers representing 9.7%. Regrettably, 65% of artists in Vancouver report a total income under \$40,000 per annum and are living below the poverty line (Statistics Canada, 2011).

### *Cultural Spaces Map and Data*

The City's online Cultural Spaces Map was launched in 2014. It includes a comprehensive list of City-owned and City-leased cultural spaces as well as other cultural spaces. The data is published on the City's web page, VanMap and is available for anyone to use as open source data.

The Cultural Spaces Map include close to 400 spaces, totalling over 3.4 million square feet of space, of which 108 spaces are City-owned or leased. 80 of these spaces (830,000 square feet) are home to approximately 137 artists and nonprofit tenants housed in both City and Park Board spaces. The figure below details the types of spaces captured in the map (see Appendix B for a complete list of City-owned/leased cultural spaces/facilities or see the map online at <http://vancouver.ca/cultural-spaces-map>).

**Figure 1 – Cultural Spaces Map - Types of Spaces**

| Type of Cultural Space   | Ownership           |                  | Total      |
|--|---------------------|------------------|------------|
|  | City and Park Board | Other (Non-City) |            |
| <b>Theatre/Performance</b> (cinemas, theatres, performance)  | 15                  | 39               | 54         |
| <b>Studio/Rehearsal</b> (studios, film/recording rehearsal spaces, workshops)                        | 26                  | 67               | 93         |
| <b>Museum/Gallery</b> (museums, galleries, libraries, archives, science centres, gardens, aquariums) | 18                  | 90               | 108        |
| <b>Educational</b> (art, music, and dance schools)   | 3                   | 22               | 25         |
| <b>Community Space</b> (arenas, stadiums, community centres, halls, plazas, places of worship)       | 46                  | 38               | 84         |
| <b>Other</b> (arts-focussed retail)  | 0                   | 23               | 23         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>108</b>          | <b>279</b>       | <b>387</b> |

### *Accomplishments 2008-2018*

Within Canada and the Pacific Northwest, Vancouver has been a leader in the development of cultural space programs and policies. Since the previous *Cultural Facilities Priorities Plan* was launched in 2008, much has been accomplished. Highlights include:

- In 2009, the Cultural Infrastructure Grant Program was launched. The City has contributed \$9.36 million in capital grants to 135 local arts and cultural nonprofits to plan, buy, build or renovate 236 projects. These projects have leveraged a minimum of \$60 million of additional investment and have led the way for comparable programs in other cities.
- Since 2009, through Community Amenity Contributions, the City has developed 12 new City-owned affordable and secure arts and cultural spaces for over 30 local arts organizations over 156,678 square feet. This includes arts and cultural spaces at Woodward's, the BMO Theatre Centre, The Post at CBC, the Arts Factory, the Orpheum Annex, the VSO Music School, and the York Theatre.

- In 2009, a dedicated cultural position was added to assist with regulatory processes and issues. Staff has provided technical assistance to over 450 enquiries, launched the Live Performance Regulatory Review, including simplifying City regulations for liquor service and enabling underground events to run safely and legally. The 2010 Artist Studio Regulatory Review led to making artist studios an outright use in industrial and commercial districts, allowing industrial flex space within residential buildings and reducing parking requirements.
- Since 2009, staff has supported the convening of community members with experience in cultural spaces, now a sub-committee of the Arts and Culture Policy Council, for ongoing dialogue around issues and opportunities as well as input for City policies around cultural spaces.
- Since 2013, staff has offered nonprofits small grants to cover permit fees. Critical Assistance grants are available to nonprofits facing urgent, unexpected facility issues.
- In 2014, the City funded the development of BC Artscape, with J.W. McConnell Family Foundation and Vancity Community Foundation. They are an independent nonprofit development organization based in Vancouver with a mandate to develop cultural spaces. This spring, BC Artscape launched a 50,000 square foot community cultural hub in Vancouver's Chinatown, now home to over 50 tenants with a diverse mix of artists, cultural producers and community groups.
- In 2014, the City worked with Britannia Community Services Society to design, fund and construct the ʂxʋqʋeləwən ct carving pavilion.
- Four new studios were added to the City's Artist Studio Award program, which provides live-work and work-only spaces at below-market rates for approximately three years to low-income Vancouver, Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh (MST) artists. The program currently has seven studios and has supported 26 artists since its inception in 1995.

## **BACKGROUND**

### *AMS Consultant Report*

In 2016, AMS Planning and Research ("AMS") was contracted to provide a study of Vancouver's "key gaps" that included reviewing the strengths and challenges of Vancouver's arts and culture ecology, and to explore Vancouver's cultural space needs. Their comprehensive report *Key Gaps in Vancouver's Cultural Infrastructure* ("AMS Report") is included in Appendix A.

The AMS Report also includes learnings from an internal *Review of Performing Arts Facilities* ("Performing Arts Study") led by Vancouver Civic Theatres and conducted by AMS in 2016 that focused on the Civic Theatres and other performing arts facilities. Work included reviewing policy, market scans and comparative research on other jurisdictions and best practices. Independently and with staff, AMS conducted roundtable meetings, focus groups, in depth interviews (both internal and external), and two surveys.

### *Steering Committee*

Throughout the process, staff relied on a Steering Committee for internal advice, with representation from Long-term Financial Strategy, Facilities Planning and Development, Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability, Development, Buildings, and Licensing, Park Board, and Civic Theatres.

For external direction, AMS and staff presented both AMS's findings as well as draft directions and recommendations to the Council-appointed Arts and Culture Policy Council ("ACPC"), as well as to the ACPC Spaces Sub-Committee, Vancouver Music Strategy Steering Committee, Social Purpose Real Estate Collaborative, Committee of Committees and other key stakeholder groups.

### *Related City Strategies*

This work of supporting affordable and accessible cultural spaces touches many other City strategies, and Cultural Services staff work with various teams to integrate and align this work. Related City strategies include: Creative City Strategy, Vancouver Music Strategy, Special Events Motion, Healthy City Strategy, City of Reconciliation, Social Infrastructure Plan, VanPlay (Park Board Master Plan), Heritage Strategy and Action Plan, Places for People (Downtown Public Space Strategy), Plaza Stewardship, Liquor Policy Review, Development and Building Regulatory Review, and Support for Small Business Strategy, Provincial Property Tax Assessment and Taxation Review, and Employment Lands and Economic Strategy.

### *FINDINGS*

The AMS Report included in Appendix A provides a comprehensive overview of the strengths and challenges of Vancouver's arts and culture ecology and Vancouver's cultural space needs. For the purposes of this report, staff has provided a very high level overview of the AMS Report's survey findings, issues identified and space needs. In the report AMS noted that:

- Vancouver's income inequality is 2.5 times higher than the national average and housing costs are highest in the country;
- Collaboration between organizations and agencies is on the rise;
- City staff are perceived as supportive partners; and
- Existing community and private spaces are facing rapid displacement due to the real estate market and pace of development (particularly production, studio, and music spaces).

In 2017, AMS distributed an online survey to over 400 cultural organizations, promoted through social media. AMS received 287 responses: 119 from organizations (primarily nonprofits) that represent Vancouver's various artistic practices and disciplines. 168 individual artists also responded (of which 55% work in the visual arts).

Survey findings include the following highlights:

- Vancouver has a prolific arts scene that includes many smaller organizations:
  - 77% of organizations reported to have annual budgets under \$500,000
  - half of these (44% overall) have budgets under \$100,000
- The majority of Vancouver's existing arts and cultural spaces are vulnerable:
  - two-thirds of spaces have leases of 5 years or less
  - one-third of spaces are in leases of one year or less; and most are on month-to-month

- Only five facilities are reported as being owned by nonprofit arts organizations
- Monthly rent for organizations range between \$1.19 and \$2.44 per square foot; average rent is \$1.98 per square foot per month or \$23.76 per square foot per year.
- Concerns about security of space include:
  - 66% of individuals and 50% of organizations are concerned about losing their space
  - The highest concern is over losing production space
  - 73% of organizations have difficulty finding suitable spaces
  - 59% find it difficult to rent outdoor spaces
- Growing audiences and a general optimism about organizational growth equate to an anticipated need for additional and improved space:
  - 89% of organizations are considering space improvements or upgrades; these include accessibility, technology, acoustic and environmental improvements or upgrades to their facility
  - 43 major projects were reported as being currently active. One-third of these are in the construction/fit-out phase and the other two-thirds are projects undergoing needs assessments or feasibility studies
- Funding sources for projects are significantly more diverse than in 2008, which now includes co-developments, fundraising, federal grants, owner-financed and conventional loans.

Figure 2 lists the key issues identified in the survey and engagement by AMS. Further details can be found in their report in Appendix A.

**Figure 2 – Survey and Engagement – Key Issues Identified**

| Themes   | Issues   |
|--|--|
| <b>Affordability and Displacement</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lack of affordable spaces to live, create and present</li> <li>● Rapid pace of development displacing existing spaces</li> <li>● Little property ownership and control</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Capacity</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lack of leadership development opportunities, philanthropy and advocacy</li> <li>● Lack of space-related operating funding</li> <li>● Sector undercapitalization</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Reconciliation: MST and Indigenous; Equity &amp; Access: Underrepresented communities</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lack of First Nations and Urban Indigenous visibility and cultural spaces</li> <li>● Barriers exist for underrepresented, small and emerging groups</li> <li>● Facility accessibility barriers (audiences and artists)</li> </ul> |
| <b>Low Priority of Arts and Culture in City</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Culture not a high profile strategy/arts and culture not currently visible in City decision making</li> <li>● Compartmentalization of City support</li> </ul>   |

| Themes                     | Issues  |
|----------------------------|---|
|                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of transparency in decision making</li> <li>• High land values impact rental rates and property taxes</li> <li>• Limited tools or incentives to support private spaces</li> <li>• Infrastructure grants amounts too low to support large projects</li> <li>• Inadequate support for cultural spaces citywide (e.g., in other areas of the city not undergoing major planning processes)</li> <li>• More City-controlled spaces should be available for arts and cultural rentals</li> </ul> |
| <b>Regulatory Barriers</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for support in permit and license navigation</li> <li>• Zoning/licensing/building requirements do not align</li> <li>• Current strata live-work artist studios allowed in some industrial zones do not support long term affordability or a wider public benefit</li> <li>• Restrictive noise by-laws</li> <li>• Frequency and scope of Arts Event license too limited</li> </ul>   |

*Space Needs*

AMS also identified key infrastructure and space needs including:

- Securing new spaces to live, work and present:
  - studios, production and rehearsal spaces, spaces appropriate to Local First Nations and Indigenous cultural practices, housing, outdoor venues, office space, key major facilities such as a new Vancouver Art Gallery, shared, co-located and/or integrated spaces, and presentation spaces including small-mid-sized venues, flexible performance space, music and all ages spaces, galleries, and large-scale outdoor space.
- Renewal and renovations of City-owned spaces:
  - major renewal for sites such as Vanier Park and the Orpheum; seismic, accessibility and greening upgrades; and support for renewal and renovation of nonprofit-operated spaces (e.g. Firehall Arts Centre).
- Securing and protecting existing private spaces:
  - increasing nonprofit ownership, securing private studios, music venues, film spaces, and protecting cultural heritage.

*AMS Public Value*

Using the framework adapted from the Urban Institute’s Cultural Vitality in Communities, the AMS Report provides a framework to guide City investment in arts and culture as a means to provide public value. The report recommends “*placing the arts and culture sector at the center of citywide and community planning efforts. Artists and arts organizations would be integrated in planning and executing the process, with regular access to public officials and resources capable of navigating issues.*”



They note that the arts and cultural sector is a “*key driver of city and neighbourhood identity, a source of civic pride, a visitation catalyst, an attractor of a creative workforce — in sum, to drive success — the arts and culture sector should be recognized as a key contributor to public value ... consistent with the overall civic mission to create a great city ... to live work and prosper.*” (AMS, 2018)

### *AMS Criteria for Decision Making*

AMS, working with staff and existing grant decision making criteria, has proposed five criteria for reviewing City support for projects and plans:

- *Aligned*: Reflects and advances existing civic and arts goals. Manifests opportunities to meet a demonstrated community need.
- *Vital*: Creates durable opportunities of public value. Enhances opportunities for the arts and cultural community and neighbourhoods/districts to thrive and adapt.
- *Equitable and Diverse*: Reaches diverse communities intentionally and respectfully. Nurtures cultural understanding and mutual respect in respect to Reconciliation, equity, diversity, and inclusion of Indigenous communities and underrepresented communities.
- *Engaged*: Shows connections to communities of practice, or other factors. Advances opportunities to engage and collaborate on innovative solutions and programs.
- *Ready*: Demonstrates organizational capacity to lead project planning and implementation, with respect to project scale, intent, and duration. Readiness demonstrated through past accomplishments, current capacity, and forward-looking planning efforts that drive toward adaptability and ongoing, dynamic creation of public value.

## **STRATEGIC ANALYSIS**

The arts and cultural sector, governments, agencies, and the broader community all have essential roles to play in supporting spaces for arts and cultural expression. Cities have a particular responsibility as regulators and enablers, through land use, planning, and regulatory policies and processes. As well, other levels of government and agencies look to cities as they develop and commit to major policy directions or project funding.

Based on the work done by AMS and further consultation, staff has developed five objectives to provide a clear framework for the immediate recommendations as well as future considerations.

## Objectives

1. Position/align arts and culture as a key priority in City building.
2. Expand policies and tools to secure, enhance and develop affordable, accessible cultural spaces in partnership with the arts and cultural sector, government, other agencies and the private sector.
3. Incorporate equity, access and reconciliation lenses into cultural space programs, policies and priorities.
4. Expand engagement with the community and partners on planning for renewal of City-owned spaces and the development of new spaces.
5. Support community initiatives that build capacity.

### **Objective 1: Position/align arts and culture as a key priority in City building**

As stated by Jamie Bennett, ArtPlace America, the way forward to support arts and cultural spaces is to “*work to position arts and culture as a core sector of community planning and development.*”

#### **Position/Align: Targets and Infrastructure Grants**

##### *Immediate Recommendations*

Develop a planning, support and decision framework as well as city-wide targets for arts and cultural spaces that consider community need, the pace of development, displacement and population growth.

Review and update the Cultural Infrastructure Grant guidelines to improve access, security of tenure, increase partnership and leveraging opportunities and funding levels for different types and scales of projects.

#### *Set Targets*

Arts and cultural spaces face the same challenges as housing, social services, childcare, local small businesses and others in respect to displacement and affordability due to growth, rising real estate prices and rental costs. Setting citywide targets for cultural space retention and development will better support a long term citywide vision. Both housing and childcare strategies have clear space targets based on community needs that reflect population growth.

In addition, staff should also consider factors such as the rate-of-change, geographic areas, and ways to integrate these targets into community planning and public benefit strategies — similar to engineering, parks, housing, childcare, heritage and social — to ensure a balanced approach to securing public benefits and enhancing community assets to support whole neighbourhoods.

### *Cultural Infrastructure Program*

While every arts and cultural space contributes to a neighbourhood's identity, most activities typically serve the entire city and region, with many having a national and international scope.

In a rapidly changing real estate market, it is critical to have security of tenure. This can be achieved in many ways. For example, enabling successful local nonprofit space providers who have developed sustainable business models to secure tenure or purchase space would provide a long term community benefit, as would having sufficient programs to partner with other agencies and senior levels of government on community-led space projects.

Considering ways to expand the Cultural Infrastructure Program to provide larger grants beyond the current limit of \$250,000 would enable community capacity to invest in more substantive capital projects, including longer leases, acquisition and expansion, and will leverage significantly more funding from other sources including other levels of government, private fundraising and conventional loans.

For example, in 2013, as part of a major development in Mount Pleasant, a pilot project was developed in which the City provided \$4.5 million in community amenity contributions in the form of grants to four organizations to secure or expand artist production space. This led to a unique opportunity to support the acquisition of the Western Front, and allowed grant gallery to pay off their mortgage and expand their space. This support has been transformative for both local artist run centres and considered an innovative model in other cities.

The current Cultural Infrastructure Grant Program budget is approximately \$1 million a year (\$4 million over four years). In the draft Capital Plan presented to Council on May 16, 2018, the proposed program budget recommends an increase of \$2 million (\$6 million over four years), to be achieved through development contributions to support securing, enhancing and developing cultural spaces.

On May 8, 2018, the Arts and Culture Policy Council put forward a Motion to increase the Cultural Infrastructure Grant program to \$6 million a year (\$24 million over four years) to support the "acquisition of commercial and industrial properties by qualified nonprofit organizations that would ensure the long-term viability of artistic venues and cultural spaces, and increase the economic viability of artists who live and work in the city." The Motion further proposed to expand "land use tools such as density bonusing, inclusionary zoning, and community amenity contributions" and to "set aside an appropriate level of seed funding and property for the development of a Cultural Land Trust, similar to the San Francisco Community Arts Stabilization Trust."

Staff will further review this motion and report back further on these and other ideas in 2019. Expanding grant funding amounts could support ideas such as land trusts or further opportunities to partner with local NPOs and the federal government through the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund.

### *Community Arts Stabilization Trust*

The Community Arts Stabilization Trust (CAST) is a nonprofit organization based in San Francisco that partners to purchase real estate property that is secured permanently by arts and culture organizations through a lease-to-own model.

### *Canada Cultural Spaces Fund*

With increased infrastructure grant funding, there would also be an enhanced opportunity to further partner on community-led projects. For example, in 2017 the Government of Canada announced an additional \$300 million over a ten year period (\$14,039,214 allocated to 29 Vancouver-based projects so far) to further support creative hubs and other cultural spaces through the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund. Creative hubs bring together a range of arts, heritage and creative disciplines to provide access to shared space, equipment and other resources. Canada Cultural Spaces Fund is Vancouver's most significant and impactful funding partner in local creative space making projects. The fund typically provides more than 50% of the funding to local nonprofit infrastructure projects.

#### **Position/Align: City Planning**

##### *Future Considerations*

Over the next several years and as the Creative City Strategy moves forward, staff will further explore and bring forward opportunities to:

- Explore ways to partner further security of tenure and acquisition (e.g., Canada Spaces Fund, land trusts. co-ops);
- Ensure cultural sector is represented and engaged in all major planning projects (e.g., City Core 2050, Broadway Corridor, Heritage Strategy and Action Plan, Vancouver Employment Lands Study);
- Encourage City strategies to engage with the council appointed Arts and Culture Policy Council and develop a toolkit for City staff on ways to engage community; and
- Consider ways to support cultural space priorities in existing area and community plans, when possible (e.g., Joyce-Collingwood Station Precinct, West End and Marpole community plans, etc.)

### *City Planning*

City strategies, community plans and other policy work set City priorities and guide zoning and investments (including public benefits). Increasingly, arts and culture has been represented in these processes. Moving forward, more work is needed to ensure artists and arts organizations are further integrated into planning as well as implementation.

New planning underway including Broadway Corridor, Employment Lands Strategy, Heritage Strategy, and City Core 2050 needs to include arts and cultural goals, impacts, policies and resources. The *Vancouver Employment Lands Study*, for example, will undertake a review of Vancouver's economy and employment lands and will establish policy directions to ensure that the use of employment lands such as office, retail and industrial uses is maximized. It will be critical that arts and cultural activities and spaces are acknowledged and considered in this work.

It is equally important that existing plans (e.g., Grandview Woodlands, Joyce-Collingwood Station Precinct, West End and Marpole community plans etc.) that have cultural space priorities within in the plan - reflect current priorities and be implemented when new opportunities or resources become available.

## **Objective 2: Expand tools to enable partnerships to secure, enhance and develop affordable, accessible cultural spaces**

### *Pace of Change*

The pace of change has continued to rapidly accelerate in recent years, especially with older buildings. Without much protection for commercial renters, artists and cultural organizations are experiencing increased rents (doubling and tripling) and “renovictions” at a concerning rate.

*“It is important for the City to prioritize the preservation of arts and cultural spaces, including production spaces, music and performance spaces, spaces that hold or foster specific cultural heritage traditions, intangible cultural assets and industrial land use for art production and other industrial uses. The present gap in preservation efforts may risk spaces that are sorely needed and heavily utilized.”* AMS Report, 2018. (Appendix A)

### **Expand Tools**

#### *Immediate Recommendations*

Work with Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability (PDS), Long-term Financial Strategy, and Legal Services to explore policies, zoning, regulatory and other tools to enable partnerships to secure, enhance and develop affordable, accessible arts and cultural spaces citywide.

Work with Long-term Financial Strategy to:

- Continue to advocate to the Province for the “Split Tax Bill” approach
- Explore options for a time-limited City stabilization fund to assist arts and cultural nonprofits in crisis due to escalating land values

Work with the Development and Building Regulatory Review and Development, Buildings and Licensing to explore opportunities to remove barriers and streamline regulations and processes for arts and cultural spaces and activities.

### *Land Values and Property Tax*

While the City holds one of the lowest average tax increases in Metro Vancouver, rampant real estate price escalation continues to drive up land values, resulting in significant volatility in property assessment and taxes each year. The arts and culture sector is hit particularly hard as it tends to be located on potential redevelopment sites. Most commercial leases are “triple net” which allow landlords to pass on all property taxes, including those applicable to the development potential, on to their tenants. One studio hub recently experienced their property taxes doubling over four years from ~\$50,000 to \$100,000.

### *Rate of Change*

Critical work is needed to better track and protect against loss of arts and cultural space. There are opportunities to consider additional tools including those used to protect Housing. Tools such as tenant relocation programs, incentives, regulatory mechanisms and ways to preserve or secure cultural assets for the well-being of communities should be explored.

### *Heritage Incentives*

Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability's Chinatown Transformation and Heritage Strategy teams have been moving forward with new policies and tools to conserve heritage, tell stories in public spaces and encourage living culture of local First Nations, Urban Indigenous and other underrepresented communities. There is an opportunity to expand definitions of heritage to include built and intangible community assets and to leverage heritage incentives to preserve cultural spaces.

### *Industrial Lands*

Industrial lands serve as the sector's "back of house" are critical to local arts production and job spaces. In Vancouver's False Creek Flats (the "Flats") for example, there is a minimum of 525,000 square feet of artist production and rehearsal studios. Nearly one-in-five businesses in the area identify as being part of the arts and culture economy. Yet, the arts and culture sector are acutely challenged with affordability and loss of spaces, increasing rents and property taxes, and competition with higher value land uses including office/commercial uses in these industrial areas.

Already this year, at least eight studios in industrial spaces, housing approximately 190 artists, have reported dramatic rent increases (in many cases, double) and imminent loss of space. The Flats Area Plan and Economic Development Strategy (2017) and subsequent approved zoning and by-law amendments address some of these issues in innovative ways, including the placing of floor space limits on certain uses and allowing an artist studio use to build to maximum floor space ratio. Further study to expand tools and mechanisms such as density bonusing, and preservation tools to secure production space in industrial areas is required.

### *Cultural Districts and Density Bonus*

Many cities designate cultural districts that have incentives including density bonusing and tax incentives to support cultural spaces. In New York, developments of over 60,000 square feet in a core area of the Special 125<sup>th</sup> Street District are required to reserve 5% of total floor area for arts and cultural uses. In addition, developments receive a four-square-foot-bonus per every one-square-foot of arts space. While there are some districts with density bonus provisions in Vancouver that have benefited cultural spaces, there is an opportunity to explore this further, particularly building on the bonusing provisions developed as part of the False Creek Flats plan.

### *Existing Community Spaces*

There are existing community spaces such as places of worship, legions and community halls that are important venues and homes to arts and cultural activities and groups. In 2017, Council approved the Ryerson United Church rezoning, securing space for a choral centre for groups such as the Electra Women's Choir, Chor Leoni, Vancouver Bach Children's Choir, and Vancouver Chamber Choir. A study on places of worship and community spaces, led by ACCS in partnership PDS is underway. This work can further support preserving and enhancing arts and cultural spaces as well as co-locations.

### *Regulatory*

The City's regulations and processes are complex and intertwined, which can lead to restrictive, inconsistent and sometimes outdated polices. This can increase costs, time required and affordability of repurposing or upgrading existing spaces, particularly for the reuse of older buildings that offer more affordable rent. Each step forward in addressing regulatory barriers can enable more cultural activities and spaces.

The Regulatory Review underway offers a significant opportunity to address obstacles for arts and culture. Staff has identified two initial changes that have been put forward as part of the *Development and Building Regulatory Review – Minor Amendments Report*, referred to Public Hearing on June 19, 2018: allow retail area in artist studios without requiring a separating wall; and remove the resident limits for artist live work studios to better support families.

### **Expand Tools**

#### *Future Considerations*

Over the next several years and as the Creative City Strategy moves forward, staff will further explore and bring forward opportunities to:

- Explore ways to preserve affordable industrial space through the Employment Lands Study
- Work with the Chinatown Transformation and Heritage Strategy team, leverage heritage incentives to further support cultural spaces and intangible assets
- Work with PDS and Social Policy to develop supportive policy for the retention and enhancement of arts and cultural spaces in places of worship, legions and community halls
- Explore tools such as tenant relocation programs, incentives, regulatory mechanisms and ways to preserve or secure cultural assets
- Explore density bonusing, cultural districts and mixed-use cultural hubs
- Review case studies of previous City-enabled projects such as the Western Front and BC Artscape to identify ways to improve the regulatory system
- Find ways to support artists and cultural organizations through regulatory processes using the Commercial Renovation Centre as an example
- Explore ways to support the reuse of older buildings (for example non-health and safety upgrade requirements) and temporary studio space opportunities

### **Objective 3: Incorporate equity, access and reconciliation lenses into cultural space programs, policies, and priorities**

#### *City of Reconciliation*

On June 25, 2014, Vancouver City Council formally acknowledged that the City of Vancouver is situated on the unceded traditional territory of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations (MST), and subsequently designated Vancouver as a City of Reconciliation to further strengthen the City's services and ongoing relationships with MST and the urban Indigenous community. The City of Reconciliation long term goals include:

- Strengthen local First Nations and Urban Indigenous relations
- Promote Indigenous peoples arts, culture, awareness and understanding
- Incorporate First Nations and Urban Indigenous perspectives for effective City services

## Reconciliation

### *Immediate Recommendation*

Develop a framework to engage with Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations and Urban Indigenous communities on ways to improve support for more visibility on the land and self-determined cultural spaces.

Recent work includes efforts to participate in MST nation-to-nation Intergovernmental meetings and referrals process related to particular neighbourhood plans and development projects. One such process, led by Real Estate and Facilities Management in conjunction with Social Policy's Indigenous Planner and the Engagement team's Indigenous Engagement Specialist, includes planning for a new Britannia Community Services Centre with spaces that serve Indigenous and neighbourhood community members including: an elder-in-residence, a healing space, a more prominent location for the šxʷqʷeləwən ct carving pavilion and other arts and cultural programming spaces.

In March 2017, the 150+ Place Naming Project motion was adopted that includes the goal of creating Indigenous Design Guidelines to guide future place naming and built form.

To improve access for historically underrepresented communities, the 2018-2021 Artist Studio Awards expanded the program eligibility to include artists of Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations (who might not reside in the City of Vancouver), reduced submission requirements, and provided greater accommodation to applicants facing hardship with the program criteria. This resulted in the successful placement of artists with a majority from Indigenous and/or historically underserved communities in the award studios.

## Reconciliation

### *Future Considerations*

Over the next several years and as the Creative City Strategy moves forward, staff will further explore and bring forward opportunities to:

- Continue to identify barriers and to review cultural space programs and support through a reconciliation lens.
- Consider, in collaboration with other City departments, ways to further support Indigenous engagement and design guidelines.

## Equity

The Canada Council recognizes equity as “*a principle and process that promotes just conditions for all persons to fully participate in society*”. Equity involves identifying barriers, removing them and accommodating the differences that people face. An intersectional approach to equity acknowledges that people who face multiple barriers will experience the compounding effects of marginalization.

## Equity & Access

### *Immediate Recommendation*

Review and update the Cultural Infrastructure Grant guidelines to improve access, security of tenure, partnership and leveraging opportunities and funding levels for different types and scales of projects.



Steps towards cultural redress have also begun in several other important City initiatives including the Apology for Historical Discrimination Against Chinese People in 2018. Work underway includes the consideration of an application to the Government of Canada for the nomination of Chinatown as a UNESCO World Heritage site. The Northeast False Creek staff team is also currently working with the Black community to address past displacement from Hogan's Alley.

Over the next few months staff will also pilot low-barrier Cultural Space Small Grants — ranging from \$1,000 to \$25,000 — to support cultural space mentorships, capacity, planning, research and minor capital projects. Priority will be given to projects from emerging or underrepresented organizations and areas of practice, and/or time sensitive projects.

### *Accessibility*

Accessibility addresses ways in which people whose physical, sensory or cognitive abilities are outside of societal norms experience discrimination and exclusion. Artists, cultural workers and audiences who may identify as disabled or differently abled, may experience barriers to accessing programs and services through the ways in which spaces are designed. The appropriate design of production, performance and exhibition spaces can create a wider range of accessibility for people who identify as low vision or blind, and people who identify as hard of hearing or deaf. Further exploration of local and international emerging best practices is necessary to identify such overlaps and distinctions.

Additionally, there are pushes to create more holistic examinations of the ways in which financial, linguistic, cultural, social and age accessibility can shape the selection, design and programming to create more accessible, inclusive and equitable arts and cultural spaces.

Supported through 2016 Cultural Infrastructure Grants, Realwheels and Kickstart Disability Arts and Culture completed a *Needs Assessment of Accessible Performance Spaces in the City of Vancouver and Accessibility Audit* that includes a review of best practices in space design and an accessibility audit checklist. This document provides a useful renovation and improvement tool for the sector to reduce certain physical accessibility barriers in existing spaces for audiences, workers and artists.

### **Equity & Access**

#### *Future Considerations*

Over the next several years and as the Creative City Strategy moves forward, staff will further explore and bring forward opportunities to:

- Continue to remove barriers and to review cultural space programs and support through an equity and access lens.
- Continue to support cultural redress in processes and projects with other departments.
- Explore ways to further support accessibility for artists, and audiences in all cultural spaces.

**Objective 4: Expand engagement with community and partners on planning for renewal of aging City-owned spaces and the development of new spaces**

The City owns or leases 80 spaces totalling over 830,000 square feet, provided at below market or nominal rent to approximately 137 artists and nonprofit arts and cultural tenants in both City and Park board spaces. The City also owns and operates the Civic Theatres, including the Orpheum, Annex, Playhouse, Queen Elizabeth Theatre, and šxwʷlexən Xwtl’a7shn Plaza (formerly known as Queen Elizabeth Plaza), and seven studios that are part of the Artist Studios Award Program.

**Engage Partners on the Creation of New Spaces and Renewal of Spaces**

*Immediate Recommendations*

Work with Real Estate and Facilities Management to engage the community and partners on planning and feasibility of City-owned spaces, including Vanier Park cultural institutions master planning, Orpheum upgrades and Firehall Theatre renewal and renovation plans.

Work with other City teams and departments, as appropriate, to integrate cultural spaces into City-owned spaces such as community centres, housing projects, social spaces, libraries and other spaces.

*Renewal*

Real Estate and Facilities Management, working with Cultural Services and Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability, leads the significant work on physical renewal of City-owned cultural spaces, including those listed on the Heritage Register. Over the past decade, Council has approved over \$100 million in renewal of significant City-owned cultural space. The largest project was the renewal of the Queen Elizabeth Theatre and šxwʷlexən Xwtl’a7shn Plaza prior to the Olympics, valued at approximately \$73 million. Other major projects include renovations to the Vancouver East Cultural Centre and the Greenhouse, and work completed at the Museum of Vancouver (see figure below).

**Figure 3 - City Investment Renewals/Upgrades of City Assets 2008-2017**

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Facility</b>                             | <b>Investment (~\$M)</b> |
|-------------|---|--------------------------|
| 2009        | Museum of Vancouver                         | \$7                      |
| 2009        | QET and šxwʷlexən Xwtl’a7shn Plaza          | \$73                     |
| 2011        | Roundhouse plaza                            | \$1                      |
| 2011        | Malkin Bowl                                 | \$1                      |
| 2012        | Maritime Museum                             | \$2                      |
| 2015        | Orpheum                                     | \$2                      |
| 2015        | Police Museum                               | \$1                      |
| 2016        | Vancouver East Cultural Centre & Greenhouse | \$14                     |
|             | Total                                       | <b>\$101 M</b>           |

The size of City-owned cultural facilities ranges from very large — including larger museums located in Vanier Park, the Civic Theatres and Vancouver Art Gallery — to small spaces such as Hodson Manor and the Firehall Theatre (see Appendix B for list of City-owned spaces).

The museums in Vanier Park (Museum of Vancouver, Vancouver Maritime Museum, H.R. McMillan Space Centre, and Vancouver Academy of Music) and the City Archives space will require major renewal over the next decade. City archives will be relocating to the Central Library as part of the 2019-2022 Capital Plan.

The Firehall Theatre has been working on a major renewal plan for many years. They have completed a needs assessment and a functional program and are undertaking further planning. The Firehall Theatre and Police Museum are both in City owned spaces adjacent to each other. Staff will work with both nonprofits to explore further facilities planning, including exploring the feasibility of working together on renewal, accessibility and planning. The Orpheum requires acoustic, accessibility, seismic upgrades and other improvements. Funding for this planning work has been included in the draft 2019-22 Capital Plan. Balancing investment between large City-and-nonprofit-run facilities and smaller nonprofit-operated facilities is an important consideration.

With the exception of the Civic Theatres and Artist Award studios, most of the City-owned spaces are operated by nonprofits. The nonprofit operator is typically responsible for maintenance of the space as well as renovations and upgrades beyond renewal of the “building shell.” Nonprofits generally fundraise for this work and the City may support smaller projects through Cultural Infrastructure Grants.

Further work is required, facilitated by Cultural Services, to prioritize with community partners the renovation needs for nonprofit operated City facilities. Early City support in the planning processes is essential for approval of the proposed improvements and as a key partner in fundraising for such improvements.

Larger projects including major renewal and upgrades listed above are considered and prioritized through the City’s capital planning process. The City Capital Plan is a four-year financial plan for investments in our city’s infrastructure and amenities, including maintenance and renewal of existing assets, as well as investments for new assets to support growth. Public engagement is underway and the final 2019-2022 Capital Plan will be presented to Council end of July.

### *New Spaces Underway*

There are several City spaces underway, including 10,000 square feet of artist studios in downtown south, (to be operated by 221A with Malaspina Printmakers) due for completion by late 2018, and a 20,000 square foot cultural hub at 801 Pacific that will include office, production and presentation space.

At Main Street and Second Avenue, 30 units of artist social housing with 4,000 square feet of shared production space have been secured in partnership with Housing. The production space will be used by the residing artists and potentially by other local arts and cultural nonprofits.

Working with Park Board staff, Cultural Services staff are planning the integration of community performance spaces, artists-in-residence studios and various arts programming studios in the future Oakridge community facility and as part of the Britannia renewal project. Outdoor opportunities for small-to-large-scale arts and culture events and activities in parks are being explored in Oakridge, Britannia and within the Northeast False Creek plan.

Moving forward, a successful model to consider is the Vancouver Public Library’s integration of arts and culture programs and spaces including dedicated exhibition space, a music lending library and its digital Inspiration Lab.

### **Engage Partners on the Creation of New Spaces and Renewal of Spaces**

#### *Future Considerations*

Over the next several years and as the Creative City Strategy moves forward, staff will further explore and bring forward opportunities to:

- Explore opportunities to support Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations and Urban Indigenous community on securing self-determined cultural spaces
- Integrate affordable, accessible, functional infrastructure for cultural presentation in outdoor spaces, including large-scale spaces
- Enable nonprofits in City spaces on planning for renovations, accessibility and greening upgrades
- Further engage the community to confirm key space needs
- Balance renewal of large and small City-owned spaces
- Further develop Artist Studio Award spaces, including ways to partner with local nonprofits, develop music spaces and ways to co-locate units
- Seek mixed-use, multi-tenant, co-located hubs, including cultural/social nonprofit hubs, to provide administration space, home bases, and shared services
- Explore opportunities to further support shared production, rehearsal and presentation space
- Explore ways to better support music spaces, as per Vancouver Music Strategy
- Continue to seek strategic partnership to enable key major facilities including a new Vancouver Art Gallery

### **Objective 5: Support community initiatives that build capacity**

The Creative City Strategy’s early findings from preliminary engagement indicate that priorities include tools to “demystify” the facility development process, support for community-led capacity building, and the benefit of convening that facilitates knowledge exchange.

#### **Building Capacity**

##### *Immediate Recommendation*

Explore opportunities and partnerships to support increased knowledge sharing and research including joining the World Cities Culture Forum.

Currently, several important community-led studies are underway, funded through Cultural Infrastructure Grants, including the Eastside Culture Crawl’s inventory of studio spaces, and 221A Artist Run Centre Society’s research on artist-governed land trusts.

#### *Social Purpose Real Estate*

The City is a founding member of the Social Purpose Real Estate Collaborative (SPRE), a group of funders and investors that strategically engage with, and support, social purpose real

estate in BC, including building capacity, leveraging capital and maximizing the impact of the collaborative. SPRE is well positioned to further develop relationships with culture across sectors, share knowledge and conduct joint research projects.

#### *Community Impact Real Estate Society and the Vancouver School Board*

There are opportunities to work with partners such as Community Impact Real Estate Society (CIRES) and the Vancouver School Board (VSB) to support innovative arts and cultural activities and uses of underutilized spaces. CIRES is a nonprofit leaseholder for approximately 50 mixed-use commercial and retail spaces in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside owned by BC Housing. CIRES operates market space to subsidize non-market rental for nonprofit tenants including arts and culture organizations such as Co-op Radio and Gallery Gachet.

#### *World Cities Culture Forum*

The World Cities Culture Forum brings together city leaders from 38 global cities to share ideas and knowledge about the role of culture as an organising principle for the sustainable city of the future. Members include world cities including Montreal, Toronto, London, New York, Paris, Rome, San Francisco, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Los Angeles. Member fees support shared research, data and collaboration. Membership for Vancouver would provide invaluable opportunities to share and collect critical data knowledge and research into best practices.

#### *Granville Island*

Granville Island is home to roughly 100 artist and arts and cultural organizations. At least one third of the island is focused on arts and culture, operating out of a variety of spaces including live performance venues, galleries, studios, retail and office space. In the Island's 2040 plan, one of its main objectives is to "build the Island's reputation as a leading centre for the arts, by creating a dynamic, risk-enabling and resilient arts and innovation destination that attracts international attention." Critical to this vision is the redevelopment of the former Emily Carr University Art and Design into an Arts and Innovation Hub. An ideas process is underway to secure the over 100,000 square foot space as a mixed use cultural hub.

## **Building Capacity**

### *Future Considerations*

Over the next several years and as the Creative City Strategy moves forward staff will further explore and bring forward opportunities to:

- Support community led capacity building and convening
- Ways to partner and support nonprofit space operators
- Expand knowledge of City space programs and resources including developing tools to “demystify” City processes
- Work with community partners to move forward on research such as exploration of land trusts and other financing tools, models to support secure tenure and ownership, cultural districts, additional mapping and data on displacement.
- Explore partnerships opportunities (e.g., Canada Spaces Fund, VSB, CIRES, Granville Island, Creative BC)
- Encourage BC Government to develop a cultural infrastructure grant program
- Partner on research and capacity building with the Social Purpose Real Estate Collective (SPRE)

## **Next Steps**

As the Creative City Strategy progresses, staff will continue to explore issues related to cultural space and strategies to further support affordable, accessible space. This will include learnings from the significant work done as part of the Vancouver Music Strategy. In 2019, staff will provide a report back on cultural spaces as part of the Creative City Strategy that will include measurable outcomes.

## **Public/Civic Agency Input**

Staff presented both AMS’s findings as well as draft directions and recommendations to the Council-appointed Arts and Culture Policy Council (“ACPC”) as well as to the ACPC Spaces Sub-Committee. Both committees were very supportive and the recommendations in this report align with an Arts and Culture Policy Council Motion made May 8, 2018, to increase the Cultural Infrastructure Grant program to provide capital funding to support the “acquisition of commercial and industrial properties by qualified nonprofit organizations that would ensure the long-term viability of artistic venues and cultural spaces, and increase the economic viability of artists who live and work in the city.”

## **Financial Implications**

Over the next several months, staff will further develop the scope, timing and resources required to support moving forward on the recommendations. Any incremental costs related to the recommendations in this report will be reviewed with other Council priorities as part of the annual budget process.

## **CONCLUSION**

*“Overall, the data makes clear that Vancouver’s arts and culture sector is poised to drive real public value – provided the City engages and supports the sector with focused intent”*  
AMS Report, 2018

The recommendations put forward in this report are intended to further focus specific policy, tools, programs and investment priorities on affordable, accessible arts and cultural spaces for artists to live, work and share their work in Vancouver. In 2019, with the Creative City Strategy, staff will report back on these changes as well as other priorities that come forward including those from the Vancouver Music Strategy.

\* \* \* \* \*