

## Edmonton Arts Council - 2024 Connections & Exchanges Update

### 2024 Implementation Summary

- In 2024, the Edmonton Arts Council continued implementation of *Connections & Exchanges: A 10-Year Plan to Transform Arts & Heritage In Edmonton*.
- Since the start of the 10-Year Plan, the Edmonton Arts Council has made progress on 32 of its 35 sole and shared Actions.
- Highlights in the sixth year include:
  - The Edmonton Arts Council distributed 235 grants totaling more than \$10.7 million to arts and festival organizations, as well as \$3.4 million to 254 successful grant applications for individuals and collectives.
  - Four new artworks were added to the City of Edmonton Public Art Collection, all by Alberta-based artists. The collection now contains 294 artworks and will reach 300 artworks in 2025, with more than 30 projects in progress.
  - Community Animation and Creative Partnerships brought 89 artists to 132 Edmonton neighbourhoods through Green Shack Shows and hosted over 230 days of programming on Churchill Square.
  - Edmonton Arts Council Shop & Services in Churchill Square showcased 227 artists and garnered \$419,000 in ticket sales for local arts organizations.
  - The Edmonton Arts Council undertook an operational planning process at the midway point of *Connections & Exchanges* in 2024, to assess progress on the Actions assigned to the organization and next steps to implement remaining Actions. The result is a living operational work plan, which will assist leadership and staff teams to direct resources effectively towards *Connections & Exchanges* goals.
  - The Edmonton Arts Council announced its new Funding Strategy to maximize the impact of its investments in the community. The new strategy allows the Edmonton Arts Council to reflect the evolving needs of the arts ecosystem while making the most of our available resources.

## 2024 Implementation & Measurements

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

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

**Action 1.1:** *Conduct surveys to map local demographics, cultural events and participation to effectively deploy resources.*

- The Edmonton Arts Council survey project helps the Edmonton Arts Council 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, awareness and satisfaction with the Edmonton Arts Council, and demographics. Results of each annual survey are posted to the Edmonton Arts Council website and are shared with the community.

**Action 1.2:** *Digitally promote and amplify neighbourhood arts activities to connect and celebrate cultural diversity.*

- Winter City Weekend programming and skate rentals were expanded at City Hall until the security incident on January 23, 2024. Skate rentals were available daily at the City Hall rink until that point, and from December 2023 to the end of January 2024 more than 2600 rentals were managed (not including New Year's Eve). Edmonton Arts Council staff noted that most of those renting skates were newcomers to Canada and/or to skating. Weekends were planned to feature partnerships with cultural groups and DJs such as Bollywood on Ice, Cariwest, 5 Artists 1 Love, and more, throughout January and February. While these events were ongoing, approximately 150 individuals attended each event, bringing families, art communities and newcomers to downtown Edmonton on Friday and Saturday evenings and Sunday afternoons.
- Due to the incident at City Hall on January 23, 2024, and subsequent security revisions, access to City Hall was limited and the Edmonton Arts Council team pivoted to reschedule winter programming in alignment with community events, including at Westmount Community League,

West Jasper Sherwood Community League, and in the Arts District on Family Day.

**Action 1.3:** *Work with City Administration, local networks and businesses to cultivate, and support community-based artistic activities.*

- The Edmonton Arts Council's 2024 Family Day in the Arts District brought families downtown for arts and entertainment. At the Winspear, more than 300 people learned about drumming with Rhythm Rhythm Rhythm. In the Art Gallery of Alberta lobby more than 100 attendees enjoyed Hula Hoop Circus. Lineups stretched down the block at the Art Gallery of Alberta for their free admission day and over 2600 people attended the gallery throughout the day. At the Citadel, two showings of Cinderella presented by Alberta Musical Theatre Company were over capacity, with more than 350 attendees each. Churchill Square was lively with more than 1200 people enjoying pop up games and activities, DJs, and an additional performance by Hula Hoop Circus.

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

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

**Action 2.1:** *Engage with organizations that support community-based artistic programming and cultural expression and engage youth through local arts and learning activities.*

- Throughout July and August, the Edmonton Arts Council's Community Animation and Creative Partnerships team organized over 150 Green Shack Shows in neighbourhoods across Edmonton, featuring diverse performers. There were some cancellations due to weather and air quality, however more than 4000 people attended overall. The Green Shack Show was the most-visited page of the Edmonton Art Council website for the duration of the summer, representing over 9,000 visitors.
- Edmonton Art Council Shop & Services collaborated with the Bissell Centre to feature the works of Jon Robillard, a Dene artist and fixture of the Bissell Centre community where he has led programs, and designed screen prints for their Orange Shirt Day shirts. Approximately 200 people attended the

event, including Councillor Jo-Anne Wright and community members from Bissell Centre.

**Action 2.2:** *Enhance citizen engagement of the public art collection with artist led events and presentations.*

- On July 2, 2024, the Edmonton Arts Council joined the City of Edmonton, Mayor Sohi, members of Council and federal representative, Randy Boissonnault to celebrate the opening of Centennial Plaza, featuring the child-friendly sculpture *UGO* by local artists Red Knot Studio (Erin Pankratz and Christian Pérès Gibaut). This child-friendly project was a collaboration between the Edmonton Arts Council, local artists, and the Child Friendly Edmonton Initiative to incorporate playful, child-friendly components within the Civic Precinct.

**Action 2.3:** *Contribute actively to placemaking that includes cultural landscape, natural history, built history, object, language, and story.*

- In 2024, the Edmonton Art Council commissioned a video about the untitled buffalo sculpture by Lloyd Pinay, in Dr. Anne Anderson Park. The video explores the legacy of Dr. Anne Anderson and her work to preserve the Cree language and highlights the work that the Edmonton Arts Council's conservation team has undertaken to preserve and care for the artwork, which is beloved by the neighbouring community.
- Marigold Santos has been selected through a curatorial process for the Millbourne/Woodvale LRT (Valley Line - Southeast LRT project). Marigold Santos, currently based in Calgary, is a Filipinx-Canadian artist known for work that examines the lived experience of immigration through themes of identity and culture. In addition to her mixed media work, Santos is a tattoo artist who interprets her heritage through drawings of folklore from the Philippines.
- Edmonton visual artist Emily Chu has been selected to create digital/print artworks for the exterior of three Edmonton Soccer centres undergoing expansion. Her murals can be found at the Edmonton Chinatown Multi-Cultural Centre, Alberta Craft Gallery & Shop and Millennium Place.
- Coda Girvan has been selected to paint a mural that envelops the Castle Downs Park washroom facility. Coda is a self-taught Queer Métis artist

currently living in Edmonton, Alberta. Their work is inspired by typeface design, and more recently much of the shapes and colours used in their work have been influenced by their family history as a Métis person.

- Bruno Canadien was selected for NAIT station LRT through an open call to Indigenous artists from across Canada. Bruno Canadien is a member of the Deh Gah Got'ie Dene First Nation of Zhati K' óé, Denendeh, a DehCho Region member of the Dene Nation. Canadien's multidisciplinary practice investigates Indigenous presence, kinship, and relationality in the contemporary context, through painting, drawing, installation, and walking.

**Action 2.4:** *Indigenous peoples are supported in revitalizing and participating in cultural traditions locally that reflect their connections to ancestors, the land and living traditions.*

- Artists selected for public art projects in 2024 were given the opportunity to join a walk with local Knowledge Holder Dr. Dwayne Donald. The core intention of the walk was to provide space and time for commissioned artists to reflect on public art in relation to the land we live and work on, and to deepen their understanding of the land and its history, aligning with the goals of the Edmonton Arts Council to grow a public art collection that resonates and reflects our city.
- In honour of Orange Shirt Day and National Truth and Reconciliation week, the Edmonton Arts Council collaborated with the City of Edmonton to host events and performances by Indigenous artists in Churchill Square.
- Public art by Becca Taylor, a Cree/ Irish/ Scottish artist and curator, was installed at the Telus World of Science Edmonton (TWOSE). The artwork, *Vessels*, explores the connection between land and sky, our connections to the spirit world and the gifts passed down by our ancestors.

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

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

**Action 3.1:** *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.*

- Edmonton Arts Council staff have partnered with City administration to contribute to projects such as the Indigenous Framework initiatives, the Canadian Country Music Association (CCMA) legacy and advisory committees, Festival and Event round tables, Community Safety and Well-Being Strategy meetings, the Ortona and the Orange Hub.

**Action 3.2:** *Work with City Administration to incorporate arts into city strategies and planning, such as neighbourhood revitalization initiatives and special projects.*

- The Edmonton Arts Council continued to work with the Public Art Advisory Group, formed in 2023, which is responsible for City-wide public art planning and includes members of City of Edmonton administration. In 2024, the Edmonton Arts Council undertook planning to identify priority neighbourhoods to the Public Art Advisory Group that would integrate public art into new capital infrastructure projects, open spaces, renewal and revitalization initiatives. However, as part of the fall budget adjustments in December 2024, the City of Edmonton removed \$550,000 per year in 2025/2026 from the Public Art Reserve as part of their efforts to reduce property taxes. Considering the funding reduction, the Edmonton Arts Council's and the Public Art Advisory Group's ability to implement the principles of the new policy, such as public accessibility and city-wide impact, will be compromised. The Edmonton Arts Council is committed to maximizing the impact of the available resources and will collaborate with the Public Art Advisory Group to manage the public art program to the best outcomes possible within the reduced budget.

**Action 3.3:** *Work with City Administration and cultural agencies to research, develop, build and seek approval from City Council for the City of Edmonton's first Cultural Infrastructure Plan.*

- The Edmonton Arts Council is supporting ArtsHab as they develop the Edmonton Cultural Infrastructure Project. The Edmonton Arts Council attended initial meetings, provided grassroots community engagement

network information, and has worked with ArtsHab to amplify communications around the project.

**Action 3.4:** *Provide tools, resources and advice to the cultural community in support of space audits, capital project management and asset management solutions.*

- Through the Invent & Adapt grant program, the Edmonton Arts Council invests in arts organizations as they navigate complex operational challenges, build capacity, and adapt to changing environments. In 2024, 14 applications were recommended for funding, for a total investment of \$382,877. Of these 14, five projects pertain to asset management, for example, Concrete Theatre Society will work with an archivist and advisor to chronicle the theatre's 35-year history, and Mile Zero Dance will hire a permanent Operations Manager to manage their new venue and administration.

**Action 3.5:** *Encourage active civic engagement and participation in cultural activities.*

- Visits to the Edmonton Arts Council website continued to increase in 2024, with more than 250k sessions and 151k active users. The website features a community events calendar which ranks in the top ten most visited pages, contributing to community awareness of arts and culture events, particularly culturally diverse and free programming in Edmonton. On average, the Edmonton Arts Council received 50+ submissions a month to the calendar, along with featuring Edmonton Arts Council events and events ticketed by Edmonton Arts Council Shop & Services.

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

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

**Action 4.1:** *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.*

- AJA Louden (Edmonton) was selected through a curatorial process to design a playground for Balwin Park. The project will be the first artist-designed playground in Edmonton and will create arts experiences for young people. AJA is a Jamaican Canadian artist whose current work focuses on the cyclical nature of power, inspired by science fiction and historical paintings.
- The Connections & Exchanges Initiatives program enacts the collective responsibility of the arts community in the implementation of the *Connections & Exchanges* plan. Through this program, the Edmonton Arts Council invests in new and existing arts and heritage activity, enables resiliency and innovation, invests in collaborations and creations, and supports the artistic work of not-for-profit organizations. In 2024, the Edmonton Arts Council invested in 32 organizations (of 59 eligible applications) for a total of \$703,203 in support through the Connections & Exchanges Initiatives program. Many of the projects pertain to equity and Indigenous arts, for example, funding supported an initiative from the Art Gallery of Alberta to remove barriers that exclude marginalized groups from equitable participation at the gallery, production workshops for disabled artists with the Collaborative Radically Integrated Performers Society in Edmonton (CRIPSiE), a GeriActors festival celebrating senior and intergenerational theatre, and Immigrant Council for Arts Innovation's Newcomer Arts Professional Program (NAPP), offering paid mentorship to newcomer arts professionals.
- Through Invent & Adapt 2024, additional projects were supported to diversify audiences. Workshop West Playwrights' Theatre launched a pilot program to make all performances and subscriptions pay what you will in 2024/2025, removing financial barriers to attendance while building and diversifying audiences. Alberta Council for the Ukrainian Arts used Invent & Adapt funding to expand their resources to support newcomer and emerging artists to foster a more inclusive arts community, creative growth, community engagement, and professional development.

**Action 4.2:** *Stand alongside Indigenous leaders in cultural work, organizations and projects.*

- The Edmonton Arts Council supports funding for organizations to work with Indigenous artists, for example, a 2024 Connections & Exchanges project

grant supported Shadow Theatre to develop and produce the new Canadian play by Neil Grahm, *The Battles of Francis Pegahmagabow*, about an Indigenous WWI hero and political leader. Through Invent & Adapt, Punctuate! Theatre received funding to retain, in a consultancy capacity, the services of two Indigenous Elders and a Knowledge Keeper.

**Action 4.3:** *Resource Indigenous-led activities that support the reclamation of Indigeneity.*

- From September 24-27, the Edmonton Arts Council collaborated with the City of Edmonton and Ron Walker to present Indigenous programming on Churchill Square as part of the City's commemorative events for National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Performers included Spirit North traditional Indigenous Games, Sheena Kaine, Maraiah Dumont, Powwow dancers and singers.
- In 2024, the Edmonton Arts Council invested in 32 successful projects totaling \$512,315 for artists who self-identified as Indigenous. Projects included a nehiyaw (Cree) fantasy podcast series, a play that tells the story of the Callihoo women in Alberta, a feature-length film script for an Indigenous love story, and a collaboration with drummers and singers from the Swan River Cree Nation.

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

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

**Action 5.1:** *Work with City Administration to lead the development of arts networks with cities across the globe to foster artistic exchanges, collaborations and projects.*

- Through Stream 2 grants for Individuals & Collectives and Equity & Access, the Edmonton Arts Council funded interprovincial and international travel opportunities for 25 artists and collectives. Of these, ten were to residencies, including international destinations such as to the UK, Italy, Japan, and the United States.

**Action 5.2:** *Work with federal and provincial arts agencies to support Edmonton artists and arts organizations to develop new markets nationally and internationally.*

- The Edmonton Arts Council was invited to Confluence - A National Convening of Arts Service Organizations and Arts Funders hosted by the Canada Council for the Arts in November 2024. Confluence brought together Arts Service Organizations with territorial, provincial and municipal arts funders to share knowledge, develop ideas, and drive action to support the sector towards building a shared vision for the future.
- The Edmonton Arts Council is a regular participant in the Alberta Tri-Level meetings of arts funders, including multiple federal and provincial agencies.
- The Edmonton Arts Council's Public Art Director will represent Edmonton with a two-year position on the Public Art Advisory Council (formerly Public Art Network) of Creative Cities Network of Canada (CCNC).

The Edmonton Arts Council's Research, Measurement Analytics and Reporting department attended the National Research Group event "Advancing Data Strategies for Arts Funders" in Calgary, in June 2024. This event unites stakeholders to promote strategic data use, foster understanding of data strategies, and inspire innovative data applications within the arts sector.

**Action 5.3:** *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.*

- The Edmonton Arts Council Conservation department works directly with the City of Edmonton, 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 294 artworks in the Public Art Collection and are an integral part of planning, commissioning, and growing the collection. In 2024, 83 artworks in the collection were treated, moved or received maintenance.
- Edmonton Arts Council attended the Creative City Summit in Vancouver, October 2024, where the Edmonton Arts Council, City of Edmonton, and artist Michelle Sound received a national Public Art Sustainability award for the artwork *Sipikiskisiw (Remembers Far Back)* located at the Telus Transit Shelter Downtown.
- Edmonton Arts Council's Public Art Director co-presented a session on Collection Care and Conservation at the Creative City Summit in Vancouver

alongside Kelly MacIvor from the Halifax Regional Municipality Public Art Program.

**Action 5.4:** *Partner with public agencies and private sector organizations to host conferences, symposia and industry events.*

- The Edmonton Arts Council partnered with the Edmonton Heritage Council to co-host the Alberta Museums Association Spring Symposium Cross-Sectoral Networking Event at the Prince of Wales Armouries in April 2024, along with the Archives Society of Alberta, and City of Edmonton Archives. Delegates from arts, culture, heritage, archives and libraries attended a reception intended to create cross-sector connections, nurture relationships, and establish networks of collaborative practice.

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

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

**Action 6.1:** *Work with City Administration, cultural agencies, post-secondary institutions and businesses to develop incubation hubs for interdisciplinary and cross-sector artistic creation, production and presentation.*

- Edmonton Arts Council Shop & Services acted as an incubation hub to feature the interdisciplinary work of youth artists through the exhibits 'An In-Between World' by WP Wagner School and 'Imagination Knows No Bounds' by Highlands School. The exhibits featured over 50 students each, providing space in-shop to display and sell work. Community attendance was high for the launch events, with more than 150 joining the Edmonton Arts Council at our Shop to celebrate the young artists. Both events saw visits from Mayor Sohi and various City Council members. Following each exhibition, the work from WP Wagner and Highlands moved to City Hall for an additional display in the City Room community gallery.

**Action 6.2:** *Work with arts venues to improve affordability for artists and organizations to support production and presentation.*

- The Dance Residency Pilot, launched in late 2024, supports creative partnerships between a dance or movement-based artist and a space, venue or organization with capacity for production or presentation. For the purposes of this residency program, the collaborative organization enters into an agreement with the individual artist or collective to provide them with resources and support for the duration of the residency term. These resources and supports may include one or more of the following: space, mentorship, community connections, financial support, collaboration, or other infrastructure. Both the artist and the partner organization will be compensated for their time and contribution to the residency project.

**Action 6.3:** *Convene the arts community to share expertise, promote collaboration and networking.*

- In 2024, the Edmonton Arts Council conducted 35 information and drop-in sessions, for more than 500 attendees, to increase awareness and understanding of our grant programs. The sessions expanded the audience of the Edmonton Arts Council, with many attendees who were new to the granting process.
- In May, the Edmonton Arts Council hosted the 2024 Edmonton Arts Prizes, where the four primary recipients were announced and honoured for their excellence in film, visual art, music and literature. The presentation included the Edmonton Arts Prizes partner organizations and Councillor Sarah Hamilton. Close to 200 arts community members attended the celebratory event. Each of the twelve nominated artists received a prize, with \$15,000 going to the primary prize recipient in each category, and two secondary prizes of \$5,000 awarded to the runners up. In total, \$100,000 was awarded to the artists.

**Action 6.4:** *Build a digital framework to mobilize critical discourse and arts impact documentation, arts information and public awareness campaigns.*

- The new edmontonarts.ca website highlights the latest in Edmonton Arts Council research and impact documentation, including survey results and reporting, case studies and annual reports. The website also features conversations with artists via the Edmonton Arts Council blog. In 2024,

the Edmonton Arts Council featured 24 artists on their blog. Select "I am YEG Arts" interviews were also featured on CBC Radio Active, offering artists additional exposure via traditional media.

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

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

**Action 7.1:** *Increase investment in artists working in a wide range of art forms and practices to foster experimentation, creative collaborations with community and public presentations.*

- Demand for Edmonton Arts Council grants was high for individuals and collectives in 2024, with a total of 1097 applications, 254 of which were awarded. Increases in awareness and application rates are attributed to long-term outreach and engagement strategies, dedicated roles in Indigenous relations and Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA), and focused inclusion practices. With an increase in applications and a fixed budget, the success rate dropped from 35% in 2022, to 28% in 2023, and 23% in 2024.

**Action 7.2:** *Increase investment in artists and arts professionals from equity seeking groups.*

- The Equity & Access in the Arts program is one of the ways the Edmonton Arts Council pursues our commitments to increasing support for artists and arts professionals from Indigenous and equity-deserving communities as outlined in *Connections & Exchanges*. In 2024, 40 applications were recommended for funding, for a total investment of \$618,666.
- Out of 254 project grants awarded to individuals and collectives in 2024, 63% were to applicants that self-identify as Indigenous or from equity-deserving groups, totaling \$2,350,259.
- In every grant assessment process and report to the Edmonton Arts Council 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 expertise in diverse artforms and artistic practices on the panels.

**Action 7.3:** *Build funding mechanisms with an emphasis on: multi-year projects, mentorships, residencies, professional development.*

- The Edmonton Arts Council launched the Dance Residency Pilot in 2024 after consultation with dancers in Edmonton about barriers to success in the dance community. The residency pairs an individual or collective with a collaborative organization. The successful applicant to the Dance Residency Pilot will be announced in 2025.
- The Edmonton Arts Council distributed \$3.4 million to 254 successful grant applications for individuals and collectives. The Edmonton Arts Council distributed \$3.4 million to 254 successful grant applications for individuals and collectives. Through grants for Individuals & Collectives (stream two), the Edmonton Arts Council 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 2024, 33 artists were supported for these types of professional development projects totaling \$263,588.

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

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

**Action 8.1:** *Build funding mechanisms for arts and festival organizations with an emphasis on: Multi-year operating grants; Annual programming grants; Commissions, co-productions and co-presentations of work by artists, ad-hoc groups, collectives and ensembles; Dissemination and artistic exchange of work through tours, exhibitions and digital technologies; Hosting artists and organizations from across Canada and the globe.*

- The Edmonton Arts Council distributed 235 grants totaling more than \$10.7 million to arts and festival organizations.
- The Edmonton Arts Council committed \$15,000 from the Lee Fund for the Arts, specifically to support travel costs for 24 professional Shumka dancers and artistic staff to tour in the eastern United States, together with the National Ballet of Ukraine.

**Action 8.2:** *Develop and support a management services model with and for the arts community.*

- The Edmonton Arts Council is supporting a two-year study by Stone-Olafson and the Rosza Foundation on the attitudes and behaviours of Alberta arts audiences. The research is designed to support and help leaders across the arts sector as they work through challenges and trends that have been accelerated by COVID.

**Action 8.3:** *Establish and nurture a partnership framework with arts funders to co-ordinate investments, shared measurement and promotion of the public value of the arts.*

- In 2024, the Edmonton Arts Council hosted the Alberta Tri-Level arts funder meeting, including a meeting with the new CEO of the Canada Council, Michelle Chawla. These meetings have been a decades-long, nation-wide practice to bring funders together to share learnings, explore new trends and innovations, improve understanding and processes, and network. These community building exercises have, in the past, informed the development of shared policy, investment, and programming.

**Action 8.4:** *Invest in Edmonton Arts Council operations to develop staff capabilities and technological infrastructure to manage investments, public art and conservation projects and customize digital platforms to measure and demonstrate the value and impact of the arts.*

- Edmonton Arts Council Collections Services team members travelled to Calgary in August for a collaborative learning opportunity with their City of Calgary counterparts. The teams from Calgary and Edmonton shared knowledge with each other about adapting bronze treatment to Alberta conditions.
- Edmonton Arts Council has updated its Public Art collection database and project management software.

**Action 8.5:** *Provide change capital to cultural organizations to retool and reorganize to meet the needs of a rapidly changing city.*

- Through the Invent & Adapt grant program, the Edmonton Arts Council invested in arts organizations as they navigated complex operational challenges, built capacity, and adapted to changing environments.

Canada Council support of the program augmented the 2024 funding budget with an additional \$100,000 to be allocated to organizations.

Projects related to change capital included:

- Ballet Edmonton transitioned leadership roles and added new positions to support the organization's growth.
- Chronos Music Society invested in system building, process documentation, information management and internal communication.
- Common Ground Arts Society improved its stability and succession capacity.
- Edmonton New Shadow Theatre is implementing a four-stage succession plan to secure the future of its leadership.

### **2025 Edmonton Arts Council Strategic Priorities**

Last year represented the midway point of *Connections & Exchanges*. Edmonton Arts Council leadership worked with our Research, Measurement and Analytics team to assess progress in the first five years of the plan and create a refreshed operational plan to guide the work over the next five years. Progress on all 35 Actions assigned to the Edmonton Arts Council were assessed, and the process identified 11 Actions as priorities going forward. The prioritized Actions are: 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 6.1, 6.3, 7.3, 8.1, 8.2.

Once the 11 priority Actions were identified, work continued to standardize workplans, analyze for gaps, and align workplans with the prioritized Actions, including scheduling, and a RASCI matrix that identifies who is Responsible, Accountable, Supporting, Consulted, and Informed.

The result is a living operational workplan, which will assist the leadership and the staff teams to understand the work, and direct resources effectively towards the goals of the plan.

### **Measurement, Evaluation and Learning Framework**

The Edmonton Arts Council 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 Edmonton Arts Council 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 strategic aims. Below is the breakdown of the eight aims with sample measures that construct the performance measurement system. The survey data reports for artists and arts and festival organizations with all measures are produced annually, while the public survey measures are reported biennially.

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

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

The measures of Aim One directly align with the City Plan’s Intentions 1.2.3, 6.1.2, and 6.2.1.

Sample Measures	Survey Data Source	Calculation	2022	2023	2024
Edmonton offers great arts and cultural experiences	Artists	% strongly agree or agree	79%	82%	83%
Edmonton offers great arts and cultural experiences	Organizations	% strongly agree or agree	93%	94%	97%
Edmonton offers great arts and cultural experiences	Public	% strongly agree or agree	69%*	70%	--

\*This figure reflects the 2021 public survey data as this survey is only conducted every two years.

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

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

The measures of Aim Two directly align with the City Plan’s Intentions 1.2.3, 1.3.1, and 6.2.1.

Sample Measures	Survey Data Source	Calculation	2021	2023
Arts and culture make your communities better places to live	Public	% strongly agree or somewhat agree	87%	87%
Arts and cultural experiences help bring people from diverse backgrounds together as a community	Public	% strongly agree or somewhat agree	87%	85%
Participating in arts and cultural activities builds a shared sense of community identity	Public	% strongly agree or somewhat agree	85%	85%
Arts and culture are important to your quality of life	Public	% strongly agree or somewhat agree	80%	82%

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

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

There are no quantitative survey measures associated with this aim.

Measurement and progress tracking of this aim is done using qualitative methods and Geographic Information System (GIS) ecology mapping.

The measures of Aim Three directly align with the City Plan’s Intentions 1.2.3, 6.1.2, and 6.2.1.

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

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

The measures of Aim Four directly align with the City Plan’s Intentions 1.2.3 and 6.2.1.

Sample Measures	Survey Data Source	Calculation	2021	2023
Rating on “easy access to arts and cultural events, festivals, activities, and facilities”	Public	% very good + good	65%	65%

Sample Measures	Survey Data Source	Calculation	2021	2023
Rating on “the number of different platforms or channels that make you aware of arts and cultural events, festivals, activities, and facilities”	Public	% very good + good	49%	51%
Percentage of the public saying “nothing has prevented me from taking part in arts and cultural opportunities in Edmonton”	Public	% no barriers	6%	20%

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

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

The measures of Aim Five directly align with the City Plan’s Intentions 6.1.2 and 6.2.1.

Sample Measures	Survey Data Source	Calculation	2022	2023	2024
Edmonton’s arts and culture has a great international reputation	Artists	% strongly agree or agree	31%	36%	39%
Edmonton offers great opportunities for artists to exchange ideas and expertise nationally and internationally	Artists	% strongly agree or agree	31%	38%	39%
Percentage of artists that engaged in at least one international idea-sharing experience in the past 12 months	Artists	% yes	30%	37%	34%

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

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

The measures of Aim Six directly align with the City Plan’s Intentions 1.2.3, 3.2.2, and 6.2.1.

### Attachment 3

Sample Measures	Survey Data Source	Calculation	2022	2023	2024
You had sufficient opportunities to interact, gather, share ideas, and learn from the local arts community	Artists	% strongly agree or agree	56%	59%	61%
You had sufficient opportunities to receive knowledgeable, constructive feedback about your artistic work	Artists	% strongly agree or agree	47%	51%	57%
Edmonton offers sufficient physical platforms for artistic communication within the local arts community (e.g., in-person workshops, spaces, conferences, etc.)	Artists	% strongly agree or agree	35%	37%	42%
Edmonton is a good place to be an artist	Artists	% strongly agree or agree	69%	71%	68%

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

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

The measures of Aim Seven directly align with the City Plan’s Intentions 6.1.2 and 6.2.1.

Sample Measures	Source Data	Calculation	2022	2023	2024
Total dollar amount provided to Individuals and Collectives through grants	Edmonton Arts Council System Data	\$ amount	\$3,286,927	\$4,196,553	\$3,447,680
% of gross personal income from artistic practice	Artists Survey Data	Mean %	43%	45%	44%

Table – Grant Amounts Awarded to Individuals and Collectives by Project Primary Artistic Practice

Project Primary Artistic Practice	Grant Amounts Awarded	Percentage of Total Grant Amount Awarded
Music	\$860,909	25.0%
Visual Art	\$787,401	22.8%
Theatre	\$511,426	14.8%
Literary Art	\$335,720	9.7%
Media Art	\$335,612	9.7%
Indigenous Arts	\$179,113	5.2%
Dance	\$148,169	4.3%
Multi-Disciplinary	\$140,233	4.1%
Deaf and Disability Arts	\$63,432	1.8%
Other	\$52,265	1.5%
Arts and Cultural Workers	\$33,400	1.0%
Total	\$3,447,680	100.0%

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

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

The measures of Aim Eight directly align with the City Plan’s Intentions 6.1.2 and 6.2.1

Sample Measures	Data Source	Calculation	2022	2023	2024
Total dollar amount provided to Arts and festival organizations through grants	Edmonton Arts Council system data	\$ amount	\$10,764,272	\$11,012,233	\$10,714,081
Funding from the Edmonton Arts Council supported your organization’s capacity to build economic resilience	Organizations survey	% strongly agree or agree	73%	76%	66%

### Attachment 3

Sample Measures	Data Source	Calculation	2022	2023	2024
Municipal proportion of provincial cultural GDP	Creative City Network of Canada	% municipal proportion*	33.3%	32.2%	32.7%

\*Data is available up to the year 2022: we received an update for 2020 in 2022, an update for 2021 in 2023, and an update for 2022 in 2024.