

The Stratford Arts and Culture Centre @ the Knox Community Hub Project Overview



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Stratford 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 Arts and Culture Centre to serve the needs of Stratford residents and visitors as a central element at the Knox Community Hub.

- The proposed Knox Community Hub is the result of the confluence of a demonstrable need for such a facility, a site which is available and a motivated group of citizens.
- 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 30 organizations which are not-for-profit, amateur, professional, semi-professional and commercial.
- The addition of a central, downtown location will greatly enhance the sustainability and growth of Stratford's arts and culture ecology. Current public and private facilities will continue to host arts and culture events.
- Renovating the facilities at Knox Presbyterian Church can be done in a cost-effective manner that is responsive to community needs. A phased approach is possible.
- The theme of Health, Wellness and Learning are the philosophical foundations of the Arts and Culture Centre and are supported by substantial international research. Knox Presbyterian Church houses up to 40 partners which have complementary outlooks and will continue to be accommodated.
- Through shared, efficient space usage among partners, the Arts and Culture Centre will provide an exciting focus for the work of complementary organizations and agencies.
- Given the number of faith buildings in Canada which will disappear in the next ten years, there may be new ways of supporting them. The proposed Knox Community Hub may be able to access specialized capital and operational funding.

A THUMBNAIL SKETCH: THE STRATFORD ARTS AND CULTURE COLLECTIVE

- ✓ The Stratford Arts and Culture Collective (SACC) is composed of **30 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 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. (2016)
- ✓ 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 **\$2.34 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 may use performance spaces in the Arts and Culture Centre at least **65%** of its available days, while the Exhibition 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: KNOX COMMUNITY HUB AND THE STRATFORD THE ARTS AND CULTURE CENTRE

INTRODUCTION: THE COMMUNITY HUB CONCEPT

Community hubs are places where citizens can go for “one stop” access to a variety of community resources, including social services, recreation, health and wellness and others. The concept is not new but has received more attention in the past few years, as all levels of government try to find ways of controlling expenses and increasing efficient use of communal resources. They can be “vibrant centres of community life that generate economic and social benefits.” (Community Hubs in Ontario: A Strategic Framework and Action Plan, 2015, p. 9) There is no single, all purpose model of the ideal community. Each is a product of the needs of the community which it serves. All levels of government, local organizations and individual citizens have significant roles to play in their development.

Community hubs provide a central access point for a range of needed health and social services, along with cultural, recreational, and green spaces to nourish community life. A community hub can be a school, a neighbourhood centre, an early learning centre, a library, an elderly persons’ centre, a community health centre, an old government building, a place of worship or another public space. Whether virtual or located in a physical building, whether located 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.

When people think of community hubs, they think of places where people come together to get services, meet one another and plan together. We have heard that community hubs are gathering places that help communities live, build and grow together. No community hub is like another, as each brings together a variety of different services, programs and/or social and cultural activities to reflect local community needs. It is this diversity of activity that allows community hubs to play a critical role in building economic and social cohesion in the community.

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*

Community Hubs in Ontario: A Strategic Framework and Action Plan, 2015, p. 7

Stratford has a unique opportunity to create a dynamic community focus at Knox Presbyterian Church. Through effective planning and organization, and using a combination of shared and dedicated spaces, the hub will be a destination which complements the downtown and provides essential services in a variety of areas for the community.

BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY HUBS

Community hubs offer a number of benefits to respond to these challenges:

- **School-community partnerships** – enhance learning opportunities and well-being for students.
- **Respond to local needs** – community hubs offer a very concrete way that families can access a range of services. The collaboration between different community agencies and service providers puts residents first and is what makes this model truly unique.
- **More efficient and sustainable services** – providing access to local early-intervention programs can also forestall more intensive and costly programs later. Some economies of scale can also be achieved through shared back-office duties. Funders also benefit from co-location of service providers, increasing service access and reducing duplication.
- **Improved access to services and better outcomes for people** – co-locating and/or providing wrap-around services through a community hub provides individuals with access to a broader range of services through increased connectivity leading to improved results. For example, Public Health initiatives in schools can reach 95 percent of children and youth who attend Ontario’s 5,000 publicly funded schools (statistics provided by the Ministry of Education).
- **Social return on investment** – integrated service delivery models can save money in other sectors and generate a Social Return on Investment (SROI). There is currently a lack of evidence-based research on community hubs; however, SROI is an emerging model for measuring the social value relative to the resources invested.

The Province and communities share the perspective that community hubs are vibrant centres of community life that generate economic and social benefits. While the benefits are clear, it is equally clear that there are numerous rules and constraints imposed by the Province, among others. Provincial policies and processes are often complicated, fragmented and are driven by ministry-specific requirements rather than being viewed through a lens of community needs and outcomes.

Community Hubs in Ontario: A Strategic Framework and Action Plan, 2015, p. 7 and 8

STRATFORD'S ARTS AND CULTURE ECOLOGY

Most Canadian cities of a similar size and demographic lack 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 1950's, these industries faded, and were replaced by the creation and growth of the Stratford Festival. As a result, the city's arts and cultural 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 from other Canadian and North American centres, as well as recent international arrivals have brought cultural diversity that is evident in culinary arts, festivals, fashion, and language which enriches the community even more.

Over the decades, many groups were created to meet community needs, including choirs, theatre groups, orchestras, bands, and art galleries. 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 have been adequate and satisfactory, but their designs left few possibilities for creative renovation or expansion. Often, when modifications were attempted to please a specific group, the renovations often impaired the space for other users. Few facilities, if any, were purpose-built for performances or exhibitions. Today, they no longer meet current technical and safety standards, nor do they meet the expectations of modern audiences.

Stratford's City Hall Auditorium is a prime example of a facility that was adequate when it was built (1900) but has not kept in tune with the times. When it was built, its use was limited to music recitals, lectures, meetings and associated activities. However, a set of modifications to improve acoustics in the early 1980s rendered it almost impossible to use by theatre groups. It is a tribute to those groups that their attempts to work around the modifications have been moderately successful.

An Arts and Culture Centre built at a renovated Knox Presbyterian Church as part of a community hub will have a profound impact on Stratford's artistic growth and development. With Stratford's strong arts foundation, the redevelopment of the Tom Patterson Theatre and its downtown location, a community hub will serve the shared needs of the arts and culture sector alongside partner groups.

STRATFORD ARTS AND CULTURE COLLECTIVE

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 doubled its membership to its present 30, representing more than 4,000 arts and culture presenters.

In the last fifty years, no issue or opportunity has rallied the entire arts and culture community in a focused, 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 (Spring, 2019)

DANCE

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

MEDIA

Ballinran Entertainment
Queen of the Square Cinema
O.W.L. 48.5 Hour Film Challenge

MUSIC

County of Perth Community Choir
Festival City Big Band
Festival Sounds - Sweet Adelines

INNERchamber

Music & Opera Appreciation
Stratford Concert Band
Stratford Concert Choir
Stratford Summer Music
Stratford Symphony Orchestra

ARTS AND CULTURE SUPPORT GROUPS

Architectural Conservancy of Ontario
Judy Tye Arts Management
PAL Stratford
Perth Arts Connect
Multicultural Association Perth Huron

THEATRE

Alternative Theatre Works
Perth County Players
Playmakers! Theatre School
Strictly Stratford

VISUAL AND INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTS

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

Many independent artists from a wide spectrum of artistic genres are also members. Their needs will be included as the project goes forward.

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.

Vision

Our Vision is for the Stratford Arts and Culture Centre at Knox Presbyterian Church to be an additional venue to serve the arts and culture needs of Stratford and area citizens.

Values

- Honouring and enhancing the city's artistic and cultural life;
- Collaboration with other like-minded organizations;
- 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 daily life;
- The arts are for all citizens;
- The arts are transformational, challenging our perceptions to help us grow individually and collectively;
- The arts are both traditional and non-traditional.

ARTISTIC VISION

The Artistic Vision of the Centre is founded in three main areas:

- Meeting community arts and culture needs;
- Being multi-faceted;
- Being a strong partner;
- Being self-sustaining.

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

The SACC will support established and emerging arts groups and disciplines to create and perform, exhibit, educate, explore 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 learning 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) and emerging arts. 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 Hub.

The Centre will develop efficiencies by creating ongoing protocols for dialogue and decision-making with its Hub partners. Through the wise use of shared resources, the Centre will link with other elements of the Hub, particularly the social service and health agencies which have a similar mandate in the community. These groups share a common focus which should form the foundation of the Hub.

A FOCUSED APPROACH: HEALTH, WELLNESS AND LEARNING

There is substantial, credible research to prove conclusively that arts and culture are beneficial to a community from health and wellness, and learning 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 housed at Knox focus on many of 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, an exhibition of Asian landscapes, a meeting of Asian exchange students and a traditional Japanese dance performance, 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.

Stratford's economic and age demographics can be addressed if programs are focused to address those societal gaps, with the result that Stratford will 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 A contains more information and a bibliography of selected research which supports the focus on health and wellbeing, and learning.

- 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.

THE SITE: KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Situated at the northwest corner of Ontario and Waterloo Streets in downtown Stratford, Knox Presbyterian Church has played a vital role in Stratford's life since 1871. It has been much more than a place of worship, providing meeting space for community groups, being a venue for high-profile musical and theatre events, including Loreena McKennitt and the World Festival of Children's Theatre. It also houses organizations that are integrated deeply into the social fabric of the community, such as Choices for Change, Girl Guides, Conestoga College Cooking School, Cancer Care's wig service, The Alley Thrift Store, Stratford Summer Music, the Stratford Writers' Festival, Alcoholics Anonymous, OneCare fitness classes for seniors, and community meals, to name but a few. It is also the site of fundraising activities for the Stratford Perth Museum and Shelterlink, among others. In 2017, 47 different community groups and not-for-profit initiatives relied on Knox! It is truly a vital community resource.

Knox commissioned a Building Assessment Report in 2017 which identified \$1.6 million worth of unavoidable building repairs in the next five years. \$300,000 of repairs have been done since then, leaving many more to do. Coupled with high maintenance costs is a dwindling congregation, currently numbering 475 in 1990, but only 200 currently. The Knox Church Task Force, a 10-member body, estimates that if nothing changes, the church could potentially last two more years, but no longer. It would become part of the 1/3 of Canadian churches which will disappear in the next 10 years, according to the National Trust of Canada and Faith and the Common Good.

The church's location is both a strength and hindrance. Because it is an anchor on the north side of the main downtown, it is a reason to attract shoppers to that end, thus increasing foot traffic past several stores. There is ample parking nearby as well as public transit. Its location also makes it a kind of gateway to Stratford's park system, and the new Tom Patterson Theatre Centre, which are both heavily used by tourists and residents. However, the building is also part of the Stratford's Heritage District (a designation not requested by the church when it was done in 1988) which imposes significant restrictions on what can be done to the property. When these issues are resolved, the congregation will be free to move forward with its plan to adaptively re-use the building and re-build itself anew, just as it did after a devastating fire in 1913, to serve the community in a fresh, new way, including the Knox Community Hub.

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER AT THE KNOX COMMUNITY HUB

OVERVIEW OF THE KNOX COMMUNITY HUB

The Knox Community Hub would consist of three main partners:

- The faith community of Knox Presbyterian Church. The congregation will continue to use portions of the building to hold services, weddings and other church-related events.
- The Stratford Arts and Culture Collective. The Collective will be housed mainly in the sanctuary, and other parts of the site.
- The social services agencies that call Knox “home”. The church is firmly committed to continuing to host the community social service and related organizations which serve important needs for a wide variety of clients and audiences.

Because many of the needs of these organizations are complementary, 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 focusing on health, wellness, and learning.



THE CENTRE'S 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.

A Venue

The four main spaces within the Centre are the Performance Space, the Studio, the Exhibition Space, and the 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.

A Cultural and Community Developer

The modern model of many arts and culture 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.

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

A 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.

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*

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.

An 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 learning about traditional and non-traditional arts and culture forms, for example, will

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

complement formal learning in other settings.

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

ENLARGING THE TENT

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. The SACC is also sensitive to the needs of arts spaces which currently host events and a variety of groups, such as Stratford City Hall, the Masonic Hall, the Avondale, Factory 163 and others. Building an Arts and Culture Centre should not be a negative factor for current venues. We will encourage SACC member groups to continue to program the spaces 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. Stratford has a long history of visual artists in a variety of media, and our local, public 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. Shared office space, equipment and personnel among arts organizations. Organizations could also share rehearsal and storage space and a meeting/board rooms equipped 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 be an integral part of many areas of the Knox Community Hub, so that community members can connect seamlessly with social services organizations and arts and culture organizations under one roof. It should connect physically to other elements in the Community Hub by internal corridors, doors, outdoor walkways and landscaping. It should be architecturally sympathetic to the church's original use in terms of space and colour, but each of its spaces should have visual definition. The Centre is near public transit and taxi drop offs. The Centre must be accessible to all citizens and must use space efficiently and effectively.

The Performance Space

The "flagship" space will be used as a performing arts space, community auditorium, concert hall, and lecture hall. 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

- Large stage/deck as required by a symphony and larger productions, but with flexibility to decrease the size for smaller productions
- Proscenium arch or open stage, with draperies or hard materials to give flexibility
- 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

- 450 - 600 seats
- Flat main floor
- Seats on telescoping, retractable platforms which can be stacked and stored at the rear of the house
- Storage in wings or other suitable location
- 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 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. 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) and Ancillary Spaces

- Lobby (may also be a space for gatherings and performances)
- Ticket wicket
- Coat room
- Café

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

- Manager's office
- Public washrooms

Kitchen

- Possibly under auditorium
- 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 telescoping, 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

Exhibition Space

The downtown site of the Knox 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
- Gift shop
- Shared office space
- Dedicated Artist in Residence Space
- Classroom Spaces

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 on a cost-recovery basis.

- Lobby spaces which join elements of the Knox Community Hub.
 - The lobby may be used as an extra performance, meeting, or exhibition space, as well as a “community living room”
 - 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 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

Four Examples of Cross-Organizational Use

1. [The Studio](#) is used by the Knox Presbyterian Church on Sundays for worship, and at times for special occasions. In the evening, it is also a rehearsal space for the performance organizations.
2. [The Performance Space](#) is used for performances (professional, semi-professional, amateur), community meetings, conference plenary sessions, panel discussions and product launches.
3. [The Exhibition Space](#) for visual and media arts 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 high audience attraction to summer visitors and year-round residents.
4. [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 as an office/co-work space. 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 a central booking office. Keeping these arrangements centralized will 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 renovation, capital building and other types of funding. We will also research and consult with other experts and venues (e.g. ArtsBuild 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)

The SACC will work with the Knox administration and others 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. 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.

A PHASED APPROACH

While the Collective's preferred approach to building the Arts and Culture Centre within the Knox Community Hub is to complete the entire project at one time, we recognize that there may be reasons which make a phased approach more logistically attractive. If that is the case, we will propose two or more phases, as appropriate.

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PART TWO: OWNERSHIP, GOVERNANCE, AND MANDATE

OWNERSHIP

Ownership of the Knox Community Hub will be negotiated, according to the models that are proposed and feasible. The SACC, as a CRA charity, or the Knox Presbyterian Church administration, or a combination of these or others may own the site. As the arts and culture are foundational to the development and ongoing health and wellness of the city, it is important that the owners bring objectivity, leadership, stability and resources to operational and maintenance issues through an “arms-length” Board of Directors.

GOVERNANCE

The Knox Community Hub should be 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 building owners 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 its 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 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 Centre 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 Knox Community Hub.

MANDATE

The Arts and Culture Centre will have a multi-faceted mandate in relation 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

- Engage Stratford and area citizens in high-quality, meaningful arts experiences, animating the community and enriching people’s lives;
- Nurture and support local presenters and producers.

The mission is accomplished by

- Being Stratford’s main focus for arts and culture experiences;
- Supporting and enhancing related local community groups, priorities, and goals;
- Offering a balanced program.

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;
- Leading the community in 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.® 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 Knox Community Hub provides an opportunity for Stratford’s artists and cultural leaders to expand their capacities and to explore a broader spectrum in the arts. With the addition of the Knox Community Hub, organizations and individual artists can find deepened creative capacity and new heights of artistic excellence by delivering richer and more diverse artistic products. Community arts and culture groups will be strengthened by having new and well-equipped facilities in which to showcase their art.

Having a 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 non-professional 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 run in a large theatre. Creating multiple performing spaces, such as a Studio space, a flexible lobby space, an exhibition space,

S.M.A.R.T.E.R.® GOALS

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;

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 for 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 will provide 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 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, or their work in Stratford may be a model that can be replicated elsewhere.

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

The Arts and Culture Centre 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 and the public at large. They 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. 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 diverse revenue streams, the strength of community partnerships, 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 which 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 as part of the Centre's ongoing communication commitments.

APPENDIX A: BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SELECTED RESEARCH

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