



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee **Date:** September 6, 2023

From: Marie Fenwick, Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services **File:** 11-7000-11-01/2023-Vol 01

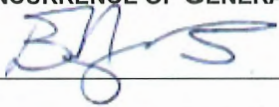


Re: **Richmond Arts Facilities Needs Assessment**

Staff Recommendation

1. That the proposed scope of work for the Richmond Arts Facilities Needs Assessment as presented in the report titled, "Richmond Arts Facilities Needs Assessment," dated September 6, 2023, from the Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services, be endorsed; and
2. That one-time funding of \$75,000 be considered in the 2024 budget process.

CM Fenwick

Marie Fenwick
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REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Finance Department	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS:	APPROVED BY CAO
		

Staff Report

Origin

At the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee meeting on April 25, 2023, representatives from the Richmond Arts Coalition, Richmond Delta Youth Orchestra (RDYO) and Richmond Community Concert Band (RCCB) delegated on the topic of arts space needs.

Following the presentation, staff received the following referral:

1. *That staff investigate:*
 - (a) *interim support with these immediate and emerging Musical Arts Space Needs;*
 - (b) *launching an External Arts Needs Assessment; and*
 - (c) *long-term vision to build purpose-built space for Music and Performing Arts in Richmond; and*

2. *That staff consult with Richmond School District No. 38 to explore opportunities to utilize any potential space; and report back.*

Staff responded to items 1(a) and 2 in a memo to Mayor and Councillors dated July 5, 2023, that described staff support for the two groups facing displacement due to the slated June 2023 closure of Brighthouse United Church. Since that date, RCCB has secured a new location and RYDO has found a temporary solution to their space needs.

The purpose of this report is to respond to item 1(b) to launch an Arts Facilities Needs Assessment.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #1 Proactive in Stakeholder and Civic Engagement:

Proactive stakeholder and civic engagement to foster understanding and involvement and advance Richmond's interests.

1.3 Increase the reach of communication and engagement efforts to connect with Richmond's diverse community.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #2 Strategic and Sustainable Community Growth:

Strategic and sustainable growth that supports long-term community needs and a well-planned and prosperous city.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #6 A Vibrant, Resilient and Active Community:

Vibrant, resilient and active communities supported by a wide variety of opportunities to get involved, build relationships and access resources.

6.1 Advance a variety of program, services, and community amenities to support diverse needs and interests and activate the community.

6.3 Foster intercultural harmony, community belonging, and social connections.

6.5 Enhance and preserve arts and heritage assets in the community.

This report supports the Council-approved Richmond Arts Strategy 2019-2024 Strategic Direction #3 Invest in the Arts:

3.1 Build creative capacity through planning and development.

3.1.4 Identify priority cultural amenity opportunities through development.

3.5 Integrate the arts at a strategic level in community, economic, tourism, environmental and wellness planning.

3.5.4 Conduct a deeper analysis of the data collected through the community engagement process and connect, where applicable, to relevant data from other sources.

This report supports the Council-approved Richmond Arts Strategy 2019-2024 Strategic Direction #5 Activate public spaces through (and for) the arts:

5.1 Work towards meeting the demand for creative spaces and cultural facilities.

5.1.6 Complete a Cultural Facilities Needs Assessment and conduct feasibility studies as may arise from it.

5.1.11 Plan for future arts facilities to address the demand for Arts Education and Program Space.

Background

As per the Council referral and the Richmond Arts Strategy, a Richmond Arts Facility Needs Assessment (Needs Assessment) will enable staff to gain a better understanding of the needs and opportunities for expanding the number and type of purpose-built arts spaces in Richmond. Arts and cultural spaces are unique to the communities they serve and therefore there is no industry-standard benchmarking specific to the provision of arts and culture spaces and programs. While multi-purpose spaces can be used for some creative programs, many arts practices require facilities that are designed and equipped especially for them. This project will give the City a better understanding of the needs and aspirations unique to Richmond.

Arts facilities help promote liveability and individual well-being by encouraging social inclusion through the provision of community spaces with affordable arts programs and services as well as a range of opportunities to experience the arts. These are key places for positive social interaction and creative expression that can transcend language, of particular importance to new immigrants and youth.

The arts are integral to quality of life and quality of place. Cities that distinguish themselves from other cities based on strong or profitable identities, cultures, or arts and crafts, gain a competitive advantage as “destination cities” for cultural tourism. As well, arts amenities and the availability of cultural experiences are tied to the ability of urban centres to attract skilled workers.

The City of Richmond currently owns and/or operates three facilities with purpose-built arts spaces:

- Gateway Theatre (1984);
- Richmond Cultural Centre: Richmond Arts Centre, Richmond Art Gallery, Performance Hall (1993); and
- Richmond Cultural Centre Annex (Opening in 2023).

During the 30-year period since the opening of the Cultural Centre, Richmond has experienced a 69% increase in population overall (with the highest percentage increase in the City Centre) and a significant shift in demographics. This has brought a commensurate increased interest in and demand for community spaces and cultural experiences of all kinds. The Needs Assessment will allow us to get a better understanding of needs and aspirations for a range of arts spaces in Richmond.

Analysis

Scope of Work

The following proposed scope of work, which is in alignment with the delegation’s request and strategic directions of the Richmond Arts Strategy, will include:

- Richmond context
 - o Population, demographics, land area
 - o Trends and leading practices
 - o Regional considerations
- Community input and engagement
 - o Targeted stakeholder interviews and data collection
 - o Previously collected survey data from stakeholders and general public
- Asset Analysis of existing City of Richmond arts spaces
 - o Description, condition, usage, gaps
 - o Includes spaces for performance, exhibition, production, rehearsal, education, storage, and other ancillary uses
- Needs and Opportunities
- Recommendations

The Needs Assessment will provide important material to inform decisions around arts spaces including those regarding capital requests and amenity space opportunities in City Centre, such as in the growing Arts District, per the Official Community Plan. Moreover, it is an essential step towards responding to the final section of the April 25, 2023, staff referral regarding a long-term vision to build purpose-built space specifically for music and performing arts.

Timing

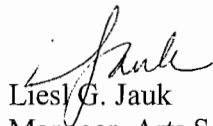
Should the project be approved as part of the 2024 budget process, the project will be initiated in Q2 with a report to council anticipated by end of the year.

Financial Impact

A request for one-time funding of \$75,000 will be brought forward as part of the 2024 budget process.

Conclusion

Arts facilities play a vital role in creating an inclusive, healthy and vibrant community and can be exciting economic drivers to attract tourism and skilled workers. The Richmond Arts Facilities Needs Assessment is needed in order to make sound decisions regarding future investments in the health and growth of Richmond's arts and culture eco-system, to meet the current and future needs.



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