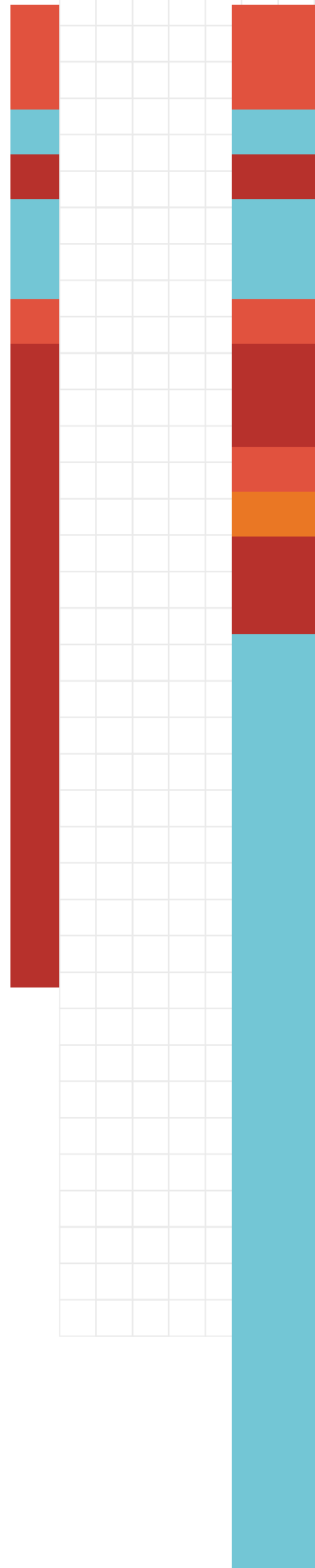




**2023**

# **ANNUAL REPORT**



## Table of Contents

- Ta-Tawâw.....3
- Message From The Board.....4
- Message From The Executive Director.....5
- The Benefits Of a Thriving Arts Sector.....6
- Understanding Artists' Needs and Market Offerings .....7
- The Challenge for Developers.....10
- The City of Edmonton's Commitments to Arts and Culture in 2023.....12
- Alignment As Art Partners .....14
- Connections & Exchanges .....15
- Alignment with the Edmonton 2020 City Plan.....16
- We Are Arts Space Planners .....18
  - 2023 Accomplishments as Planners.....18
- We Are Arts Space Operators and Managers .....20
  - 2023 Accomplishments as Operators and Managers.....20
- We Are Arts Space Advocates .....25
  - 2023 Accomplishments as Advocates .....25
- We Are Arts Space Trusted Advisors.....27
  - 2023 Accomplishments as Trusted Advisors .....27
- The Habitat - Our Arts Spaces .....30
- ArtsHub Creative Studios .....31
- ArtsHub Ortona.....32
- ArtsHub McLuhan House.....33
- ArtsHub McLuhan House Garage Studio .....34
- ArtsHub I18.....35
- Project & Funding Partners.....36
- Arts Habitat Space Tenant Programming .....37
- Arts Habitat Edmonton Directory.....38
- Board of Directors.....38
- Staff.....38



# Message From The Board

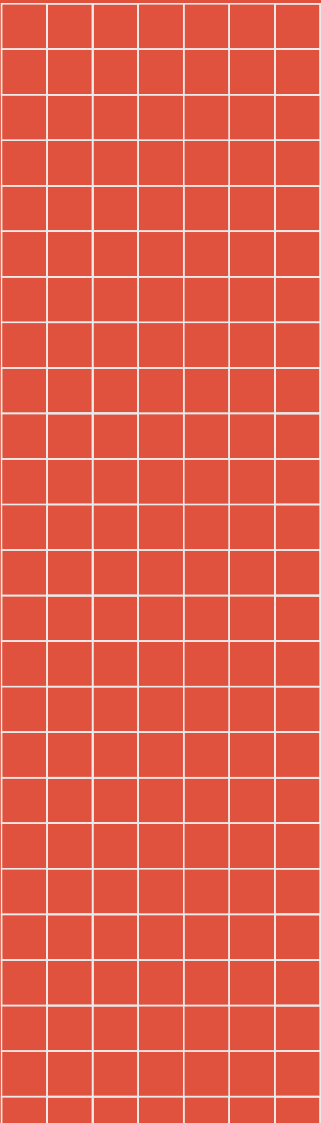
Arts Habitat Edmonton operates with a diverse volunteer Board of Directors and a team of skilled staff who are jointly focused on delivering our mandate on behalf of Edmonton's City Council. We focus on our purpose; to identify, manage, and build appropriate and affordable space for the arts. Whether it's living, working, rehearsal, exhibition, workshop, practice, or performative spaces, we are committed to enabling access to art space for Edmonton's professional artists and cultural creatives.

In a post-pandemic world, we have seen a surge in the need for art spaces across the arts community. People have returned to public spaces and rediscovered the need to gather, connect, and share, to experience community and belonging. However; we are still feeling the effects of a recovering economy. Affordability has been a main concern for artists. The increasing costs of living question an artist's ability to afford to practice their art. Still, we are encouraged by our ongoing collaborations with the property owners who are leading the pack towards a city that is purpose-built for the arts. We make sure to collaborate with all stakeholders and utilize our network expertise to craft workable deals that enable us to build an inventory of arts and cultural spaces.

Ken Chapman - Chair

## On behalf of the Board of Arts Habitat

- Stephanie Chai
- Erick Estrada
- Viktoria Grynenko
- Heather Inglis
- Jenna Stanton



## Message From The Executive Director

Edmonton's creative economy faces hardships from the residual effects of a rebooting economy. Poignant to this, is an unwavering desire for arts and culture in our prairie city. Arts Habitat Edmonton's responsibility is as crucial as ever; to lead our creative economy back to a place of prosperity, community, and connection, with a secure foothold for the arts.

Edmonton is a promising city to be in right now. It's on the cusp of transformational change. This year the zoning bylaws have changed to increase the diversity of housing, and we have yet to see its impact on our communities, and the space options that develop as a result. Arts Habitat Edmonton is excited to lead the arts community into this new frontier for the city. As arts space planners, operators, managers, advocates, and trusted advisors, we are fueled by our vision to make Edmonton a hub of dynamic, sustainable, and entrepreneurial artistic communities.

This year lays some of the final groundwork to launch both ArtsHub Ortona and ArtsHub Creative Studios in 2024. Since 2018, we have worked in partnership with the City's administration to secure a long-term lease and ongoing

operational funding for Arts Habitat Edmonton to manage ArtsHub Ortona. We are proud Arts Habitat's expertise and hard work has secured a future ArtsHub Ortona and retained it as a building serving Edmonton's arts community.

As we grow into managing an increased number of arts spaces, we are implementing a co-working software system across our properties, allowing us to manage our membership growth, book short and long-term rentals, and administer documentation.

The closer we get to opening days, the more energized we are to get these facilities filled with the artists and cultural workers who help our city shine. We look forward to seeing the personality each ArtsHub develops and we are keen to meet the communities that fill the spaces.

I would like to thank our volunteer board, staff, and supporters, for their hard work in making these new facilities become a reality.

Sincerely,

Julian Mayne



## The Benefits Of a Thriving Arts Sector

Arts Habitat Edmonton has been enforcing the fact that investing in non-market cultural infrastructure has both direct and indirect benefits for any community, including improved quality of life, increased economic activity, and enhanced competitiveness in attracting people and investment.

In 2023, Arts Habitat attended the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board's Housing Symposium: REenvision Housing, at the Edmonton Convention Centre. The keynote speaker, Chris Fair, President, Resonance Consultancy, reaffirmed Arts Habitat's understanding of what a city's strong arts sector can contribute to the bigger picture. The creative economy, as Fair (2023) explained, plays a huge role in the longevity of a city's attractiveness. As we continue to move towards knowledge and innovation-based economies, the attractiveness of a city has shifted towards the services and experiences it can offer. The next predicted era of urbanization is a city's ability to be a place of transformation. People seek places where they can improve their education, health, well-being, and experiences to positively transform their way of life. This transformation comes threefold: livability, lovability, and prosperity.

To be livable; a city must be affordable, safe, have abundant opportunities, and preferably a good climate (Fair, 2023). However; on a global scale these livable factors are too competitive to create any differentiation. So to attract talent, investment, and visitors, cities need to be loveable to compete.

Lovable regions grow from urban centers with:

- business localization,
- immersive shopping experiences,
- the socialization of central business districts,
- rewilding of urban parks,
- workplaces that prioritize well-being,
- robust nighttime economies,

And who use inclusive and accessible place-making in the city's development.

Arts Habitat Edmonton's vision is to create dynamic, sustainable, and entrepreneurial artistic communities that thrive in Edmonton. This vision directly impacts Edmonton's shift to becoming a more lovable city.

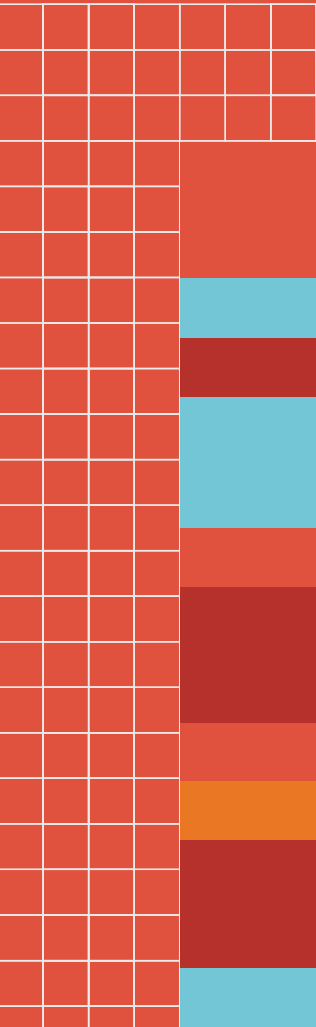
# Understanding Artists' Needs and Market Offerings

Artists are not just painters.

## Who are Artists?

Sculptors, Makers, Crafters, Multimedia Artists, Writers, Poets, Fashion Designers, Wood Workers, Rock Carvers, Dancers, Performers, Musicians, Actors & Actresses, Podcasters, Photographers, Videographers, Cinematographers, Directors, Producers, Textile Workers, Glass Blowers, Potters, Metal Workers...

Artists are Innovators, Creators, and Contributors.



The biggest subsidizers of professional artists are the artists themselves. To be a professional artist is to be an entrepreneur. When you are outside the arts community, there is often a disconnect when trying to understand the financial expenses that come with producing art.

In 2023, to better understand the financial challenges of professional artists, Arts Habitat Edmonton contracted Hill Strategies Research Inc. to produce the report *Statistical Profile of Artists In Edmonton in 2021*. The following table exhibits a comparison using the report's Artist Median Personal Monthly Income statistic (includes all revenues of income) from 2021 census data to convey an estimate of savings in different art professions. The following table estimates the monthly expenses and overhead costs of artists based on Arts Habitat's knowledge of market offerings, a cost of living analysis from 2020 Numbeo historical data and the Government of Alberta average residential rent index. The table showcases the costs of artists self-funding their work and the income inequality artists face.

## The overhead and monthly costs of producing art

	Professional Oil Painter	Professional Drummer	Professional Writer
Artist Startup costs (sunk costs)	Brushes, palette knives, easel, smock, lamp, palette <b>\$830</b>	Drum set, speakers, microphones, earplugs <b>\$3,595</b>	Freelance editor fees, publishing fees <b>\$5,000</b>
A. Artist Monthly Overhead costs:	Studio rent <b>\$500</b>	Studio rent <b>\$500</b>	Coworking membership full-time rent <b>\$360</b>
	Studio utilities, studio insurance, promotion of you paintings ex. website and advertisements, technology payment(s) <b>\$100</b>	Musician association fee, promotional; budget ex. website and advertisements <b>\$35</b>	Promotional budget ex. website and advertisements, technology payment(s) <b>\$40</b>
B. Artist Monthly Arts Expenses	Stretched canvas, acrylic paint set and model fees <b>\$515</b>	Performance space, venue, recording studio fee, album production fee <b>\$300</b>	Writing program fees (ex. Grammarly) <b>\$12</b>
Total Monthly Art Costs (A+B)	<b>\$1,115</b>	<b>\$835</b>	<b>\$412</b>
C. Average Monthly Cost of Living in Edmonton <sup>1</sup>	<b>\$2,048</b>	<b>\$2,048</b>	<b>\$2,048</b>
Total monthly costs (A+B+C)	<b>\$3,163</b>	<b>\$2,883</b>	<b>\$2,460</b>
E. Monthly Median Employment Income From Art in 2020 <sup>2</sup>	-Art sales -Commissioned work <b>\$1,033</b>	-Gigs and ticket sales -Drumming lessons <b>\$1,033</b>	-Book sales -Wattpad originals -Wattpad creator programs <b>\$1,033</b>
D. Monthly Median Personal Income from Other Sources in 2020 <sup>3</sup>	<b>\$1,400</b>	<b>\$1,400</b>	<b>\$1,400</b>
Net (D+E) - (A+B+C)	<b>-\$730</b>	<b>-\$450</b>	<b>-\$27</b>

<sup>1</sup> The data for the Average Monthly Cost of Living in Edmonton are from Government of Alberta, Edmonton - Average Residential Rent (2023). Retrieved March 1, 2024, from <https://regionaldashboard.alberta.ca/region/edmonton/average-residential-rent/#/custom/unit-type/>. And Historical Prices in Edmonton. (2024). Retrieved March 1, 2024, from <https://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/city-history/in/Edmonton>. And Cost of Living Estimator in Edmonton, Canada. (2024). Retrieved March 1, 2024, <https://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/city-estimator/in/Edmonton>.

<sup>2</sup> Hill, K. (2023, October 24). Statistical Profile of Artists in Edmonton in 2021. Hills Strategies Research Inc. <https://statsinsights.hillstrategies>.

<sup>3</sup> Hill, K. (2023, October 24). Statistical Profile of Artists in Edmonton in 2021. Hills Strategies Research Inc. <https://statsinsights.hillstrategies>.



As you can see in the table, it is financially straining to be a practicing professional artist. In this example, the supply and equipment prices are estimated based on mid-range priced products found in local art supply stores. Each artist category has a strong foundation of equipment, space, and tools to showcase artists' wants and needs to create. Arts Habitat acknowledges that even within our estimated art supply costs there are large discrepancies in quality and types of equipment and tools available to artists, and that each artist's preference is unique. It is important to note that artist's supplies are often not purchased at the same time. An artist's work and income are more sporadic than shift, salary, and base-wage jobs that receive more regular income cycles. In light of this, artists will make do with what they have to produce their art. Despite the variety in price for equipment and tools, it remains pertinent across all artist categories, the largest financial barrier artists face to produce their art is the cost of paying rent for their studio, rehearsal, or performance space.

If purpose-built art space or market price space is too expensive, artists will typically settle for off-market prices in old buildings that often come with health and safety issues. Unaffordable rent prices force artists to seek off-market space in undesirable locations. When we don't prioritize artists in the commercial space market, we communicate to artists that we don't value all the direct and indirect benefits their work brings to our local communities and economy. It conveys a negative message to artists, and it reinforces the idea that you need to move away from Edmonton to build a career in the arts. This notion moves the city further away from achieving the vision Edmontonians have set for Edmonton 2050<sup>1</sup>. Looking at the savings line in the comparison table above, if rent is subsidized, it would move artists in a break even position enough so that they can continue to self-subsidize their equipment, tools, and business costs. Subsidizing rent can help artists keep producing their art, which will organically continue to produce direct and indirect residual value felt throughout Edmonton.


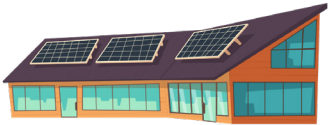



<sup>1</sup> from CONNECTEDMONTON, the City of Edmonton's Strategic report

## The Challenge for Developers

Edmonton artists are used to producing their art in buildings with unfavorable conditions, as it is all they can afford. This mindset poses a barrier to the change-makers who will remake existing space into more purpose-built art space. Any increase in the cost of space causes immediate backlash from the artist's community, which contradicts the desire to invest in creating sustainable long-term space for the arts. Both developers and artists know that artist activity improves the attractiveness of a community. Developers want to invest in and develop properties that meet their standards for inspection. Developers and artists both know artists deserve better working conditions, but nothing can be done without a positive bottom line. Most building projects get stuck in a negative cause-and-effect cycle. Artists and the arts community at large want better conditions and more purpose-built space to practice their crafts, but they can't afford the rent increases that will justify the investment in art space. On the other side of the same coin, developers can't justify an investment in the space without a direct positive rate of return from the space. So here lies the challenge: how can the financial longevity of art space be made to be desirable to developers?

# Opportunities and Challenges for Developers to Support Art Spaces

	Market Rate	Subsidized Market Rate	Off-Market Rate
Ownership model:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>These buildings are privately owned by the Developer.</li><li>Rent is set to cover the building operating fees and allow the building to make a profit.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>These buildings are built with a mix of private and public ownership. These ownership models are called PPPs for Private Public Partnerships.</li><li>PPPs use grant funding or public investment to subsidize rent costs.</li><li>A partnership with Arts Habitat Edmonton or other social enterprise organizations offer the funds to subsidize art space rent and apply for grants for capital project costs.</li><li>Important note: a subsidized rent price is similar to an off market price, but the quality of facility is higher. Artists deserve appropriate and accessible places to create.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>These buildings are privately owned. The owners of these spaces are typically looking to sell the building, and in that time they will charge less than market rate to recuperate as much money to offset the cost of owning the building.</li></ul>
Standard of space:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Quality space, not necessarily purpose-built for the arts. Longevity of affordability is low, space longevity is medium.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>New purpose-built for the arts or rehabilitated existing space made to be purpose-built for the arts. The longevity of affordability and space is high.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Old or abandoned space, often with health and safety concerns. Space longevity is low.</li></ul>
			

As shown in the table above, PPPs (Public Private Partnerships), allow developers to create space that is a financially viable investment. Partnering with a not-for-profit social enterprise, like Arts Habitat Edmonton, is a successful way to increase the longevity of accessible and appropriate space for the arts.

## The City of Edmonton's Commitments to Arts and Culture in 2023



In the heart of Edmonton lies a steadfast commitment to fostering a vibrant cultural landscape that resonates with the aspirations of its people. This commitment has been realized in the development and enacting of the following strategic plans that guide the city on how to support and expand its arts and culture communities.

### CONNECTEDMONTON

Envisioning the future the people wanted to see resulted in the creation of CONNECTEDMONTON - the City's Strategic Plan for 2019-2028. The information captured in this report was representative of the sentiments felt by 2000+ Edmontonians and their wishes for Edmonton in the year 2050. In this strategy, it was highlighted that **Edmontonians look forward to a future that is supportive of, and thriving with, Arts and Culture.**

### Edmonton City Plan

The City Plan was derived from the 4 Strategic Goals from CONNECTEDMONTON, to create a roadmap to get to the vision for Edmonton 2050. Of the 24 City Building Outcomes listed in the strategy, roughly half of the outcomes are supported by the growth of Arts and Culture.

### Connections & Exchanges

In 2018, at the same time as the development of the City Plan, Arts Habitat Edmonton, the Edmonton Art Council, and the Edmonton Heritage Council developed Connections & Exchanges: A 10-Year Plan to Transform Arts and Heritage In Edmonton that was approved by the City Council. Connections & Exchanges created a framework to hold each arts and heritage organization accountable for working towards strategic outcomes highlighted as critical by arts and culture communities in Edmonton.

**Corporate Business Plan**

In addition to the City's Strategic Plan and Connections & Exchanges, the City of Edmonton's commitment to Arts and Culture, from a short-term outlook, is written into the City's Corporate Business Plan. This plan shares what the City of Edmonton intends for its delivery of programs, services, and capital projects. Arts and culture is a key priority in the Corporate Business. It highlights a specific commitment to providing sustainable facility operating funding to Arts Habitat Edmonton, who will operate the rehabilitated Ortona Armoury as an ArtsHub.

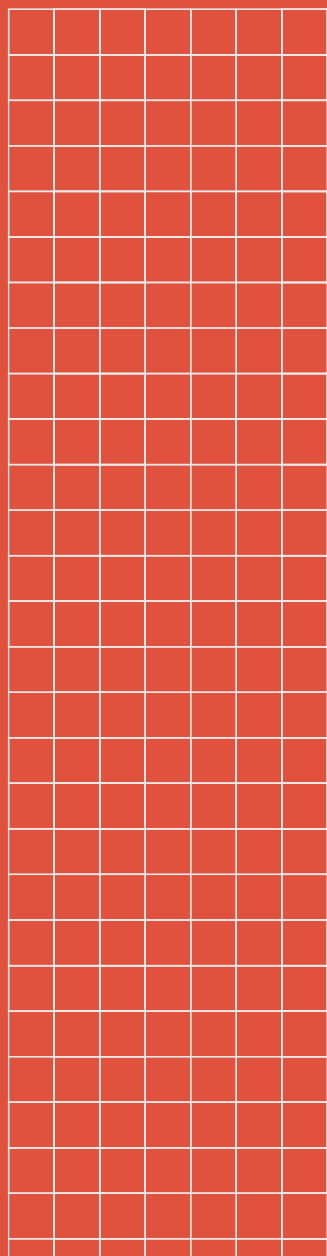
Arts and Culture is woven into an Edmontonian's vision for the future. It touches on each of the above strategic plans in foundational ways. Building space for Arts and Culture in Edmonton works toward the outcomes of the City Plan. Investment in Arts and Culture will impact both the quantity and quality of services and amenities our City can offer, create regional opportunities, and drive the attractiveness of our city bringing both talent and investment.

The City's commitment to Arts and Culture in 2023 is getting stronger. Looking at the City Plan from a top-down approach, the City has developed clear commitments to achieve the outcomes that support the growth of Arts and Culture in Edmonton. It is exciting to know the Arts are prioritized in both the high-level and ground-floor perspectives of these strategic plans. As each intention is realized, Edmonton gets closer to its vision of a city where Arts and Culture are thriving.





## Alignment As Art Partners



### About Arts Habitat Edmonton

Arts Habitat is the organizational face and collective voice that advocates for space for the arts, at all levels of government. Born from a requested initiative by Edmonton City Council in 1995, Arts Habitat Edmonton is to provide consultation and advice to achieve greater accessibility to space for Edmonton's artistic community. Our direct ties with the City of Edmonton, hold us accountable to City approval and funding, so it is important that our mandate contributes to the goals set by the City and Council. We bring our knowledge and expertise together to identify and partner with community leaders and influencers to champion the need for creative hubs, live/work space, and look for other opportunities to grow arts spaces in Edmonton.

### Partners Include:

- The City of Edmonton
- Edmonton Arts Council
- Edmonton Heritage Council
- Creative Hubs across Canada
- Calgary Arts Development Association
- Various Community Groups

# Connections & Exchanges

Arts and Culture planning in the City of Edmonton is unique in its approach, as it is separate from municipal governments' administrative functions. It is unlike most other Canadian cities in that it operates independently, by three organizations; Edmonton Arts Council, the Edmonton Heritage Council, and Arts Habitat Edmonton.

The partnership of the three organizations created Connections & Exchanges. Connections & Exchanges is a 10-year (2019-2029) Arts and Heritage plan that lights the path for Arts and Culture in Edmonton. In alignment with the CONNECTEDMONTON - the Strategic Plan created by City Council, Connections & Exchanges sets out to support Arts and Culture communities, turn Edmonton into a hub for creativity and develop a thriving and well-funded arts and heritage ecosystem.



## Arts Habitat's responsibilities in Connections & Exchanges plan include the following:

- Contribute actively to placemaking that includes cultural landscape, natural history, built history, object, language, and story.
- Apply a Fourth Pillar approach to City of Edmonton planning and policy development: social, environmental, economic, and cultural.
- Provide change capital to cultural organizations to retool and reorganize to meet the needs of a rapidly changing city.
- 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.
- Indigenous peoples are supported in revitalizing and participating in cultural traditions locally that reflect their connections to ancestors, the land and living traditions.
- Stand alongside Indigenous leaders in cultural work and cultural organizations and projects.
- Resource Indigenous-led activities that support the reclamation of Indigeneity.
- Adopt a holistic definition of civic vitality that includes culture (inclusive of heritage) as a valued component.
- Encourage active civic engagement and participation in cultural activities.
- Provide tools, resources and advice to the cultural community in support of space audits, capital project management and asset management solutions.

## Alignment With The Edmonton City Plan

In 2023, Arts Habitat Edmonton embarked on developing the first **Edmonton Cultural Infrastructure Plan (ECIP)** as specified in Connections & Exchanges. Fundamentally, ECIP is aligned with and will help accomplish the City's strategic goals and address the Guiding Values set by the City of Edmonton. ECIP and the Edmonton City Plan will set a standard for Arts and Culture in communities, and it will outline the scope of Arts and Culture's reach. Together these plans will positively influence what will make the city attractive as it evolves into a larger urban center.







# Reporting on Arts Habitat's Strategic Pillars

Arts Habitat Edmonton has identified four strategic pillars that categorize the work that is being done every day in support of Arts and Culture, and the delivery of Connections & Exchanges outcomes.

**ARTS SPACE PLANNERS**

**ARTS SPACE OPERATORS AND MANAGERS**

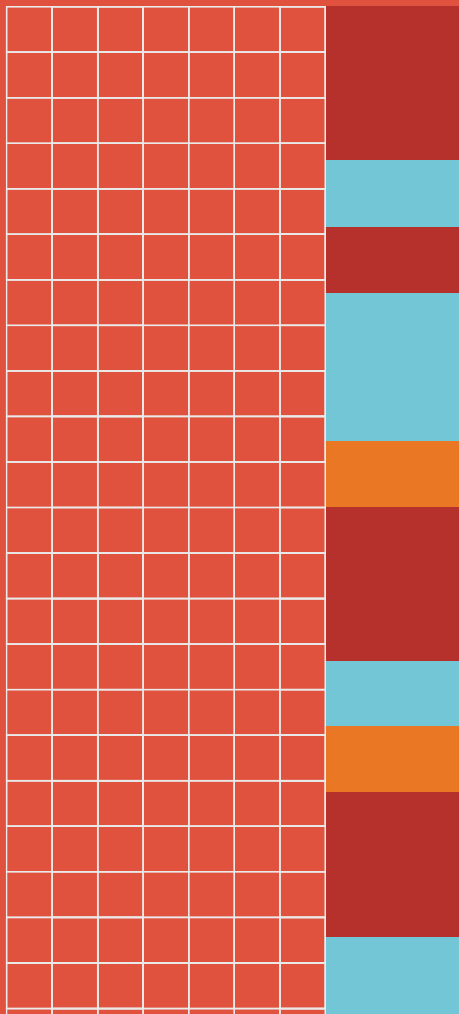
**ARTS SPACE ADVOCATES**

**ARTS SPACE TRUSTED ADVISORS**

## STRATEGIC PILLAR I

# We Are Arts Space Planners

- We are the guardians of Edmonton's first cultural infrastructure plan. We understand what arts spaces are, what exists in our city, what's needed, and what changes take place in the arts space ecosystem in Edmonton.
- We will incent the development of non-market facilities for the arts and affordable housing for artists by becoming a granting partner with arts organizations.



## 2023 Accomplishments as Planners

### Goal: Hire Hatlie Group to facilitate Edmonton's Cultural Infrastructure Plan (ECIP) Development

- In May 2023, Arts Habitat contracted Hatlie Group to outline a roadmap to completing the Edmonton Cultural Infrastructure Plan. This resulted in three key contract components: Project Relationships & Strategy, Cultural Infrastructure Approach, and an Advocacy & Communication plan.
- Working towards the Cultural Infrastructure Approach, Hatlie Group interviewed and produced a report that reviewed and analyzed existing Cultural Infrastructure Plans (CIP) from:
  - City of Hamilton, Tourism and Culture
  - City of Victoria, Create Victoria
  - City of Toronto, Cultural Partnerships
  - STEPS Public Art for St. James Town neighbourhood in Toronto and the City of Stratford
  - City of Calgary, Calgary Arts Development Authority
- This work helped determine the strengths and weaknesses of CIPs where the CIP lives with an agency of the municipality or community non-profit. It informed on what is achievable, and it created a common vernacular for the Edmonton Cultural Infrastructure Plan.
- As part of the Project Relationships & Strategy component of Hatlies work, an Advisory Committee was formed to advise on the Edmonton Cultural Infrastructure Plan. The collective engagement from this committee will help advise on concerns from the findings of the report. Hatlie Group invited Edmonton community leaders from different disciplines to create a diverse advisory committee that could offer a wide array of perspectives to help form solutions to different community challenges that will ultimately contribute to the making of ECIP.



**Goal: Partner with MacEwan University to continue supporting research for the Edmonton Cultural Infrastructure Plan.**

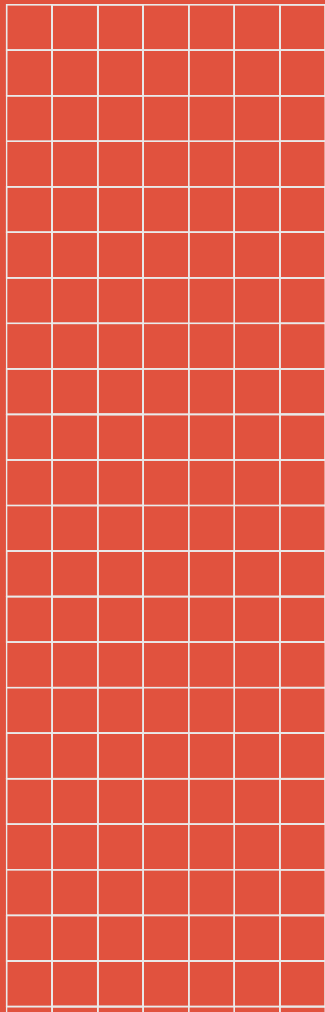
- MITACS (a research and innovation funding program for Canadian companies and institutions) contacted Arts Habitat asking if we would want to participate in its Accelerate program.
- The research project was defined to create a report about the City of Edmonton's development processes.
- The bulk of the project was completed throughout 2023. The student researcher performed a series of interviews with Arts and Culture practitioners and City of Edmonton staff, to create a report both as a guide to (1) instruct development projects on the City of Edmonton's processes, and (2) provide recommendations to improve the processes.
- Moving forward the findings from this report will aid in the creation of ECIP. These findings include a series of policy recommendations for Arts Habitat to explore and possibly action.



## STRATEGIC PILLAR 2

# We Are Arts Space Operators and Managers

- We own, lease, build, renovate, and operate property for the benefit of Edmonton's cultural sector.
- We work with the City to develop and manage City buildings as purpose-built arts spaces.



## 2023 Accomplishments as Operators and Managers

### Goal: Develop and plan the capital project for ArtsHub Creative Studios

- At the beginning of 2023, Arts Habitat Edmonton was in early conversations about opening possible studio space in the Annex Inn & Suites building on 97 Street owned by Jaffer Group of Companies. In preparation for understanding the needs of the arts community, Arts Habitat conducted arts community interviews, reviewed the submissions of the Space Needs Registry, and used this understanding to clarify why this project was needed. After multiple meetings with developers and community discussions, Arts Habitat and Jaffer Group proceeded forward with the project. Next Architecture was contracted to make the building designs.
- Arts Habitat developed a business plan that lays out a route to operational and capital funding. Arts Habitat Edmonton applied for funding with:
  - Canadian Heritage Department-Canada Cultural Spaces Fund (CCSF) [\[Approved\]](#)
  - City of Edmonton Downtown Vibrancy Strategy Funding Program [\[Approved\]](#)
  - City of Edmonton Interior Improvements Grant [\[Approved\]](#)
  - City of Edmonton Storefront Improvement Program [\[Approved\]](#)
  - Government of Canada - Community Services Recovery Fund [Not Approved]
  - Government of Alberta - Community Initiative Program (CIP) Project-Based Funding Stream [Not Approved]
  - Government of Alberta - Community Facility Enhancement Program (CFEP) Small Funding Stream [Not Approved]

- The project solidified after Arts Habitat heard back from the grant applications. Funding was successfully secured through federal and municipal grants. Upon the approval of the Storefront Improvement Grant, the City advised on graffiti management, and crime reduction practices when updating a building exterior.
- Arts Habitat will continue to curate a diverse grant application portfolio on future building projects by applying to all three levels of government for funding. When a project includes various forms of government, the project itself, exemplifies a municipal, provincial, and national view on arts and culture, and having the funding support makes us a more reliable and reputable partner in the eyes of stakeholders.

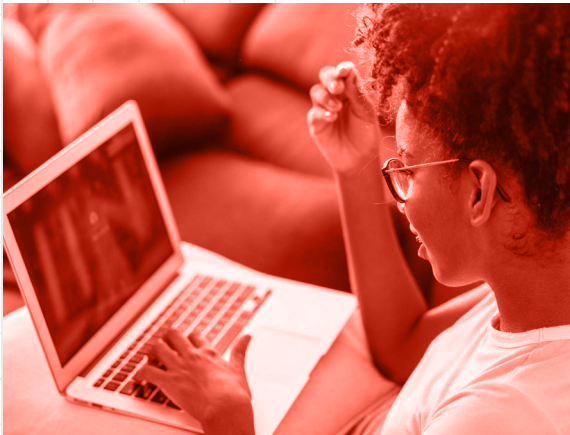
**Goal: Continue on the development of ArtsHub Ortona capital and operational projects**

- In 2023, ArtsHub Ortona entered its last year of planned construction. Arts Habitat Edmonton continued the project development and design to meet this timeline. The team planned to finalize the equipment needs of the facility, operational funding, signing of the ArtsHub Ortona lease, the hiring of a building manager, and the customer service model to manage tenants and booking.
- Throughout this project, Arts Habitat Edmonton met bi-weekly with the City's Ortona project team. As well, this year, Arts Habitat consulted with Schick and Shiner and Associates, and developed a design for the production equipment for ArtsHub Ortona's performance space. In addition, Arts Habitat developed ArtsHub Ortona's operational policies, procedures, and budgets for building spaces, and negotiated the Ortona Lease agreement with the City of Edmonton. The Operation Funding Agreement was approved in December 2023. This agreement provided Arts Habitat Edmonton with the operational funding to run ArtsHub Ortona for the next four years. Raj Nigam was hired as ArtsHub Ortona's General Manager.

- The lesson from this year was that building arts space requires patience, determination, and clear vision. Arts Habitat learned the process of developing a lease for an arts building including both the political and administrative processes at the City of Edmonton.
- With each additional project that Arts Habitat works on with the City, we continue to learn about City processes.

**Goal: Pick a software program to manage ArtsHub bookings and build capacity for future growth**

- Our team planned to do some research into different types of software programs that could help administer booking across multiple properties and automate payments.
- After months of consultation with sales representatives to discover our current and future state needs, we concluded that we were looking for coworking software. We met for two discovery video calls with a sales representative of the following software platforms:
  - Archie
  - Nexodus
  - Artifax
  - Skedda
- We narrowed down our software platform options to Nexodus and Archie. We met with the sales representatives again for additional information on features and pricing details. We proceeded to sign a contract with Archie. Canadian company Archie has the least amount of hidden fees that could ensure affordability remains the priority, the right level of innovation we need for now, with more capabilities to implement as we grow.



- In this process, we rethought Arts Habitat Edmonton's existing policies and procedures managing tenants that would be useful to continue moving forward. The current model of being one-on-one with tenants would prove to take up the capacity of our team when adding ArtsHub Ortona (a new broad-access building with more short-term booking) to our portfolio of properties. Archie can automate invoicing, require Arts Habitat to approve booking requests for select space, showcase a network of property spaces, host customer profiles, display booking availability, and create a calendar of tenant-run programming. These features will improve our customer experience and increase the efficiency of our spaces. Archie will help Arts Habitat continue to develop a database of our arts community.
- The onboarding and implementation process of the Archie software is to begin in January 2024. This will be a 2-part process. Initially, we will set up the web platform and the white-label smartphone application.

## Goal: Create ArtsHub Spruce Avenue

- Arts Habitat worked with the City to take over the lease of Spruce Avenue that was formerly occupied by Workshop West Playwrights Theatre.
- Spruce Avenue has been an established arts building for 40 years.
- After 1.5 years of negotiations, Arts Habitat Edmonton submitted a proposal to the City's leasing department. In April 2023, the City approved a lease to an alternate non-arts proposal.
- We learned through our efforts that the location required a community-use of the building as the land was subject to park zoning. From the City's perspective, the space wasn't an immediate good fit for the Arts. Arts Habitat Edmonton is pleased that door-knocking encouraged the City to see the space value and helped another cultural group secure the space.
- When working with the City of Edmonton, we can use this as a case study to strengthen our processes and collaboration on future projects.

## Goal: Create a management agreement with The Orange Hub

- In 2019, Edmonton's City Council reviewed the Current Leasing Status of the Orange Hub. This discussion included:
  - Adjusting the fixed non-profit lease rate for The Orange Hub.
  - A proposed artist subsidy program intended to make The Orange Hub more affordable for professional artists.
  - The use of third-party organizations to manage space in The Orange Hub, and monitor the professional artist criteria eligibility.
    - The Film and Video Arts Society of Alberta planned to manage up to six spaces.
    - Arts Habitat Edmonton planned to manage up to ten studios, workshops, offices, and classrooms.

- In 2020, FAVA was well underway in setting up shop in the six specified spaces as part of the agreement, but due to the pandemic years, Arts Habitat Edmonton's management of the spaces was put on hold.
- In 2023, the conversation was reopened between The Orange Hub and Arts Habitat Edmonton. Arts Habitat Edmonton met with The Orange Hub management team, to discuss the ten spaces as defined in the Leasing Status.
- It was mutually agreed that it made the most sense for The Orange Hub management team to continue to manage these spaces, but for Arts Habitat Edmonton's expertise to advise on the vetting of a professional artist's eligibility to access space in The Orange Hub.
- This decision resulted in the creation of the Qualification Criteria for Subsidized Art Spaces. This criteria is used to assess individual professional artists and professional arts organizations to be eligible for reduced rates at The Orange Hub and specifies that Arts Habitat Edmonton will administer the application process including reviewing and approving applicant submissions.

**Goal: Build Arts Habitat Edmonton's Team**

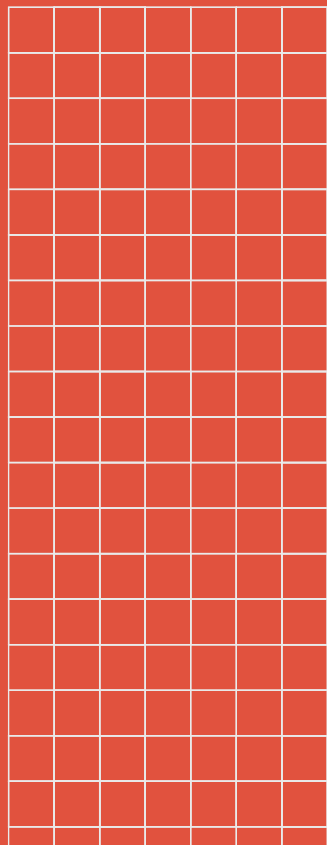
- With increased projects coming in, Arts Habitat planned to add a finance and administration role and a communications role to build the team's capacity with new workflows.
- In Q2 a finance and administration manager was hired.
- In Q4 a communications manager was hired.



### STRATEGIC PILLAR 3

## We Are Arts Space Advocates

- We are the voice of art space issues in Edmonton. We lead the civic conversation about the value of and need for, spaces in which artists can create, rehearse, exhibit, perform, and live.
- We convene conversations with the private and not-for-profit sectors about the need for the identification, development, and management of arts spaces in Edmonton.
- We shape and influence public policy and investment to support thriving cultural infrastructure and public spaces for the arts.



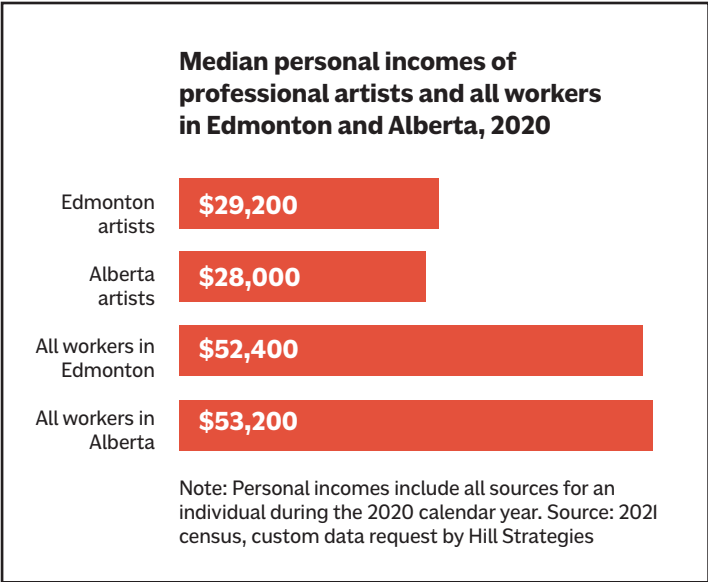
## 2023 Accomplishments as Advocates

### **Goal: Monitor the success of the Creative Spaces Mentoring Network (CSMN) pilot program in Calgary run by ArtsBuild Ontario**

- In 2023, we reached out to ArtsBuild Ontario when they were doing a pilot project for their mentorship program in Calgary with Calgary Arts Development and cSPACE. Arts Habitat attended the first kick-off meeting for their mentorship program for the Calgary run as an observer. All of the mentors and mentees met there for the first time and they discussed their backgrounds. Our involvement in the initial meeting was to figure out if Arts Habitat Edmonton could expand the program across Alberta into Edmonton, with Arts Habitat running the program locally.
- In our meetings and conversations, we saw the value of the program and the interest it generated across Calgarian mentors and mentees, and we saw how it would be great to create it in Edmonton. It was a program that seemed replicable with the resources that Arts Habitat has and it directly serves one of our stated goals: to provide training and capacity building for members of the arts community about cultural infrastructure.
- We learned the pilot project was successful, and our next discussion was about supporting the Edmonton expansion by signing on for a joint grant application organized and submitted by ArtsBuild for this Edmonton/Calgary expansion in 2024/2025.
- Moving forward we will implement the program using the strategies that were successful in Calgary.

**Goal: Obtain more information on the financial reality of artists**

- In 2023, we sponsored Hill Strategies Research Inc. to create the article *Statistical Profile of Artists in Edmonton in 2021* which uses an analysis of 2021 census data.
- The report captures important statistics on the financial standing and demographics of artists and cultural workers.
- Key Findings of Professional Artists in Edmonton:
  - Edmonton is home to 4,800 artists
  - 7/10 are self-employed
  - Almost 6/10 are women
  - Median personal incomes are 44% lower than other workers
  - The median personal income of professional artists in Edmonton is \$29,200
  - The median personal income of all workers in Edmonton is \$52,400
  - There are 21,200 cultural workers in Edmonton. In 2020, a typical cultural worker (workers in arts, culture, and heritage occupations) in Edmonton had an employment income of \$42,400 which is 6% less than all Edmonton workers (\$45,200)
- These statistical findings strengthen our vision, and we will continue to commit to providing much-needed appropriate, non-market creative space, to ensure our Professional Artists and Cultural Workers can thrive in Edmonton.



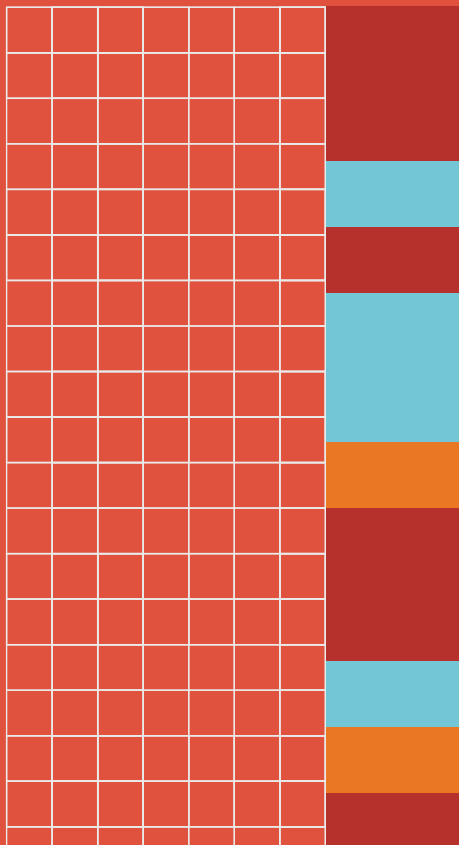
4,800 Artists in Edmonton
Artist Breakdown by Occupation and Industry
1,100 Musicians (23% of the city's artists)
690 Writers (14%)
630 Photographers (13%)
570 producers, directors, choreographers & related occupations (12%)
460 painters, sculptors & other visual artists (9%)
420 artists and crafts people (7%)
320 actors, comedians & circus performers (7%)
310 dancers (7%)
230 other performers (5%)
60 conductors, composers & arrangers (1%)

1,050 Arts Leaders in Edmonton
Artist Breakdown by Occupation and Industry
570 producers, directors, choreographers & related occupations (55% of the arts leaders in the city)
180 managers in publishing, motion pictures, broadcasting & performing arts (17%)
160 library, archive, museum & art gallery managers (15%)
80 conservators & curators (7%)
60 conductors, composers & arrangers (5%)

#### STRATEGIC PILLAR 4

## We Are Arts Space Trusted Advisors

- We understand the space needs of the arts community and use this insight to advise and support the City on projects involving existing or potential living and working arts spaces.
- We report to City Council annually on the space needs of the arts community, and our progress in planning, operating and managing arts spaces.



## 2023 Accomplishments as Trusted Advisors

### Goal: Offer an infrastructure feasibility program to the arts and culture sector

- Arts Habitat wanted to contribute to increasing the viability of projects that aim to increase access to and the sustainability of creative spaces. This resulted in the creation of the Arts Habitat Feasibility Contingency Fund for community organizations to apply for.
- The impact of the fund:
  - Sponsored a feasibility study for the Green Violin Community Development Company.
  - The Green Violin Community Development Company is a non-profit that runs many projects in and around Boyle Street/McCauley/Chinatown.
  - Sponsored a feasibility study for Mile Zero Dance Society.
  - Mile Zero Dance Society used the funds to hire an Architect to do some space planning work and assist with obtaining permits from the City of Edmonton.

### Goal: Provide consultation on the development of the Revillon Boardwalk Building with Allied Properties REIT

- In 2020, Arts Habitat reached out to Allied Properties Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT), and Dialog, to offer our consultation on the basement development of the Revillon Boardwalk building. The Revillon Boardwalk building, previously known as Edmonton's Center High School, is located at 103 Street NW north of 102 Avenue.
- In 2023, Allied Properties REIT, and Arts Habitat met to discuss the potential usage of and affordability of the space.
- This resulted in Arts Habitat Edmonton building relationships with two private developers in the Edmonton area.

### **Goal: Consult with private ownership for the Princess Theatre**

- An Artistic Director of a new Edmonton theatre company, contacted the City of Edmonton for help with a feasibility study of the historic Princess Theatre on Whyte Avenue, to see if it could be transformed into a multipurpose arts event. The City of Edmonton then directed this inquiry to Arts Habitat Edmonton to help determine the project's merit.
- Arts Habitat Edmonton was happy to consult on the project with the new Edmonton theatre company, and both met on site at the Princess Theatre to explore options of the project.
- The consultation led to informing them of a feasibility grant offer they could apply for.
- From this consultation, the new Edmonton theatre company went away with more information to help with the project, and Arts Habitat looks to continue the conversation of this project into 2024 to retain this historic property as a venue for the arts in Edmonton.

### **Goal: Consultat with Oak Hills Community**

- Oak Hills Community Centre in Carter Crest and Leger communities reached out to Arts Habitat to provide consultation on the development of art space in their new community hub project.
- Arts Habitat met with the President of Oak Hills to offer its insight into their designs for purpose-built arts space in their clubhouse.
- The results of the consultation have created space for art workshops, dance programs, and music programs in the new clubhouse that are in the process of being built and set to open in 2024.
- Arts Habitat Edmonton looks forward to the possibility of connecting with more community leagues in the future to collaborate on the development of arts space.

### **Goal: Support Harcourt House in their goal to retain their Alberta Government owned building.**

- Harcourt House was actively campaigning to save their space. Arts Habitat immediately understood the importance of Harcourt House in Edmonton's Arts ecosystem and met multiple times with leadership to offer our support in keeping the institution alive.
- Arts Habitat Edmonton supported Harcourt House by writing letters of support.
- In addition to the letters, Arts Habitat met with the WECAN Food Basket Society, on multiple occasions to discuss the issues Harcourt House was up against and strategize ways the two organizations could support them.
- These conversations are still ongoing, and Arts Habitat will continue to aid in the survival of Harcourt House to its best ability. The effort put towards this initiative has cemented the relationship between our two organizations and will bring future positive relations.

### **Goal: Consult with the Green Violin Community Development Company**

- Koermann Block was previously owned by Arts Habitat Edmonton as this was going to be the location of the newly built Arts Quarters. Arts Habitat met with Green Violin Community Development Company, who had an idea for how the Koermann Block could be used for the Arts.
- Arts Habitat Edmonton was happy to discuss and collaborate on a proposal to the City.
- The result of this consultation propelled the Green Violin to speak with a variety of community organizations to continue to gather information and research on the feasibility of the project.
- This consultation is an example of how Arts Habitat can continue to mobilize projects to benefit arts development.

### **Goal: Assess the potential for arts space in the Jasper Place Hotel on Stony Plain Road**

- A private developer was planning to develop the Jasper Place Hotel into low-income housing with built-in community support onsite. This plan was conditional on finding funding. Arts Habitat Edmonton was approached by the private developer for consultation on a potential community art space in their project.
- Arts Habitat met with the developer at the Jasper Place Hotel and offered insight into the use of the space.
- Arts Habitat is excited to continue the conversation about this space and will help direct requests from artists and groups with potential arts uses that would suit that space.

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# THE HABITAT

## Our Arts Spaces

This year we are excited to welcome the concept of the Habitat. The Habitat is the ecosystem of ArtsHubs (art spaces) we own and/or manage. In November 2023, we proceeded with looking for an advertising agency to help us create a branding system that connected all of our current properties to the Arts Habitat Brand, created distinct identities for each property, and made it easy to replicate as new properties are acquired. We partnered with Vision Creative Inc. a local Edmonton company to realize our concept. We finalized our branding system over the holiday break in December 2023. The approved concepts can be seen on the following pages.



## ArtsHub Creative Studios

Space for the Arts

### ArtsHub Creative Studios

10133-97 Street

ArtsHub Creative Studios, formerly known as the Annex Inn & Suites, is owned by Jaffer Group of Companies. In early 2023, Jaffer Group of Companies approached Arts Habitat to guide and advise on the space's conversion into purpose-built art spaces. In partnership with Jaffer Group, a building design was completed by NEXT Architecture. Funding was secured for this project through contributions from:

- Canadian Heritage Department-Canada Cultural Spaces Fund (CCSF)
- City of Edmonton Downtown Vibrancy Strategy Funding Program
- City of Edmonton Interior Improvements Grant
- City of Edmonton Storefront Improvement Program

Arts Habitat and Jaffer Group of Companies are collaborating on this joint venture, with the goal of being that Arts Habitat moves into the building as their main office, and manage the second-floor office spaces available to arts organizations and basement studio spaces, movement and gallery for artists.



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# ArtsHub Ortona

Space for the Arts

## ArtsHub Ortona

9722-102 Street

In 2018 the City of Edmonton invited Arts Habitat Edmonton to advise and support their initiative to rehabilitate the Ortona Armoury. The building has been in construction for 6 years. Since 2018 in ongoing consultation on this City project, Arts Habitat was asked to present a business case to operate the Ortona Armoury post-rehabilitation. After presenting a business case, Arts Habitat Edmonton secured operational funding to run ArtsHub Ortona starting in 2024 on behalf of the City of Edmonton.

In alignment with Arts Habitat Edmonton's servicing agreement with the City of Edmonton, ArtsHub Ortona will be an arts facility designed to provide broad access to arts space for professional artists, arts organizations, and the greater Edmonton arts community. Professional artists and arts organizations occupying the space will be required to foster a collaborative network that welcomes the greater community to visit, explore, and participate within its doors. Arts Habitat Edmonton is ecstatic to open ArtsHub Ortona in 2024!



Edmonton

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## ArtsHub McLuhan House

Space for the Arts



### ArtsHub McLuhan House

11342 - 64 Street

The McLuhan House, located in the beautiful historic Highlands neighborhood, was restored by Arts Habitat, with support from the City of Edmonton, Edmonton Arts Council, and the Social Enterprise Fund. The home is a great example of how rezoning property into a commercial building, with direct association with the arts, can be successful in a residential area. The McLuhan House is now a secured landmark in the community, and its interpretive photo gallery celebrating Dr. Marshall McLuhan, donated by the McLuhan Estate, and is available for tours upon request.

ArtsHub McLuhan House is taking on the persona of the literary ArtsHub. Literary tenants include YouthWrite, Edmonton Poetry Festival, and The McLuhan Conversation Series. An upstairs studio space is also used by a classical musician for violin teaching, and the Highlands Ukelele Gang meets in the living space of the home.



## ArtsHub McLuhan House

Space for the Arts



Breanna Barrington

## ArtsHub McLuhan House Garage Studio

11342 - 64 Street

Walking out the backdoor of ArtsHub McLuhan House you will spot the McLuhan House Garage Studio. The Garage Studio space offers 540 square feet to work on self-directed projects. This project has been in place since 2016 and has hosted both individual artists and groups. This program aims to offer space and time for the advancement of an artist or artist group's career and is offered at no cost. Each spring a call is put out to individual artists and collaborative teams in all disciplines. Emphasis is placed on finding an artist or artists with a strong project proposal and good potential to succeed in producing artwork in the available space/time. A demonstrated history of self-directed creation and presentation is required.



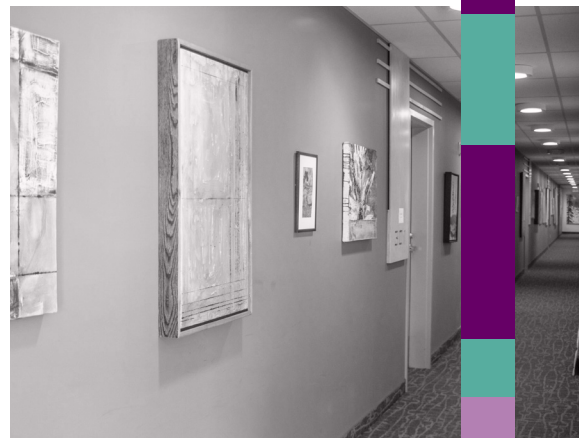
Erika Germain



# 118<sup>A</sup>

## ArtsHub 118

Space for the Arts



## ArtsHub 118

11731 - 93 Street

Since 2011, ArtsHub 118 is Edmonton's affordable housing co-operative for artists. The capital project was funded by a grant from the Cornerstones Program. The project helps to increase the supply of local affordable housing and aids the City of Edmonton and the Alberta Avenue community in their joint efforts to revitalize the 118th Avenue area. The co-operative is open to professional artists, non-profit arts or cultural industry professionals, and is determined by application. The building design consists of sixteen live-in and work studios located above the Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts on 118th.

# Project & Funding Partners

## Project Partners



## Funding Partners



## Arts Habitat Space Tenant Programming

### Open Studio

ArtsHub McLuhan House's Garage Studio Resident Erika Germain hosts an open studio exhibition, "Tell Me What You're Searching For And I'll Help You Look," inviting the highlands neighborhood to participate.

### McLuhan Conversations 2023

In 2023 the overarching theme of the McLuhan Conversation Series was about creativity in Edmonton and beyond.

### Session 1: Expressive Streets

January 24, 2023

Conversation Topic: Street art is often associated with global cities – New York, LA, Berlin – but what does it mean in Edmonton? This conversation dares to imagine a different art scene for Edmonton.

### Session 2: House As Medium

February 28, 2024

Conversation Topic: This conversation considers the social world and assumptions built into the 1913 McLuhan House and thinks with the form of the house to interrogate assumptions about domestic life and space.

### Session 3: Thinking With Sound

March 28, 2024

Conversation Topic: Attention to sound and acoustics in the last decade has produced some of the most novel ideas about the role of the senses and their relation to how we understand the world

### Session 4: Race and Media: McLuhan and Beyond

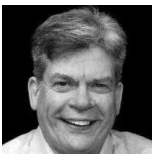
May 29, 2023

Conversation topic: What do thinkers say and how do they use McLuhan's work in the 2020s? What are the most relevant parts of his thought that illuminate current issues and cultural trends? How is McLuhan's work being extended, queried, and debated?



# Arts Habitat Edmonton Directory

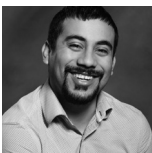
## Board



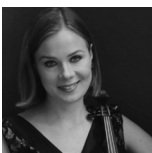
Ken  
Chapman  
Chair



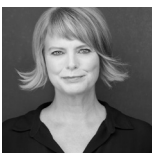
Stephanie  
Chai  
Director



Erick  
Estrada  
Treasurer



Viktoria  
Grynenko  
Director



Heather  
Inglis  
Director



Jenna  
Stanton  
Director

## Staff



Julian  
Mayne  
Executive  
Director



Raj  
Nigam  
Operations  
Manager



Brent  
Constantine  
Cultural  
Planner



Doris  
Car  
Finance and  
Administration  
Manager



Kelly  
Gardiner  
Communications  
Manager