



## EDMONTON ARTS COUNCIL

### *Connections & Exchanges: A 10-Year Plan to Transform Arts and Heritage Annual Update*

#### RECOMMENDATION

That the May 31, 2023, Edmonton Arts Council report EXT01830, be received for information.

#### Report Purpose

**Information only.**

#### Executive Summary

- In year four of *Connections & Exchanges: A 10-Year Plan to Transform Arts & Heritage In Edmonton*, the Edmonton Arts Council (EAC) has continued implementation of the plan.
- Priority Actions undertaken have incorporated arts into city strategies and planning, such as neighbourhood revitalization initiatives and special projects, encouraged active civic engagement and participation in cultural activities, expanded arts experiences for young people, convened the arts community to share expertise, promoted collaboration and networking and implemented funding mechanisms with an emphasis on equity-seeking artists, mentorships and professional development.
- *Connections & Exchanges* contains an Indigenous principle: “Indigenous peoples have agency in their journeys of revitalizing and participating in traditional, contemporary and future manifestations of their culture.”
- Actions relating to Indigenous arts and culture are predicated on building relationships with, and following the guidance of, Indigenous artists and community leaders. Projects arising from the community have included support for burgeoning Indigenous arts organizations and collectives such as I AM Indigenous Artists’ Collective and Ociciwan, as well as investing in the

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collective responsibility of the arts community in implementing the Indigenous principle — supporting the incorporation of Indigenous programming within existing structures in the arts ecosystem.

- Among 261 organizations supported by Arts Operating and Programming and the Arts Presentation Fund for Covid Recovery investments, in 2022:
  - 4 indicate Indigenous art as a primary art practice of their organization.
  - 16 refer to Indigenous art and culture in their mission, mandate and goals.
  - 11 indicate that engagement, advocacy, promotion, or services for Indigenous communities is a primary activity of their organization.
  - 34 indicate engagement, advocacy, promotion, or services for Indigenous communities as a secondary activity.
  - 104 have policies or defined goals around Indigenous participation, equity, diversity and/or inclusion.
- Among 276 individual artists and collectives funded in 2022:
  - 50 per cent of successful individual artists and collectives were Indigenous or equity-seeking.
  - 10 per cent of all individual artists and collectives funded self-identified as Indigenous.
  - The success rate of all applications from individuals and collectives was 32 per cent, whereas the success rate of Indigenous applications was 41% and the success rate of equity seeking applications was 33 per cent.
- Six of eight (75 per cent) artworks acquired into Edmonton's Public Art in 2022 were by Indigenous artists (one of the six projects was by an Indigenous, Black and People of Colour (IBPOC) artist collective, which included Indigenous representation).
- Recovery from the impacts of COVID-19 continued to be an area of focus for the EAC. In 2022 the EAC implemented the Arts Presentation Fund for COVID Recovery and by the end of Summer 2023 will have distributed \$1.2 million to more than 146 applicant groups, 93 of which were from outside the typical funding streams for arts organizations. These recipients included collectives, restaurants, bars, venues, community leagues and other neighbourhood and cultural groups and through their community-based arts events they contributed to the city's cultural, social and economic recovery from Covid.
- *Connections & Exchanges* also contains a Measurement, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework, which guides the EAC's research to evaluate these initiatives and measure their impact. In 2022, the EAC implemented the Research and Data plan through both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies such as a survey project that established baseline evaluations of perceptions in the community, focus group studies to help understand community experience, reorganizing historical data and developing interactive online tools to support planning and reporting.

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- In early 2023, the EAC began to establish a formalized corporate performance measurement system to longitudinally evaluate our progress in implementing *Connections & Exchanges*. The system will contribute to the analysis of EAC's operations and implementation of *Connections & Exchanges* at the halfway point of the 10-year plan, in 2024. These measures will show the progress the EAC has made consistently year-over-year, enabling the EAC to recognize accomplishment and identify gaps in the completion of the plan as well as providing transparency and accountability to our community.

### **REPORT**

#### **Background**

The EAC is the City of Edmonton's primary partner in arts and culture. Since 1995, we have supported, promoted and inspired the arts in our city. With an annual investment of over \$14 million in more than 275 artists, including 35 collectives representing more than 110 additional artists, 170 organizations and the greater arts community, the EAC raises the profile of Edmonton arts and culture and brings the arts to everyday life. The EAC welcomes the contributions of artists from multiple communities, backgrounds and traditions, serving as a springboard for emerging and established artists alike – while showcasing the endless variety and value of art in Edmonton.

The work we do includes:

- Events – supporting, presenting and promoting events and festivals in the city.
- Public Art – transforming our urban landscape with engaging and vibrant art pieces for the enjoyment of all.
- Shop & Services – formerly known as TIX on the Square, our box office and art shop in Churchill Square connects Edmontonians and visitors to the local arts community.
- Investments – inspiring and funding artistic work of all sizes and scopes, with grants, calls to artists and other opportunities available to individuals and organizations.
- Special projects – promoting a diverse and thriving arts community with our artists in residence, community programming and City of Edmonton poet laureate.
- Research & Impact – fostering a culture of evidence-informed decision-making and demonstrating short and long-term change in Edmonton's arts ecology.

#### **Progress on *Connections & Exchanges: A 10-Year Plan To Transform Arts & Heritage In Edmonton***

*Connections & Exchanges: A 10-Year Plan To Transform Arts and Heritage In Edmonton* is the City of Edmonton's vision and strategy to drive transformation of the arts and heritage sectors. In 2022, *Connections & Exchanges* was recognized with the Creative City Network of Canada (CCNC) Award of Excellence for Cultural Planning. This award recognizes a Canadian municipality that has developed, adopted and implemented an excellent culture plan with a process that demonstrates outstanding visionary leadership and best practices in cultural planning. The CCNC jury called the plan a “shining

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star model” and celebrated its innovative approach to engagement and measurement tools as well as its creative way of working through a comprehensive and difficult project to navigate.

The plan consists of three Ambitions or visions for Edmonton to achieve by 2029. The Ambitions are further articulated with a series of eight Aims – tangible outcomes or changes that the plan strives to generate. Each of those outcomes is driven by the plan’s 55 strategic Actions to guide implementation efforts.

In 2021 and 2022, the EAC reported to City Council about our progress on 14 Actions (see City Report CR\_6593, 2021 and EXT00901, 2022). Since our last update to Council, we have made further progress on these 14 Actions as well as in activating an additional 11 Actions.

*Connections & Exchanges* was developed at the same time as *ConnectEdmonton*. The Ambitions, Aims and Actions that make up *Connections & Exchanges* align with the vision, principles and goals emerging from that process, in particular the goals around Healthy City, Urban Places and Regional Prosperity. Likewise, *The City Plan* acknowledges the importance of art and heritage in making Edmonton a city that fosters wellbeing and connection as people celebrate unique cultures and heritage in the outcomes:

- I want to BELONG and contribute
- I want to LIVE in a place that feels like home
- I want opportunities to THRIVE
- I want to be able to CREATE and innovate

### **Implementation in 2022 and 2023**

#### **Ambition: Alive with Arts and Heritage**

**Aim:** Edmonton’s neighbourhoods come alive with meaningful and relevant opportunities for participation and engagement.

#### **Actions:**

- *Conduct surveys to map local demographics, cultural events and participation to effectively deploy resources.*
  - The EAC developed a survey project to understand the perceptions and experiences of three groups of stakeholders: artists, arts and festival organizations, and the general public. The main topics of the survey include participation in the arts, perceptions of the arts ecology, experience, understanding, awareness and satisfaction with the EAC and its programs and services and demographic information.
  - The surveys will be conducted longitudinally and consistently to inform EAC’s business planning and policy development. The surveys have been conducted in January of 2022 and 2023. In 2023 the EAC will have two years of survey data for artists and arts and festival organizations which can begin to show trends over time.

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- *Digitally promote and amplify neighbourhood arts activities to connect and celebrate cultural diversity.*
  - In spring, summer and fall 2022, the EAC hosted pop-up events in neighbourhoods across the city, which brought arts engagement to a wide range of communities. Festival in a Box parades happened in 13 Edmonton neighbourhoods and 78 shows for children occurred at Edmonton Green Shacks.
  - The feedback for these events has been exceptional, demonstrating the benefits of partnering with community leagues and hiring diverse artists to bring arts activations to neighbourhoods across Edmonton. The success of the parades has led to spin-off events initiated by organizations such as the Street Performers Festival, specific community leagues and, most recently, Explore Edmonton.
  - UP on the Square was a new initiative in June 2022 to support the goals of the COVID Recovery Fund. The event paid artists and boosted vibrancy in downtown Edmonton leading up to festival season. Artist fees to hire more than 25 diverse artists for this event were drawn from the Arts Presentation Fund for Covid Recovery portion allotted to the EAC. An estimated 800 people attended the event throughout the day, with TIX on the Square foot traffic representing a ~400 per cent increase in in-store traffic over previous Saturdays.
  - Early 2023 marked the triumphant post-restriction return of Swing 'n Skate programming inside City Hall, as well as the continuation of free skate rentals and Ice Grooves DJ nights as part of outdoor Winter City Weekends programming hosted by the EAC at City Hall. The weekends featured partnerships with cultural groups and DJs such as Bollywood on Ice, Cariwest, 5 Artists 1 Love and more. On average, approximately 125 individuals attended each event, bringing families, art communities and newcomers to downtown Edmonton on Friday and Saturday evenings and Sunday afternoons throughout January and February.
  - The EAC offered additional hours and skate rentals at the City Hall skating rink from December 2022 to March 2023 at the City's request. The additional availability resulted in active participation by Edmontonians and the need to purchase more skates and helmets to meet demand. The EAC worked with City Administration to acquire new equipment to support skating and other programming.
  - The EAC worked with Poet Laureate Titilope Sonuga to commission and create a video for her poem "You are Welcome Here." The poem explores the concept of creating a new home as an immigrant, highlighting Edmonton's neighbourhoods and the important role that Edmonton's artists and festivals play in welcoming newcomers to our city.

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- *Work with City Administration, local networks and businesses to cultivate and support community-based artistic activities.*
  - Through the Arts Presentation fund for Covid Recovery, the EAC empowered community groups, businesses and other local organizations to host their own arts activations. By the end of Summer 2023, we will have distributed \$1.2 million to more than 146 applicant groups, 93 of whom were from outside the typical Arts Operating funding streams, including collectives, restaurants, bars, venues, community leagues and other neighbourhood and cultural groups. The fund provided employment to artists, including Indigenous and equity-seeking practitioners, supported downtown vibrancy and economic recovery for venues, festivals and presenters and brought arts activities to diverse Edmonton neighbourhoods. The program was a valuable initiative to introduce new organizations to the EAC funding pool without the requirement of not-for-profit status.
- *Broker relationships with community-based entities to increase access to affordable space for arts and heritage programs, presentations and events.*
  - In 2022 and early 2023, TIX on the Square partnered with ten community-based organizations, providing them access to their central retail space for presentations, events and pop-ups. Community groups included Islamic Family Services, I AM Indigenous Artists' Collective, Chinatown Greetings, McNally High School and the University of Alberta's Student Design Association. Sales were positively impacted for organizations and individuals who showcased merchandise and artworks via the partnership.

### **Ambition: Alive with Arts and Heritage**

**Aim:** Edmonton's neighbourhoods come alive with meaningful and relevant opportunities for participation and engagement.

### **Actions:**

- *Engage with organizations that support community-based artistic programming and cultural expression and engage youth through local arts and learning activities.*
  - New in 2022, Green Shack Shows deepened intergenerational engagement and aligned with the City of Edmonton Green Shack program to deliver arts programming to children across Edmonton. The EAC contracted artists for weekdays in July and August with two shows per day, for a total of 78 shows. Highlights included puppet shows, street performers, African dancers, family theatre and an Indigenous Hoop Dancer. The EAC is enhancing the program in 2023 due to its initial success.
- *Enhance citizen engagement of the public art collection with artist led events and presentations.*



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- EAC partnered with Edmonton Public Library (EPL) to facilitate a presentation and conversation with artists represented in the Public Art Collection. *Serendipity: Discovering Public Art in Your Public Library* included Rebecca Bayer, Coryn Kempster, Julia Jamrozik and Robert B. Epp who shared insights into the inspiration and the creative process for the Calder Community Mosaic (Calder Library), Letter Cloud (Clareview Library) and Sculptures in Landscapes (Meadows Library). EPL and EAC are planning future artist talks that feature artists and public artworks in and around EPL branches throughout the city.
- The EAC partnered with MADE (Media Architecture Design Edmonton) for a sold-out public art walking tour which engaged the art and design community with artworks from downtown to Tawatinâ Bridge to the Muttart.
- To promote artworks in the City of Edmonton collection, increase awareness and understanding of the artworks and provide engaging COVID-friendly learning experiences, the EAC released two short documentaries about public artworks in 2022: *If the Drumming Stops* at Mill Woods Stop (VLSE) and *High Jinx* at Avonmore Stop (VLSE). The videos featured the artists explaining the artworks and their processes in their own words. Additional public art videos are in development for 2023.
- *Contribute actively to placemaking that includes cultural landscape, natural history, built history, object, language and story.*
  - EAC worked with artists Peter Morin, Tania Willard and Cheryl L'Hirondelle to organize and participate in a ceremony to celebrate the completion of their artwork *If the Drumming Stops* at Mill Woods (VLSE). The day included a tour of the artwork given by the artists, a pipe ceremony led by Elder Joseph Naytowhow of Saskatchewan and a feast at EPL Mill Woods. The ceremony brought together the artists, members of Ociciwan Contemporary Arts Collective, City of Edmonton, TransEd and EAC.
  - The EAC worked with three Indigenous artists and curators under the new Public Art Policy (C458D: Public Art to Enhance Edmonton's Public Realm) to commission and install *Sipikiskisiw (Remembers Far Back)* by Cree and Métis artist Michelle Sound. The artwork at the downtown Edmonton ETS shelter reflects the Indigenous history of the area using torn copies of archival images. The artist then mended the torn imagery using embroidery thread, caribou tufting, porcupine quills and beadwork. According to Sound the rips "show the colonial violence that Indigenous people have experienced, including residential school intergenerational trauma, loss of language and displacement from our territories." The mending of the images doesn't fully obscure the rips, shares Sound, "as the loss, grief, longing, and memory cannot be fully mended and the resiliency required to survive colonialism is also messy and fragile. These losses can never be fully healed but we can process our histories and realities through art, culture and stories".

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- The EAC has had a role on the City of Edmonton Indigenous Framework Corporate Committee for the past four years. EAC staff have worked closely with City department team leads to develop the Indigenous Framework, which was approved by Council in January 2022. Following approval, the working corporate committee continued with next steps in the strategic action planning process, to activate the four roles: Listener, Connector, Advocate and Partner, in internal operations within the corporation, as well as with partners and communities.
- Further work with the Indigenous Framework committee led to the formation of an arts committee, which was tasked to specifically implement the Framework Commitment #3: “to identify and implement ways to make City spaces and buildings welcoming and safe for Indigenous People and ensure they can see themselves reflected in the City’s spaces and places.” EAC staff offered knowledge and ensured best practices for the installation, presentation and conservation of artworks. This work became a priority, with the approval to install four artworks created during the Framework engagement sessions by Indigenous artists, in City Hall.
- Indigenous artists Brad Crowfoot, Dawn Marie Marchand, Lana Whiskeyjack and MJ Belcourt were commissioned to create art pieces that captured conversations from earlier community engagement events, that informed the creation of the Indigenous Framework. The pieces are artistic aspirations for a city that uplifts all Indigenous Peoples in Edmonton and that all City employees uphold and live out the Guiding Principles of the Framework that include Relationships, Agreements, Celebrations and Renewal.
- *Indigenous peoples are supported in revitalizing and participating in cultural traditions locally that reflect their connections to ancestors, the land and living traditions.*
  - EAC has partnered with the City’s Indigenous Relations Office to support the Indigenous Artist in Residence program since 2016. During this time, three Indigenous artists have received unique Elder and committee supports that have helped each artist to increase their artistic capacity, created mentoring and partnership collaborations, offered renewal of cultural and traditional sharing and strengthened community connections. The program highlighted the participating artists in innovative ways where they felt empowered to further share their gifts. We continue to collaborate as we renew our commitment to this program into 2024.
  - The Indigenous Principle of *Connections & Exchanges* is reflected in the communications strategies of the EAC. In the spirit of centering Indigenous voices and supporting the autonomy of Indigenous artists in manifestations of Indigenous cultures and artforms, the EAC piloted a new project to center the voices of Indigenous artists and writers on the EAC blog. Four local Indigenous writers have been paid as guest bloggers to share their reflections on their practices, traditions and the influences of their peers and



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mentors in the Indigenous arts community. When the new edmontonarts.ca website is launched, this guest blog series will continue on a regular basis with an even higher profile.

- On the EAC's journey to better understand Indigenous artmaking and culture and the land upon which we create, the EAC hosted land acknowledgement workshops for staff led by Naomi McIlwraith, a local educator, poet and essayist, with a mixed Cree, Ojibwe, Scottish and English inheritance. Participants reflected on and wrote personalized and meaningful land acknowledgements that express who we are as individuals and as an organization and where we are in our relationship with Indigenous peoples and this land. The EAC plans to host a public version of this workshop to assist arts organizations in developing meaningful land acknowledgements to deliver at arts events and presentations, reinforcing the importance of thoughtful engagement with Indigenous peoples and the history of this place.

### **Ambition: Alive with Arts and Heritage**

**Aim:** Arts and heritage leaders are actively engaged in civic planning and implementation.

#### **Actions:**

- *Work with City administration to explore the development of a "Cultural Placemaking" policy to support, anchor and celebrate artistic and heritage activity in the public realm.*
  - EAC staff have partnered with City administration to contribute to projects such as the Winter City Strategy, Downtown Vibrancy Strategy, Night Time Economy Strategy, Indigenous Framework and the Orange Hub. The EAC also represents the arts community on the Explore Edmonton and Downtown Business Association boards.
- *Work with City Administration to incorporate arts into city strategies and planning, such as neighbourhood revitalization initiatives and special projects.*
  - The EAC worked with City administration on the development of a Downtown Public Art Guide and Initiatives document. The vision of the document is to promote and support all forms of artistic endeavors in Edmonton's downtown and reinforce the downtown's role as a regional, national and international centre for the development and enjoyment of the arts, culture and entertainment. The EAC is now working with the City and partners to implement initiatives detailed in the guide.
  - Within the implementation of the new Public Art Policy (C458D: Public Art to Enhance Edmonton's Public Realm), the EAC and City Administration have created a new Public Art Advisory Group which is responsible for public art planning throughout Edmonton, including integrating public art alongside neighborhood renewal and revitalization initiatives.
- *Encourage active civic engagement and participation in cultural activities.*
  - In 2023, the EAC is launching a new edmontonarts.ca website that will feature an Edmonton arts events calendar, allowing us to improve our digital promotion of events

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that are happening in the community. The need for the calendar was evidenced by feedback in the public and arts organization surveys in 2022 and individual requests for an all-encompassing arts calendar. The new calendar will feature EAC events (Festival in a Box parades, Green Shack Shows and more), Shop & Services ticketing clients and community-submitted events in one comprehensive listing.

- The new edmontonarts.ca will also feature a public art tour component where visitors can easily explore and engage with the City of Edmonton public art collection, with curated collection guides, a public art walking tour map functionality and cross promotion of public artworks within the collection.

### **Ambition: Alive with Arts and Heritage**

**Aim:** Conditions are in place to remove barriers for all Edmontonians to participate in cultural experiences.

#### **Actions:**

- *Work with public and private partners, arts organizations and festivals to improve access by: Piloting ticketing and transportation programs to diversify audiences; Expanding arts experiences for young people; Supporting partnerships with culturally-specific media to engage newcomers; Supporting partnerships with cultural associations and human and social services.*
  - The Connections & Exchanges Initiatives program enacts the collective responsibility of the arts community in the implementation of the *Connections & Exchanges* plan. Arts organizations are supported for projects that create cascading, long-term impacts for the cultural ecosystem. Examples of eligible activities include skills development in any arts practice or arts administration field, advancement of ensemble development, community and audience engagement or creation and revision of artistic work.
  - Since 2019, the EAC has invested in 68 organizations for a total of \$2,114,130 in support through the Connections & Exchanges Initiatives program. Many of the projects pertain to IDEA and Indigenous arts, embedding Indigenous and equity seeking artists within mainstream arts organizations or offering them platforms or performance opportunities with existing arts audiences. For example, funding has supported the hiring of an Adjunct Indigenous Curator at the AGA, support for Indigenous playwrights through Punctuate! Theatre, creation of a mentorship program for female IBPOC artists at NextFest and a writer's circle and mentorship program for emerging IBPOC artists through the Writers' Guild of Alberta.
  - In keeping with the spirit of collective responsibility, a number of arts organizations have piloted or maintained programs to offer access to programs for refugees, youth and other equity seeking groups. For example, free admission programs and partnerships for newcomers at the AGA, and the Alberta Ballet Welcoming Newcomers program which has offered free performances and classes for newcomers, through various immigrant service agencies, since 2019.
- *Stand alongside Indigenous leaders in cultural work, organizations and projects.*

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- Through Operating Investments, the EAC supports four Indigenous led organizations for a total of \$1,210,000. In addition to these Indigenous led organizations, there is an increasing number of organizations that include Indigenous-focused projects and programming, which has provided greater reach into the Indigenous arts and traditional communities.
- Among 261 organizations supported by Arts Operating and Programming, as well as the Arts Presentation Fund for Covid Recovery:
  - 4 indicate Indigenous art as a primary art practice of their organization.
  - 16 funded refer to Indigenous art and culture in their mission, mandate and goals.
  - 11 indicate that engagement, advocacy, promotion, or services for Indigenous communities is a primary activity of their organization.
  - 34 indicate engagement, advocacy, promotion, or services for Indigenous communities as a secondary activity.
  - 104 have policies or defined goals around Indigenous participation, equity, diversity and/or inclusion.
- Many organizations work with EAC's support and encouragement to further their own learning and understanding of Indigenous inclusion through formal and informal efforts, such as land acknowledgments, greater opportunities for Indigenous performers, hiring of traditional helpers (tipi and other installations), connections to Elders when requested and requests to better understand protocols. EAC is committed to working with organizations that seek greater partnerships and connections to building stronger relationships with Indigenous arts, cultural and traditional communities.
- EAC staff has supported organizations in their efforts to apply the Indigenous Principle, offering one-on-one support from our Indigenous Relations Advisor. For example, EAC supported Edmonton Folk Music Festival's development of an enhanced Indigenous experience. Since 2019, EAC staff worked directly with the Folk Festival to make recommendations that helped to create Indigenous-led committee and process which contributed to the hiring of an Indigenous project consultant. The result was greater focus and inclusion of Indigenous musicians and performers at the 2022 festival.
- The EAC is working directly with IAM Indigenous Artist Market Collective to develop the capacity of the organization and support their growth at a pace that is sustainable for their administration.
- The EAC has offered similar capacity development support for organizations in the community such as Ociciwan Contemporary Art Collective and the Dreamspeakers Festival Society, working closely with the organizations on everything from leadership transition, finances and accounting and partnership development, with the goal of sustainable and self-directed growth.

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- *Resource Indigenous-led activities that support the reclamation of Indigeneity.*
  - New processes within the Public Art Policy are working to address the collection's under-representation of Indigenous artists, as well as artists from diverse genders and cultural backgrounds. The new processes will also help to address systemic barriers faced by artists from marginalized, racialized and equity-seeking groups which prevent them from becoming involved in public art.
  - Of eight artworks acquired into Edmonton's Public Art Collection in 2022, six were by Indigenous artists (one of the six projects was by a IBPOC artist collective, which included Indigenous representation). The prioritization of Indigenous artists in the City of Edmonton Public Art Collection will ensure the reclamation of Indigeneity in public spaces in Edmonton, including key locations such as City Hall, downtown Edmonton, transit stations and other municipal resources. This is in line with Indigenous Framework Commitment #3: "identify and implement ways to make City spaces and buildings welcoming and safe for Indigenous People and ensure they can see themselves reflected in the City's spaces and places."
  - In 2022 EAC provided \$345,781 to 30 artists and collectives who self-identified as Indigenous. Within those 30, 15 artists who work primarily in the discipline of Indigenous arts were funded to a total of \$176,170. Indigenous arts as a discipline denotes artists whose practice is centered on Indigenous lived experiences and creative expressions, including both customary and contemporary practices.

### **Ambition: A Hub for Extraordinary Creation and Reputation**

**Aim:** Dynamic exchanges of ideas and expertise occur between Edmonton's arts and heritage sector and the world.

#### **Actions:**

- *Work with federal and provincial arts agencies to support Edmonton artists and arts organizations to develop new markets nationally and internationally.*
  - The EAC is a regular participant in the Alberta Tri-Level meetings of arts funders, including multiple federal and provincial agencies.
  - Along with the Canada Council for the Arts, the EAC invested in Ballet Edmonton's high profile Canadian tour through our Connections & Exchanges Initiatives program. Investment from the EAC enabled the creation of new artistic work, development and rehearsal processes to stage the work and payment for Edmonton-based dance artists and artistic professionals. The tour saw the local ballet company perform across Ontario and BC and included a performance at the prestigious National Arts Centre in Ottawa.
- *Work with City Administration to foster the study and enjoyment of the public art collection through its conservation, documentation and connection to a diverse range of publics.*

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- The EAC provided tours of the Indigenous Art Park for the Indigenous Framework Committee, as well as David Garneau's artwork at Tawatinâ Bridge for the Urban Planning Department, attendees of the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) conference and colleagues in the Federal Government. These tours connect the public art collection with our colleagues who are involved in the planning and installation of public art, as well as connecting them as citizens with the existing collection.
- The EAC Conservation department works directly with the City of Edmonton and artists and project teams to consult on care and maintenance, materials research and testing and fabrication and installation documentation. They oversee the care of all 288 of the artworks in the Public Art Collection and are an integral part of planning, commissioning and growing the collection.
- *Partner with public agencies and private sector organizations to host conferences, symposia and industry events.*
  - The EAC partnered with four Provincial Arts Service Organizations to coordinate the City of Edmonton Prize program, drawing the four existing City prizes together under one cohesive awards program and event. The City of Edmonton prizes in music, film, visual arts and literature were presented at an event in early May 2023 and saw 12 artists receive \$100,000 in prizes in recognition of their contribution to Edmonton's reputation as a hub for extraordinary creation in the arts. The EAC is committed to a shared vision for the Edmonton arts prizes as a program that is inclusive of a wide range of artistic practices and welcomes the contributions of artists from multiple communities, backgrounds and traditions. We envision the arts prize categories growing in future years to include a greater diversity of arts disciplines.
  - EAC-supported Provincial Arts Service Organizations have piloted or maintained industry networking events, for example Arts Industry Nights for emerging and established visual artists with CARFAC (Canadian Artists' Representation/Le Front des artistes canadiens) Alberta, an open house and tour to welcome filmmakers to FAVA (Film and Video Arts Society) and workshops and professional development opportunities with AMPIA (Alberta Media Production Industries Association). The EAC also provided direct support to Be Collective (IBPOC filmmaking collective) for an industry event to diversify film practitioners' networks in the Alberta film and television industry and provide stakeholders with information on how to address labour market gaps in terms of equity, diversity and inclusion in the industry workforce.

### **Ambition: A Hub for Extraordinary Creation and Reputation**

**Aim:** Diverse platforms for collaboration exist within Edmonton that allow artistic and heritage communities to connect, create and collaborate.

#### **Actions:**

- *Convene the arts community to share expertise, promote collaboration and networking.*
  - Through a series of round-table research sessions in 2022 and further follow up community discussion in 2023, the EAC convened dozens of stakeholders from the dance community to

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explore issues they face. This is leading towards discussion at the EAC Board level to consider responses and initiatives that the EAC can shape and advance to support the dance community.

- Through the Yorath House Artist in Residence program, the EAC and the City of Edmonton hosted five artist pairs in 2022. The program encouraged artists working in seemingly disparate media or disciplines to come together, share and learn from one another, influencing one another's practices in a manner that artists rarely get the opportunity to immerse themselves in. The pairs hosted in 2022 included theatre artists, visual artists, musicians, literary artists and artists working across disciplines. Artist duos Adriana Davies and Marlena Wyman, Kerri Strobl and Christine Lesiak, Jody Shenkarek and Thea Bowering Andrew Thorne and Anna Wildish and Fern Facette and Matthew Cardinal all drew inspiration from the surrounding park area and river, incorporating elements from the natural landscape into their respective practices.
- In early 2023 the EAC hosted drop-in sessions to assist those who faced barriers to the Individuals & Collectives program. The communications strategy for the drop-in sessions included direct outreach to cultural groups, community groups and social service agencies, as well as digital promotion. The sessions expanded the audience of the EAC, with many attendees who were new to the granting process and/or spoke English as a second language.
- *Build a digital framework to mobilize critical discourse and arts impact documentation, arts information and public awareness campaigns.*
  - In 2023, the EAC is launching a new edmontonarts.ca website that will feature a research and impact section, highlighting the latest information, data, survey results and reporting.
  - The website will also feature conversations with artists via the EAC blog, which will be moved in-site to edmontonarts.ca. In 2022, the EAC featured 77 diverse artists on the EAC blog. In early 2023 the EAC developed a partnership with CBC to feature blog artists on Radio Active, thus increasing the profile of the artists and their work on a mainstream media platform.

### **Ambition: A Thriving and Well-Funded Arts and Heritage Ecosystem**

**Aim:** Arts and heritage practitioners are economically resilient.

#### **Actions:**

- *Increase investment in artists working in a wide range of art forms and practices to foster experimentation, creative collaborations with community and public presentations.*
  - The Edmonton Arts Council in partnership with SNAP (Society of Northern Alberta Print Artists) and Pattison Outdoor Advertising, has commissioned artists to create three temporary public art murals wrapping the interior and exterior of three LRT SuperTrains.



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The artists will have a two-month studio residency at SNAP to create their new pieces of artwork for the trains, which are scheduled to roll out throughout 2023. The project is rooted in the theme of “Environmental Stewardship” and artists are encouraged to explore the relationships between the natural world and urban spaces.

- *Increase investment in artists and arts professionals from equity seeking groups.*
  - The Equity & Access program budget has steadily increased since 2018. Through our Equity & Access grants, 46 equity-seeking artists were funded to a total of \$590,000 in 2022. In 2023 that commitment is budgeted for \$600,000.
  - Out of 276 project grants awarded to artists and collectives in 2022, 50% were to applicants that self-identify as Indigenous or from equity-seeking groups totalling investments of \$1,626,833.
  - In every grant assessment process and report to the EAC Board, equity and inclusion considerations are addressed. Every peer assessment panel is recruited and appointed with an emphasis on Indigenous and equity considerations to ensure that expertise on diverse artforms and artistic practices participates on the panels.
- *Build funding mechanisms with an emphasis on: multi-year projects, mentorships, residencies, professional development.*
  - Through grants for Individuals & Collectives (stream two), the EAC supports projects that pertain to skills and career development, including mentorship, attending a residency, or other forms of professional development for artists and arts professionals. In 2022, 42 artists were supported for these types of professional development projects for a total of \$320,322, representing a 100% increase from 2021 in which 21 artists received \$167,700.

### **Ambition: A Thriving and Well-Funded Arts and Heritage Ecosystem**

**Aim:** New and existing arts and heritage organizational capacity enables innovation and builds resilience in the sector

#### **Actions:**

- *Provide change capital to cultural organizations to retool and reorganize to meet the needs of a rapidly changing city.*
  - Since 2021, the EAC has invested \$334,842 in 13 Invent & Adapt projects, which provide a flexible path for the EAC to support and participate in focused development of organizational capacities, through strategic investments to promote sustainable operations.

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## Measurement, Evaluation and Learning Framework

Edmonton Arts Council (EAC) introduced its performance measurement system in April 2022 after a series of data collection initiatives were implemented. The intention of introducing the performance measurement system is to monitor progress, demonstrate success and understand impact as the EAC implements *Connections & Exchanges*.

All data collection initiatives were developed in alignment with *Connections & Exchanges* both operationally and strategically. The data can be pulled directly to measure corporate performance against the goals.

There are a total of nine goals, the first eight are reflective and representative of the eight Aims defined in *Connections & Exchanges* and the ninth goal is stand alone to understand impact. Below is the breakdown of the nine goals with sample measures that construct the performance measurement system. The final report with all measures will be produced on an annual basis.

*Note:* for all measures, the performance targets and baselines are under development. The total list of measures will evolve while the EAC is implementing, completing or understanding Actions under each Aim.

### Ambition: Alive with Arts and Heritage

**Aim:** Edmonton’s neighborhoods come alive with meaningful and relevant opportunities for participation and engagement.

Goal 1: Promoting community participation and engagement.

Sample Measures	Source	Frequency	Calculation	2021	2022
Edmonton offers great arts and cultural experiences	Artists survey Q13	Annual	% strongly agree or agree	79%	79%
Edmonton offers great arts and cultural experiences	Organization survey	Annual	% strongly agree or agree	94%	93%

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**The measures of Goal 1 directly aligns with the City Plan’s Intention 1.2.3, 6.1.2 and 6.2.1.**

**Ambition: Alive with Arts and Heritage**

**Aim:** Edmontonians feel a sense of belonging and connectedness to peoples, places and stories.

Goal 2: Promoting community’ sense of belonging and connectedness.

Sample Measures	Source	Frequency	Calculation	2021	2022
TIX on the Square value of tickets sold	EAC Finance	Annual	\$ amount	\$443,883	\$417,074
TIX on the Square Merchandise sales	EAC Finance	Annual	\$ amount	\$96,654	\$129,968

**The measures of Goal 2 directly aligns with the City Plan’s Intention 1.2.3 and 6.2.1.**

**Ambition: Alive with Arts and Heritage**

**Aim:** Arts and Heritage leaders are actively engaged in civic planning and implementation.

Goal 3: Actively engaging City planning and strategies.

There is no numerical measure for this goal. The measurement will be conducted through qualitative research methods.

**Ambition: Alive with Arts and Heritage**

**Aim:** Conditions are in place to remove barriers for all Edmontonians to participate in cultural experiences.

Goal 4: Removing barriers and promoting accessibility.

Sample Measures	Source	Frequency	Calculation	2021	2022
How would you rate the easy access to arts and cultural events, festivals, activities, and facilities	2021 Public survey Q14	Biennial	% very good or good	65%	n/a
While accessing the EAC’s resources and services, or applying for EAC’s programs and support in the past 12 months,	2021 Artists survey Q18	Annual	% no barriers	56%	67%

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do you feel you faced additional barriers due to your identify					
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**Note: Because public perception does not shift dramatically year over year, the public survey is conducted once ever two years. This data will be available in 2024.**

**The measures of Goal 4 directly aligns with the City Plan’s Intention 1.2.3 and 6.2.1.**

### **Ambition: A Hub for Extraordinary Creation and Reputation**

**Aim 5:** Dynamic exchanges of ideas and expertise occur between Edmonton’s arts and heritage sector and the world.

Goal 5: Promoting international exchanges and reputation.

Sample Measures	Source	Frequency	Calculation	2021	2022
Edmonton offers great opportunities for organizations to exchange ideas and expertise nationally and internationally	2021 Organization survey Q13	Annual	% strongly agree or agree	49%	49%
Edmonton’s arts and culture has a great international reputation	2021 Artists survey Q13	Annual	% strongly agree or agree	36%	31%

**The measures of Goal 5 directly aligns with the City Plan’s Intention 6.1.2 and 6.2.1.**

### **Ambition: A Hub for Extraordinary Creation and Reputation**

**Aim:** Diverse platforms for collaboration exist within Edmonton that allow artistic and heritage communities to connect, create and collaborate.

Goal 6: Building diverse platforms for collaboration.

Sample Measures	Source	Frequency	Calculation	2021	2022
Edmonton offers sufficient physical platforms for artistic communication between the arts community and arts audiences	2021 Organization survey Q12	Annual	% strongly agree or agree	50%	46%
You had sufficient opportunities to interact, gather, share ideas and learn from the local arts community	2021 Artists survey Q12	Annual	% strongly agree or agree	42%	56%

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**The measures of Goal 6 directly aligns with the City Plan's Intention 1.2.3 and 6.2.1.**

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**Ambition: A Thriving and Well-Funded Arts and Heritage Ecosystem**

**Aim:** Arts and heritage practitioners are economically resilient.

Goal 7: Promoting practitioners’ economic resilience.

Sample Measures	Source	Frequency	Calculation	2021	2022
Total dollar amount provided to Individuals and Collectives through grants.	EAC system data	Annual	\$ amount % distribution	\$238596 5	\$3286927
Percentage of gross personal income from artistic practice	2022 Artists survey Q33	Annual	Mean %	43%	43%
Percentage of artists’ practice spending funded by EAC	2022 Artists survey Q34	Annual	Mean %	12%	14%

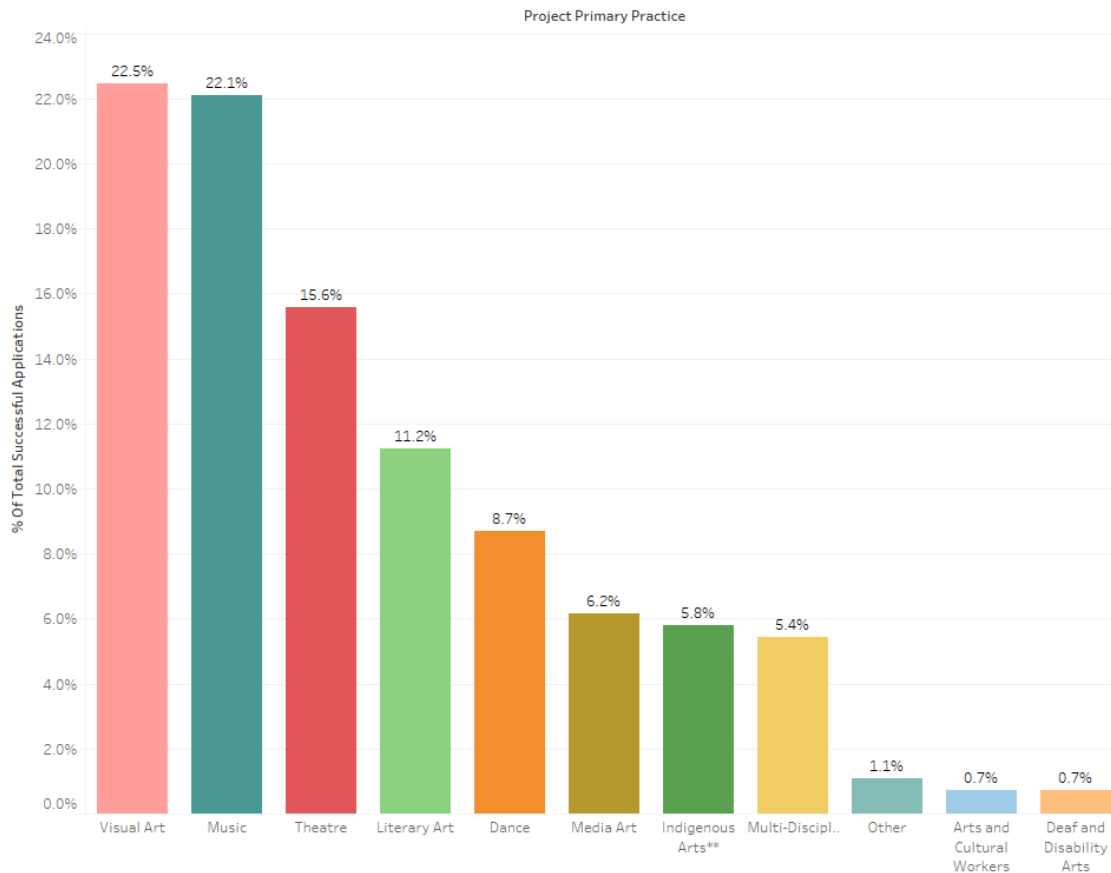
**The measures of Goal 7 directly aligns with the City Plan’s Intention 6.1.2 and 6.2.1.**

Grant distribution to individuals and collectives by primary artistic discipline



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Proportion of individual grants shown by primary artistic practice in 2022



## Ambition: A Thriving and Well-Funded Arts and Heritage Ecosystem

**Aim:** New and existing arts and heritage organizational capacity enables innovation and builds resilience in the sector.

**Goal 8:** Supporting innovation and resilience building of arts and heritage organizations.

Sample Measures	Source	Frequency	Calculation	2021	2022
Total dollar amount provided to Arts and festival organizations through grants.	EAC system data	Annual	\$ amount	\$9300800	\$10764272
Funding from the Edmonton Arts Council supported your organization's capacity to build economic resilience.	2022 Organization survey Q1	Annual	% strongly agree or agree	N/A	73%

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Municipal proportion of provincial cultural GDP	Creative City Network of Canada	Annual	% municipal proportion *	33%	33%
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\* Data is available up to year 2020: we received update for 2019 in 2021 and update for 2020 in 2022..

**The measures of Goal 8 directly aligns with the City Plan’s Intention 6.1.2 and 6.2.1**

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Goal 9: Creating positive changes and impacting the everyday lives of Edmontonians.

This goal is beyond Aims of *Connections & Exchanges* and is stand alone.

<b>Sample Measures</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Calculation</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
You are Satisfied with the level of support the Edmonton Arts Council and its staff provided	2022 Organization survey	Annual	% very satisfied or somewhat satisfied	78%	84%
You are Satisfied with the level of support the Edmonton Arts Council and its staff provided	2022 Artist survey	Annual	% very satisfied or somewhat satisfied	78%	84%
In general, you believe that the EAC's programs create positive impact and value to the arts community	2022 Artist survey Q1	Annual	% strongly agree or agree	93%	91%
The EAC can usually recognize and address community needs in a timely manner	2022 Organization survey Q2	Annual	% strongly agree or agree	66%	67%

### **ATTACHMENT**

1. *Connections & Exchanges: A 10-Year Plan to Transform Arts & Heritage In Edmonton*