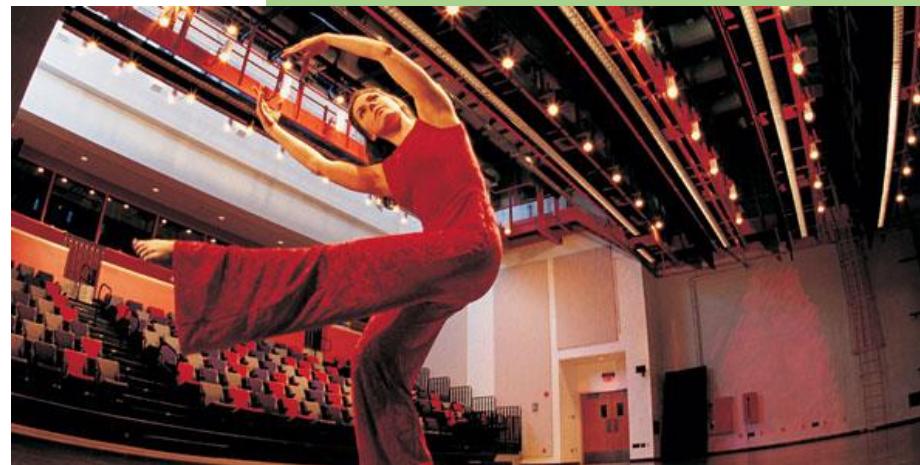


# Building Our Community: Stratford Arts and Culture Centre Project Overview



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[www.stratfordacc.com](http://www.stratfordacc.com)

# Arts and Culture Centre

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

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# Stratford Arts and Culture Centre

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

***The Stratford Arts and Culture Collective strongly recommends the phased construction of a multi-functional, purpose-built Arts and Culture Centre to serve the needs of Stratford residents and visitors, as a central element in the Grand Trunk Community Hub.***

- Stratford has a strong history of supporting a wide range of broadly inclusive and financially significant arts and culture groups in all art forms.
- The Stratford Arts and Culture Collective includes organizations which are not-for-profit, amateur, professional, semi-professional and commercial.
- The addition of a purpose-built location will greatly enhance the sustainability and growth of Stratford's arts and culture scene. Current public and private facilities will continue to host arts and culture events.
- Building new facilities on the Cooper Block at the Grand Trunk Community Hub must be done in a cost-effective manner that is responsive to community needs. A phased approach is possible.
- Community health and wellness and community-building are the philosophical foundations of the Arts and Culture Centre, supported by substantial international research. Partners which have complementary outlooks include the Stratford Perth YMCA, the Stratford Lakeside Active Adults Association, the University of Waterloo Stratford campus, the Stratford Public Library.
- Through shared, efficient space usage among Community Hub partners, the Arts and Culture Centre will unite the Grand Trunk Community Hub.
- The City of Stratford may access specialized capital funding for arts and culture.
- Governance and other issues may be connected to the creation of a Municipal Cultural Plan.

# Arts and Culture Centre

## PREAMBLE: THE STRATFORD ARTS AND CULTURE COLLECTIVE

- ✓ The Stratford Arts and Culture Collective (SACC) is composed of **28 groups** from traditional and emerging arts disciplines. The members are listed on page 7.
- ✓ The Collective is a **healthy blend** of not-for-profit, amateur, professional, semi-professional and commercial organizations.
- ✓ The shared vision of an Arts & Culture Centre has ignited the passions of all SACC members, who are **working together** as never before to breathe life into this project.
- ✓ Over **4,000** Stratford citizens participate “onstage and backstage” for SACC member organizations. That’s about 13% of Stratford’s population.
- ✓ In 2016, SACC organizations counted over **71,000** in attendance at productions, concerts, exhibitions, or other events -- more than twice Stratford’s population!
- ✓ SACC member organizations were supported by **86,700** hours of time from **almost 1,000** volunteers (2016)
- ✓ SACC member organizations spent more than **\$178,000** in rehearsal, studio, gallery and performance space rental and custodial fees in 2016.
- ✓ In 2016, the 13 SACC member organizations which are CRA-registered charities
  - recorded more than **\$2.1 million** in expenses, the vast majority of which was spent in and around Stratford;
  - employed **9** full time and **82** part-time workers
  - received government support:
    - federal: \$ 83,811 (18% of total grants)
    - provincial: \$298,744 (64.2% of total grants)
    - municipal: \$82,200 (17.6% of total grants)
- ✓ SACC member organizations will use performance spaces in the Arts and Culture Centre at least **65%** of its available days, while the Gallery space will be used **360** days per year, based on 2016/2017 data.

Sources: Surveys of member groups by the Stratford Arts and Culture Collective: Nov. 2016; May 2017;  
Canada Revenue Agency Charities Directorate

## PART ONE: THE COMMUNITY HUB, AND THE ARTS AND CULTURE CENTRE

### THE COMMUNITY HUB CONCEPT

*A community hub makes it easier for local residents to access the cultural, health, social, recreational and other resources they need together in one spot. It can be located in a physical building or accessed through a digital service.*

*Community hubs serve as a central access point, which:*

- *offer services in collaboration with different community agencies and service providers*
- *reduce administrative duplication*
- *improve services for residents and are responsive to the needs of their communities*

*Whether in a high-density urban neighbourhood or an isolated rural community, each hub is as unique as the community it serves and is defined by local needs, services and resources.*

(<https://www.ontario.ca/page/community-hubs-0>, n.d.)

Stratford has a unique opportunity to create a dynamic community focus at the Grand Trunk Community Hub. Through effective planning and organization, and using a combination of shared and dedicated spaces, the Community Hub will be a local destination which complements the downtown, and provides essential services for the community.

### STRATFORD'S ARTS AND CULTURE SCENE

Most Canadian cities of a similar size and demographic do not have the depth and range of Stratford's professional, semi-professional, community-based, not for profit, independent, and commercial arts and culture. Our recorded history tells a story of a working city which was dependent for decades on the railway and furniture-building. In the early 1950s, these industries faded, and were replaced by the creation and growth of the Stratford Festival. As a result, the city's arts life flourished.

The results are impressive. From the traditional arts such as dance, theatre, music, and visual arts, to emerging arts, including media, digital technology and interdisciplinary arts, Stratford's citizens have embraced a cultural perspective that has few equals in Canada. Newcomers to Stratford have brought cultural diversity that is evident in culinary arts, festivals, fashion, and language, which enriches the community even more.

## EMBRACING THE FUTURE

Over the years, many groups were created to fill community needs. Choirs, theatre groups, orchestras, bands, and art galleries were created to enrich the fabric of the city and area. Many were community-based “amateur” groups, while some became charitable, not for profit organizations. Some were created as for-profit businesses.

The venues for these groups were adequate and satisfactory, but their designs left few possibilities for creative renovation or expansion. Often, when updates were attempted to please a specific group, they often impaired the space for other users. Few, if any, were purpose-built for performances or exhibitions. They no longer meet today’s technical and safety standards, nor do they meet the expectations of modern audiences. That will change with the building of the Arts and Culture Centre.

A purpose-built Arts and Culture Centre will have a profound impact on Stratford’s artistic growth and development. With our strong arts foundation, the pending redevelopment of the Tom Patterson Theatre, and the availability of the Cooper Block, a community hub will serve the shared needs of the arts and culture sector alongside partner groups.

As a direct result of this opportunity, the **Stratford Arts and Culture Collective (SACC)** was formed in October 2016. The 15 founding groups formed a strong alliance across arts disciplines. Surveys and preliminary discussions proved that these groups were very interested in working together to provide new facilities for the community. Since its inception, the SACC has almost doubled its membership to its present 28.

In the last fifty years, no issue or opportunity has rallied the entire arts and culture community in a unified vision until now. The main reasons for that excitement and cohesion of vision include the following.

1. The desire to serve and lead the Stratford and area community better, by exploring new artistic challenges which are not currently possible.
2. The willingness to create new synergies through collaboration with both arts and culture and non-arts and culture groups.
3. Understanding the limitations of current facilities in which they operate.
4. Recognition of the artistic and financial advantages of sharing services and facilities.

As seen in the membership list, the SACC represents a broad spectrum of not-for-profit, amateur, professional, semi-professional and commercial organizations, working together across arts disciplines and traditions, in pursuit of the same goals.

## STRATFORD ARTS AND CULTURE COLLECTIVE MEMBERS

### DANCE

Dance Aarts Academy  
Infinity Dance  
Judy's School of Dance  
On Stage Dance Studio

### MEDIA

Ballinran Entertainment  
Queen of the Square Cinema

### MUSIC

County of Perth Community Choir  
Festival City Big Band  
Festival Sounds - Sweet Adelines  
INNERchamber  
Music & Opera Appreciation  
Stratford Concert Band  
Stratford Summer Music  
Stratford Symphony Orchestra

### ARTS AND CULTURE SUPPORT GROUPS

Judy Tye Arts Management  
PAL Stratford  
Perth Arts Connect  
Multicultural Association Perth  
Huron

### THEATRE

Alternative Theatre Works  
Perth County Players  
Playmakers! Theatre School

### VISUAL AND INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTS

Agora Gallery  
Digiwriting: Stratford Writers Festival  
Gallery Stratford  
Independent Artists  
Kiwanis Festival of the Performing Arts  
Off the Wall Stratford Artists Alliance  
SpringWorks Festival

This unique opportunity to create, learn and grow, for both themselves as artists and for the community as audience members, has formed the Mission, Vision, and Values of the SACC, as well as the Artistic Vision of the Arts and Culture Centre.

### Mission

The Mission of the Stratford Arts and Culture Collective is to be the primary voice and advocate for the Stratford Arts and Culture Centre at the Grand Trunk Community Hub.

## Vision

Our Vision is the inclusion of the Stratford Arts and Culture Centre as an integral element of the Grand Trunk Community Hub.

## Values

- Honouring and enhancing the artistic and cultural life of the city of Stratford;
- Collaboration with other like-minded organizations, including the Stratford Perth YMCA, the Stratford Public Library, the Stratford Lakeside Active Adults Association, the University of Waterloo Stratford Campus, and others;
- Inclusion of all Stratford citizens in our planning, regardless of their age, income, religious or ethnic origins, or any other visible or invisible identifier.

### CORE ARTISTIC BELIEFS

The Arts and Culture Centre is founded on these core beliefs:

- The arts are a vital part of Canada's and Stratford's culture and heritage;
- The arts are for all citizens and exclude no one for any reason, either visible or invisible;
- The arts are transformational, and challenge our perceptions to help us grow individually and collectively;
- The arts are both traditional and non-traditional.

## ARTISTIC VISION

**The Arts and Culture Centre will serve Stratford's arts and culture needs, including theatre, dance, visual arts, music, media and others.**

The SACC will support established and emerging arts groups and disciplines to create and perform, exhibit, workshop, and celebrate. Programming will reflect the entire community, from children to seniors, all cultures and economic groups. Through creative planning and collaboration, the Centre will present arts and culture activities for the benefits that accrue from health, wellness and community-building perspectives.

**The Centre will be a venue, a cultural and community developer, a presenter, and an educator.**

The Centre will both serve and lead the community. It will be the home of a variety of community organizations, including amateur, semi-professional and professional groups which

span the traditional arts (drama/theatre; music; visual arts; dance; media), emerging arts and cultures. The Centre will be a flexible space to host both traditional and non-traditional performances, workshops, exhibitions and creative explorations by groups and individuals. It will provide opportunities for not-for-profits and commercial rentals.

**The Centre will provide vital linkages and synergies among the partners in the Grand Trunk Community Hub.**

If the partners create ongoing protocols for dialogue and decision-making, the Hub partners will include efficiencies. Through the wise use of shared resources, the Centre will link with other elements of the Grand Trunk Community Hub, such as the University of Waterloo Stratford Campus, the Stratford Lakeside Active Adults Association (SLAAA) and the YMCA. These groups share a common focus which should form the foundation of the Hub.

### A COMMON FOCUS: HEALTH AND WELLNESS, AND COMMUNITY-BUILDING

There is substantial, credible research to prove conclusively that arts and culture are beneficial to a community from health and wellness, and community-building points of view. When people engage with the arts and culture, they are open to possibilities that integrate body, mind, and spirit. The community organizations listed above are focused at their core on the same concepts. When partners share the same point of view, programming decisions can be more efficient and effective. For example, complementary programming can be created, such as a *tai chi* class organized by the SLAAA, an exhibition of Asian landscapes, a meeting of Asian exchange students and a traditional Japanese dance performance can all be programmed under a single theme.

When the community comes together at an event, such as a theatre or dance performance, an art exhibition or a multicultural festival, the event itself becomes a point of conversation. As a catalyst for discussion and learning, the event promotes both self and interpersonal understanding and promotes authentic community-building across generational, economic, and social borders.

- 3.5 MILLION CANADIANS SANG IN A CHOIR IN 2016 (10% OF THE POPULATION).
- 3 TIMES MORE CHILDREN UNDER 18 SING IN A CHOIR THAN PLAY HOCKEY.
- ABOUT ONE IN EVERY 4 CANADIAN CHILDREN SINGS IN A CHOIR (23%).

SOURCE: SURVEY OF 2,000 CANADIANS, DESIGNED BY HILL STRATEGIES RESEARCH AND CONDUCTED BY INNOVATIVE RESEARCH FOR CHORAL CANADA, JANUARY 2017.

Stratford's economic and age demographics can be addressed if programs are focused to address those societal gaps, with the result that Stratford would be an even better place to live. Having a central location for such programs in an attractive space is a vital supporting element for that change.

Appendix B contains more information and a bibliography of selected research which supports the focus on health and wellbeing, and community-building.

## ROLE IN THE GRAND TRUNK COMMUNITY HUB

Many community organizations have important needs which will be addressed at the Grand Trunk Community Hub, for a wide variety of clients and audiences. They include

- University of Waterloo
- Stratford Perth YMCA
- Stratford Lakeside Active Adults Association (SLAAA)
- Stratford Public Library.

Because many of the needs of these organizations overlap, and because arts and culture bring people together, the SACC believes strongly that an Arts and Culture Centre is the “glue” which can bring groups together through shared space and programming. These centre around the areas of health, wellness, and community-building.



## ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY

The Arts and Culture Centre will serve many community needs in a central, creative, accessible space.

- As a **venue**, it will be a host and home for local performing arts groups in a wide variety of arts disciplines, as well as for regional and provincial events, convention activities and related functions;
- As a **cultural and community developer**, it will host a wide range of demographics to come together for learning and mutual understanding;
- As a **presenter**, it will showcase artists and performing arts companies from across Canada and the world;

- As an **educator**, it will be an incubator and catalyst in arts learning by bringing artists and audiences closer through meaningful experiences, while ensuring the SACC remains healthy, sustainable, and dynamic.

## Venue

The five main spaces within the Centre are the Performance Space, the Studio, the Art Gallery, the Media Centre, and the Artistic and Administrative Support Spaces. Each of these is described in more detail below. Other spaces which overlap with usage by other groups include meeting, reception, office, and other support areas.

### Cultural and Community Developer

The modern model of many municipally-supported arts centres is mission-driven, curated programming, aimed at supporting important artistic work and community cultural development. The Centre will be an incubator and catalyst in arts learning -- a place where arts and culture programming can be offered for all Stratford demographics, helping the community learn about and understand itself, and its place in Canada and the world. As noted above, some programs may be developed and presented in collaboration with other organizations, such as the SLAAA, service clubs, the University of Waterloo, and the YMCA.

*WHEN ARTS AND CULTURE BRING PEOPLE  
TOGETHER IN A SHARED SPACE FOR A SHARED  
PURPOSE, COMMUNITIES CHANGE.*

*WE ... SEE SUCH AN ARTS AND CULTURE  
CENTRE AS A VENUE WHERE OUR  
PARTICIPANTS COULD FIND INSPIRATION  
AND ACQUIRE A BETTER  
UNDERSTANDING OF THE PERFORMING  
ARTS.*

J. Auster,  
Kiwanis Festival of Performing Arts

### Presenter

The Centre will host mid-sized professional “road” productions and concerts from across Canada and the world. Currently, financial or production restrictions prevent performances from being presented in Stratford. A mid-sized site that is open throughout the year is particularly appealing to promoters in the fall, winter, and spring seasons, with substantial economic benefits to the city and area.

Dance competitions, which draw thousands of participants, supporters and audiences will be attracted to Stratford in the spring, with the attendant economic benefits.

Larger conventions which need lecture and plenary session spaces will find the Centre to be an attractive, financially-sound venue for their needs.

Other events such as weddings, corporate launches and meetings can be held at the Centre.

## Educator

The Centre will educate audiences by bringing them closer to the artists and audiences. Through meaningful programming, the Centre will focus on meeting the learning needs of all Stratford and area citizens, regardless of their age, gender, economic or cultural background or other identifier, while ensuring that it remains healthy, sustainable, and dynamic.

The Centre will program events such as workshops, seminars, festivals, and symposia. New

*A CULTURAL FACILITY WITHIN A COMMUNITY HUB SETTING WOULD BE A WELCOME ENHANCEMENT TO THE ARTISTIC VIBRANCY OF THIS ALREADY WORLD-CLASS ARTS DESTINATION.*

*E. & K. DINICOL*

learning about traditional and non-traditional arts and culture forms, for example, will complement formal learning in other settings. Cooperative programming in shared spaces can be organized with groups such as the YMCA, the Multicultural Association Perth Huron, the University of Waterloo, Stratford

Lakeside Active Adults Association, the Stratford Public Library, and others.

When these programs are developed and coordinated on the same site, by like-minded volunteers and professionals, the process can be streamlined with spectacular results.

## BENEFITS

An Arts and Culture Centre as a vital element in the Community Hub has rich benefits.

- A clear, visible focus on community-based arts and cultural activities promotes higher level artistic products for Stratford and area citizens
- Economic impact within Stratford and area
- Innovative programming

Locating arts groups and support groups in a common, central space gives the community a focal point as “the place” for the arts and culture. However, we are sensitive to the needs of arts spaces which currently host events and a variety of groups. Building an Arts and Culture Centre should not be a negative factor for current venues. We will encourage SACC member groups to continue to use those spaces for programming which work best for them and to use the SACC for enhanced and extended programming which is not possible at their current venues. As evidenced in other communities, we also believe that current sites will attract new events and productions which are better suited to those spaces.

It is vital that there is a strong visual arts presence in the Arts and Culture Centre. As Stratford has had a long history of visual artists in a variety of media, and our municipal art gallery, The Gallery Stratford, has shown leadership alongside other commercial and community-based individuals and groups. It makes sense to include space for the visual arts to be celebrated in an appropriate manner that is complementary to its sibling art forms.

The Stratford Tourism Alliance sees great potential in attracting larger scale conventions and conferences which need space that is complementary to the Rotary Complex or other venues. The Theatre would fill this need. The economic impact in the hospitality and retail industries (particularly those located in the city's core) could be significant. (K. Sainsbury, Dec. 14, 2016).

Further “spin off” benefits include:

1. Office space, equipment and personnel could be shared among arts organizations. Organizations could also share rehearsal and storage space and a meeting/board rooms with Smartboard, Internet, and AV capabilities.
2. An administrative link could be developed with the City of Stratford’s Events Coordinator in conjunction with Market Square programming.

## GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS OF ARTS AND CULTURE CENTRE SPACES

Because the Arts and Culture Centre serves overlapping interests and audiences, the spaces must demonstrate that philosophy. The Centre should not be a “stand alone” structure. It should connect physically to other elements in the Grand Trunk Community Hub by internal corridors and doors, as well as outdoor walkways and landscaping. It should be architecturally complementary in its use of space and colour, but each of its spaces could be distinct. Parking spaces should overlap in usage, so they are used all day and evening by citizens coming to other tenants of the Hub, and so that the amount of paved space is minimized. The Centre should be near public transit and must have space for taxi drop offs. The Centre must be accessible to all citizens, and must use space efficiently and effectively.

*The Centre should ... connect physically to other elements in the Grand Trunk Community Hub by internal corridors and doors, as well as outdoor walkways and landscaping.*

### The Performance Space

The “flagship” space will be used as a community auditorium, concert hall, lecture hall and theatre space. It will be used by many Stratford arts groups on a low-rental, or cost-recovery rental basis, including the Stratford Symphony Orchestra, County of Perth Community Choir, and Perth County Players, among others. It will also be a venue for film presentations, lectures,

dance competitions, plenary sessions for larger conventions, “road” productions, lectures, and other events.

#### Stage

- 2,000 s. f. deck/stage (50 f. w x 40 f. deep), to fit requirements of a symphony and larger productions, but with flexibility to decrease the size for smaller productions
- Proscenium arch, with draperies or hard materials to give flexibility of arch opening size
- Hardwood floor with portable dance floor
- Wings and crossover, with draperies
- Technical equipment including a projection screen and/or cyclorama, LED lighting system including fixed and moving lights and a sound system.
- All spaces to be soundproof

#### Auditorium

- 600 raked, fixed seats, with flexibility to cordon off some of the seats, to reduce house size to 350 – 400 when needed
- Additional storage under the auditorium
- Acoustic wall and ceiling treatments

#### Technical:

- Booth at rear of auditorium
  - 12 f. x 8 f. minimum, with seating/working space for at least 3 people
  - Lighting, sound (secondary position), projector
  - Computer capabilities, including wireless Internet
- Sound board in centre of auditorium (primary position)
  - Analogue and digital capabilities

#### Backstage

- Stage management station
- Loading dock with access to stage
- 2 large dressing rooms capable of holding at least 12 people each, with easy stage access
- Two multipurpose / staging and rehearsal rooms with 15 f. – 20 f. ceilings and access to backstage and front of house. Each room is 1,000 s. f.– 1,200 s. f., possibly in basement. These rooms could be used for multiple purposes, such as rehearsals, warm ups and recording studios when appropriate. In some cases, they may generate rental revenue.
- Backstage storage for baby grand piano and gear (microphones, stands, portable speakers)
- Service areas: janitorial and electrical rooms
- Washrooms

### Front of House (FOH)

- Lobby (may also be a space for gatherings and performances)
- Ticket wicket
- Coat room
- Café – gathering space, for nourishment, and a revenue stream
- Manager's office
- Public washrooms

Several elements of the Backstage and Front of House can be shared by the Performance Space and Studio.

### Kitchen

- Possibly in basement
- Caterer-friendly

### The Studio

This is a smaller, highly flexible space to suit smaller productions, concerts, films, weddings, and some convention needs. It is less formal than the Performance Space. The Studio will be useful for groups such as SpringWorks Festival, Stratford Writers Festival, concerts, Playmakers! Theatre School and others.

### Stage and Auditorium

- Flexible space with multiple staging possibilities
- 100 - 200 flexible, movable seats (could be on retractable platforms)
- Removable draperies
- Technical equipment, including lighting grid for LED lighting with fixed and moving lights, sound system and motorized projection screen

THE SACC SHOULD BUILD ON PROVEN, EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES WHERE POSSIBLE, INCLUDING MOTORIZED, FLEXIBLE SEATING ARRANGEMENTS.

### Technical Booth at rear of auditorium

- 12 f. x 8 f. minimum, with seating/working space for at least 3 people
- Lighting, sound, projector
- Computer capabilities, including wireless Internet

### Backstage

- Stage management station
- Loading dock access
- 2 dressing rooms for at least 8 people each with easy access to stage
- Equipment storage (microphones, stands, portable speakers, etc.)

- Service areas: janitorial and electrical rooms, washrooms

#### Front of House (FOH)

- Lobby and ticket wicket
- Refreshment area
- Manager's office
- Public washrooms

#### **Art Gallery**

The downtown site of the Grand Trunk Community Hub offers the opportunity for high quality educational visual arts exhibitions and public programming, building on the successes of the local visual art community. A well-planned, efficient space could offer integrated music / visual arts, theatre / visual arts, and dance / visual arts programs.

- 10,000 s. f. of public exhibition (curated and community) space, in several galleries
- 1,500 – 2,000 s. f. classroom / studio space with industrial sinks;
  - good ventilation and natural light (windows/skylights), counters, large tables, shelving, overhead and floor electrical outlets are essential;
  - some studio space for rent by day, short-term and long-term and both individual and common
  - studio and other spaces to be soundproof
- Maker Space with tools, 3D printers, computers, software
- 2,000 s. f. environmentally controlled collection storage
- 2,500 s. f. gallery storage
- 1,000 s. f. studio / art supplies and storage
- 1,000 s. f. gift shop
- Semi-private or private office space for five staff
- Dedicated Artist in Residence Space
- Classroom Spaces

#### **Media Centre**

The Media Centre will meet the needs of regional, provincial, national, and international productions of a variety of film and television producers who create commercials, short subjects, documentaries, music videos, and feature-length films.

- 10,000 – 40, 000 s.f. of clear (open span) space, with 25 - 30 f. ceilings

- Flexible grid for lighting and SFX placements
- Large loading dock and storage areas
- Other technical needs to be determined

### **Artistic Support, Public and Administrative Spaces**

These spaces can be used by a variety of groups and individuals for a variety of purposes. Some may be multi-user, flexible spaces, shared with another major tenant, such as the YMCA, the Public Library or SLAAA. Some might be available on a cost-recovery basis.

- Lobby spaces, which join elements of the Grand Trunk Community Hub. Patrons may enter the Hub through the SACC, or they may enter at other locations.
  - The lobby can be used as an extra performance, meeting, or exhibition space, as well as a “community living room”, used by the public and by students at the University of Waterloo Stratford campus.
  - The lobby may be used to generate revenue, with a café and as a reception area for a variety of clients and uses
- Small studio spaces for musicians, coaches, and singers, which double as individual dressing rooms for performers, text and audition coaching and other uses;
- Theatre production spaces for Off the Wall Stratford Artists Alliance workshops;
- Rehearsal rooms and studio areas to be rented to independent artists to create sets, props, costumes and other items for theatre and film productions;
- Kitchen and related food preparation and catering areas for weddings and events;
- Recording studio for voiceover, music, and other recording purposes;
- Office and meeting spaces which can be used by a variety of groups;
- The parking lot should generate revenue for the entire Community Hub.

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*The concept of a hub would provide Perth County Players and many other organizations a “performance home”, which could be shared cooperatively among arts organizations...”*

C. Leberg, Artistic Director, Perth County Players

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### **Five Examples of Cross-Organizational Use**

1. [The Studio](#) is used by the Stratford Perth YMCA for a yoga class in the morning, the SLAAA for euchre in the afternoon, and a rehearsal space for the Perth County Players in the evening.

2. The Performance Space is used for community meetings, conference plenary sessions, performances (professional, semi-professional, amateur), panel discussions and product launches.
3. The Art Gallery (Gallery Stratford) can reach new clients and new users in a more flexible and visible space by attracting more important travelling national and international exhibits in a space that has a higher audience attraction to summer visitors and year-round residents.
4. The Media Centre is rented by a film production company for three months. Afterward, it is available to the University of Waterloo Stratford campus digital media and secondary school Media Arts classes on a cost-recovery basis OR by a band who wishes to record music and produce an accompanying video.
5. Artistic Support and Administrative Spaces are used by Off the Wall Stratford Artists Alliance for summer and fall workshop programs, and by individual artists who rent by the hour or week during the rest of the year. The administrative offices are shared by several groups with a common reception and infrastructure.

**Diverse, intensive, efficient use of the same space leads to economic security and sustainability** for both the operator and the tenants. Scheduling and logistical issues are solvable through group to group communication and creative structures outlined in the Municipal Cultural Plan (See [Appendix A: City of Stratford Municipal Cultural Plan](#)). Indirectly, these contacts lead to better understanding within the community at large, as people meet people in a variety of contexts.

## COSTS and FUNDING

The purpose of this document is to provide a description and overview of the Arts and Culture Centre from an artistic and philosophical point of view only. As the concept of the Centre has been negotiated and agreed, a detailed Business

Case will be developed. The SACC will assist in the search for funding for capital building and other types of funding. We will also research and consult with other experts and venues (e.g. Arts Build Ontario, Wychwood Barns, Daniels Spectrum Centre, River Run Centre, etc.) to help determine the best design parameters and funding sources.

*"THERE IS A REAL ECONOMIC IMPERATIVE IN PAYING ATTENTION TO ARTS AND CULTURE.... WE CAN'T TREAT THE ARTS AND CULTURE LIKE THEY'RE SUPERFLUOUS OR NICE TO HAVE — BECAUSE IF YOU IGNORE YOUR ARTS AND CULTURE, YOU'RE GOING TO END UP WITH A CITY THAT ISN'T GOING TO BE ABLE TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN PEOPLE."*

*TODD HIRSCH, CALGARY ECONOMIST, [HTTP://BIT.LY/2FnNDWL](http://bit.ly/2FnNDWL)*

Although SACC members may have “in kind” resources to bring to the Arts and Culture Centre, the SACC does not have the capacity to search for or be the lead applicant for funding for a municipally-owned structure. It would also be presumptuous of us to do so, especially as the Arts and Centre is one element in a much larger plan for a community hub. The municipality of Stratford has financial restrictions in terms of city-owned debt and taxation. The SACC shares those concerns. However, we will work with the City to access funds, such as those from federal and provincial departments and agencies which are dedicated to cultural spaces.

### **Federal Government**

Department of Canadian Heritage

Canada Cultural Spaces Fund

The Canada Cultural Spaces Fund (CCSF) supports the improvement of physical conditions for artistic creativity and innovation. The fund supports the improvement, renovation and construction of arts and heritage facilities, as well as the acquisition of specialized equipment. By supporting improvements to our country’s cultural spaces, the CCSF increases access for Canadians to performing arts, visual arts, media arts, museum collections and heritage displays.

Municipalities may apply.

The Program can finance up to 50% of eligible project. The average approved contribution is 37% of total project cost.

### **Provincial Government**

Ontario Trillium Foundation

Capital Grants program

Activities funded include buying and installing equipment; doing renovations, installations and repairs; building structures or spaces; making better use of technological resources

Organizations registered with CRA may apply. Municipalities may apply if they are part of a collaboration of two or more organizations, where the lead organization is an eligible organization.

## **A PHASED APPROACH**

While the Collective’s preferred approach to building the Arts and Culture Centre within the Grand Trunk Community Hub is to complete the entire project at one time, we recognize that there may be reasons which make a phased approach more logically attractive. If that is the case, we propose two phases. **Phase One:** The Studio, plus Lobby / Front of House and two rehearsal rooms. **Phase Two:** All other spaces as identified.

## PART TWO: OWNERSHIP, GOVERNANCE, AND MANDATE

### OWNERSHIP

The SACC envisions the City of Stratford as the owner and operator of the Arts and Culture Centre. This municipally-owned venue reflects the values of the citizens in terms of arts and culture being foundational to the development and ongoing health and wellness of the city, as outlined in the city's Strategic Plan. The municipality will bring objectivity, leadership, and resources to operational and maintenance issues through an "arms-length" Board of Directors.

### GOVERNANCE

It is important that the Centre is owned by the City of Stratford, and governed and operated as a separate, "arms-length" organization, and that appropriate policies, procedures and people are in place to meet the Centre's artistic mandate and operational requirements.

#### Board of Directors (6 – 12 members)

The Board of Directors will be composed of Stratford citizens who are interested in and supportive of arts and culture. It will be at arms-length to the Stratford City Council and represent a variety of points of view and demographics. Its main purpose will be to set policies and priorities for the Centre, as set out in the City of Stratford Municipal Cultural Plan and other governing documents, policies, and practices.

#### Policies and Procedures

The best practices of similar organizations across Canada will form the foundation of the policies and procedures of the Centre. The Support Staff and Board of Directors will be responsible for implementation, assessment and evaluation of the policies and procedures.

#### Strategic Plan

A clearly-written, comprehensive Strategic Plan which includes the Centre's Mission, Vision, Values and Goals, financial benchmarks, programming, human resources, and other elements will form a practical basis for ongoing development.

#### Support staff (3 – 6)

The support staff will manage the day to day operations of the SACC and will report to the Board of Directors. They will include administrators, technicians, maintenance, and other

support staff, some of which may be shared with other tenants of the Grand Trunk Community Hub.

## MANDATE

The Arts and Culture Centre's will have a multi-faceted mandate in relationship with to the community. While being the home for excellence in local, community-oriented arts and culture programming and support activities, it will also be a venue for "outside" programming, a cultural and community developer, a presenter, and an educator.

## MISSION, VISION, VALUES, AND GOALS

### Mission

The mission of the Arts and Culture Centre is to

- Provide the best arts and culture experiences to Stratford and area citizens;
- Nurture and support local presenters and producers;
- Engage Stratford and area citizens in meaningful arts experiences, animating the community and enriching people's lives.

The mission is accomplished by:

- Being Stratford's hub for arts and culture experiences;
- Supporting and enhancing related local community groups, priorities, and goals;
- Offering a balanced program of touring and local attractions.

### Vision

To connect the community through the power of meaningful arts and culture activities and events.

The vision is accomplished by:

- Engaging, entertaining, and inspiring citizens of all ages and backgrounds;
- Maintaining active engagement with the whole community;
- Taking a leadership role in community cultural development.

### Values

These shared values will guide the Centre's programming, finances, and accountability.

- Significant contributions to the economic vitality of downtown Stratford and the City of Stratford can be made through the arts and culture.
- Community focal points and catalysts are necessary for a vigorous arts sector which strengthens citizens' social wellness, sense of civic pride, curiosity, understanding and identity.
- Creativity and cultural awareness are essential elements in people's lives.
- Everyone has the capacity for personal creative and cultural expression.
- Every community deserves meaningful, inspiring, and engaging cultural and artistic experiences.
- Stratford's unusually rich arts and culture sector serves the entire community.

## Goals

For its first five years of operation, the goals of the Arts and Culture Centre may include some of those outlined below, depending on the orientation of the Centre's Strategic Plan. These S.M.A.R.T.E.R.<sup>®</sup> goals address the need to be fiscally responsible, while leveraging opportunities to introduce the SACC to citizens and to program live arts and culture events which incorporate learning and participation.

The following are *examples* of priority goals which the Board of Directors may consider achieving over the Centre's first five years. *They have been adapted from the Burlington (Ontario) Arts and Culture Centre.*

### *Goal 1: Nurture Local Arts and Culture Organizations by Supporting and Building Their Capacity*

The Arts and Culture Centre will nurture the City's local performing artists and groups to increase their creative capacity, reach new heights of artistic excellence, deliver richer and more diverse artistic products, and grow their audience. Community arts and culture groups will be strengthened by having new and well-equipped facilities in which to showcase their art.

The variety of spaces in the Arts and Culture Centre is ideal for the development of a spectrum of arts and culture experiences. Many local emerging professional and nonprofessional arts organizations are looking for opportunities to enhance their artistic programming, but cannot afford the rent and production costs of a large venue, and cannot attract an audience large enough to sustain a performance in a large theatre. Creating multiple performing spaces, such

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### *S.M.A.R.T.E.R.<sup>®</sup> GOALS*

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**S** - specific, significant;

**M** - measurable, meaningful, motivational;

**A** - agreed upon, attainable, achievable, acceptable, action-oriented;

**R** - realistic, relevant, reasonable, rewarding, results-oriented;

**T** - time-bound, tangible, trackable;

**E** - ethical, environmentally-sensitive;

**R** - recorded, reportable

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as a Studio space, a flexible lobby space, a Gallery space, and outdoor spaces, enhances the experience of audiences and provides increased exposure for local artists and many others.

***Goal 2: Engage the Community in Meaningful Arts Experiences through Curated Programming Choices***

The Arts and Culture Centre will bring the best arts activities to Stratford to perform and engage with the community. We will strategically develop and nurture the foundation for a sustainable audience in music, theatre, dance, multicultural and family programming at affordable prices. The Centre's presenting season provides Stratford and surrounding communities with direct access to the diversity and richness of Canadian and International arts experiences in traditional, non-traditional, Indigenous, and multicultural arts experiences. The Centre will work co-operatively with other presenters to build tours and foster greater engagement between artists and community, through organizations such as SpringWorks, Stratford Summer Music, the Stratford Writer's Festival, and the Kiwanis Festival of Performing Arts.

Curating the programming choices requires a process of exchange and sharing among audiences, community, and artists. The process helps communities to celebrate, question, participate and reflect on being part of a vibrant civic culture. This curatorial lens promotes engagement in long term planning to find meaningful and relevant ways to connect with audiences, and to be more connected with the Stratford community. Artists who are committed to and skilled at engaging communities in opportunities for learning, exploration, and growth, may be selected for longer-term projects and residencies, for example.

***Goal 3: Develop Comprehensive and Impactful Arts Learning Experiences for All Community Demographic Groups***

The Arts and Culture Centre's presenting season will introduce new and exciting artists who are less known to the general public, or whose work is more challenging. By providing enhanced learning opportunities for audience members, the work will be more accessible, which will greatly enhance audience enjoyment. Programs will be developed to maximize the opportunity to strategically engage with a range of Stratford demographics. The Centre will establish education programs for primary and secondary schools, the University of Waterloo Stratford Campus and the public at large. This program could include a school performance series, study guides, internships, cooperative education opportunities, workshops, lectures and professional education opportunities for teachers and community members.

*Goal 4: Develop an Exemplary Workplace Environment*

The Arts and Culture Centre will establish a workplace environment that fosters a high level of staff satisfaction, accomplishment, pride, growth, and professional development. Staff will ensure the vision and goals are clearly stated, understood, and measured regularly. Communications among staff, volunteers, the Board, and the community will be based on respect and professionalism. The Centre will create a communications strategy which is based on trust and research, building on established policies and procedures, as well as promoting continuous feedback and improvement.

*Goal 5: Develop the Organizational Capacity and Infrastructure of the Arts and Culture Centre*

The Arts and Culture Centre will be an organization of operational excellence, functioning according to established policies, and characterized by fiscal responsibility, efficiency, and an entrepreneurial spirit. It is vital that the Centre is a financially stable organization supported by the City of Stratford. The Centre must address its mission, create public value, and develop the resources to adapt and change. The key to future financial stability is the ability to develop revenues, the strength of community partnerships, the support of the City of Stratford and growing organizational capacity. The Centre's governing body will identify funding resources through corporate sponsorships, memberships, and other fundraising initiatives, as well as support through grants and charitable foundations.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The Centre will achieve financial stability by developing and managing all avenues of earned and non-earned revenue and exercising appropriate expense controls. The Board of Directors will implement performance measurements to establish and sustain the highest standards of excellence. They are essential for communicating the Centre's accomplishments clearly to external audiences. The Centre will match its outcomes to its Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals, through strategies and performance indicators which are outlined clearly in the Strategic Plan. The implementation of the Strategic Plan will be monitored and supported by the Board of Directors. Achievements under the plan will be reported to all stakeholders, including the City of Stratford, as part of the Centre's ongoing communication commitments.

## APPENDIX A: CITY OF STRATFORD MUNICIPAL CULTURAL PLAN

A Municipal Cultural Plan responds to economic and cultural realities that are seen in demographics and census data. Municipalities which are strong, livable, and sustainable are built with the assistance of a vibrant MCP. They help build and strengthen downtowns and cities.



*MCP [Municipal Cultural Planning] is about building local economies through culture. It is about municipalities responding to major new economic and demographic realities. It is about attracting jobs in a new knowledge-based economy. It is about building municipalities that are livable and environmentally sustainable. It is about regenerating downtowns and building healthy neighbourhoods.*

(<http://www.ontariomcp.ca/why-cultural-planning/>, n.d.)

### WHAT IS A MUNICIPAL CULTURAL PLAN?

A Municipal Cultural Plan is a process for leveraging a community's cultural resources to support economic development and integrating culture across all facets of local planning and decision-making. The Municipal Cultural Planning Partnership defines municipal cultural planning as: "The strategic and integrated planning and use of cultural resources for economic and community development."

The following are defining features of a MCP:

#### **Cultural resources**

The focus of MCP is on the concept of cultural resources. Cultural resources are both tangible (specific facilities, organizations, etc. – see below) and intangible (the unique stories and identities of individual communities).

#### **Cultural mapping**

Cultural mapping is a systematic approach to identifying and recording a municipality's cultural resources usually using Geographic Information System (GIS) tools and analyzing local cultural systems.

## **Municipal roles**

A MCP requires municipalities (under the direction of Council) to integrate culture in plans and policies across all departments and to help build local capacity through collaboration among cultural groups.

## **Cross-sectoral strategies**

MCP relies on effective collaboration and partnerships between the municipality and its community and business partners.

## **Networks and engagement**

MCP depends on systematic approaches to networking and engagement across the community in planning and decision-making related to cultural resources.

*(Municipal Cultural Planning , n.d.)*

## **WHY STRATFORD SHOULD HAVE A MUNICIPAL CULTURAL PLAN**

Stratford is inarguably one of the strongest cities in Canada in terms of its arts and culture life. We often say Stratford “punches above its weight”. This is the direct result of the vision of a small group of dedicated and determined citizens who saw the potential in arts and culture and created the Stratford Festival. Arts and culture workers made Stratford their permanent home. Their commitment to Stratford included a growing amateur and recreational arts scene, resulting in the development of many of the organizations which are members of the Stratford Arts and Culture Collective.

Stratford’s strong arts and culture identity is reflected in its slogans, such as “Arts and Industry” and “Dramatically Different”. The Stratford Tourism Alliance’s current slogans are “The Arts Are What We Are” and “Arts Inspire Our Town.” While the arts and culture focus is true of our professional artistic scene, it is ironic that those slogans are much less true regarding community-based arts and culture. In other words, while we do a good job of inviting the world to come to our world-class festivals, the city does very little to support its non-professional groups. A MCP would promote a better balance between the two sectors.

In Ontario, 69 communities of all sizes have Municipal Cultural Plans. In our region, these municipalities have a MCP:

- ✓ St. Marys (2013); population 7,265
- ✓ Ingersoll (2006); population 12,757
- ✓ Kitchener (2005); population 233,222
- ✓ Huron County (2008); population 59,297

- ✓ London (2004); population 383,822
- ✓ Waterloo (2013); population 104,986
- ✓ Cambridge (2009); 129,920
- ✓ Centre Wellington (2013); population 28,191

*Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.*  
[http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/culture/cul\\_planning.shtml](http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/culture/cul_planning.shtml)

It is not the place of the SACC to “sell” the City of Stratford on the merits of a MCP, nor is it our role to draft a plan. We highlight it here to give context to how the Arts and Culture Centre at the Grand Trunk Community Hub should be positioned. We hope that the City of Stratford will use this opportunity to create a MCP, and that it will guide its relationships with arts and culture organizations.

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