

# ATTACHMENT B



## Arts Centre at 150 Commercial Street April 2019 Facility Tour – Summary Notes

### 5 Organizations, 20 Years of Collaboration

Nanaimo Art Gallery is proud to manage the Arts Centre at 150 Commercial Street and works collaboratively with the four other professional, non-profit arts and culture organizations who make this building their home base: Crimson Coast Dance, Nanaimo Archives, TheatreOne, and Vancouver Island Symphony. From this creative hub, these groups produce the best, most relevant and engaging exhibitions, inspired contemporary dance performances, educational workshops, concerts, and theatre performances in our region, connecting our varied audiences to the culture and history of our communities.

In a building originally constructed in the early 1960s as a bank, the Arts Centre at 150 Commercial Street has served as a creative hub since the late 1990s. The five organizations in the Arts Centre have operated out of this City-owned building for twenty years, working closely as colleagues and collaborators. **The Gallery took over management of the building in 2014 and holds a 10-year agreement with the City.** Our partners in the building then each hold three-year agreements with the Gallery. Each partner organization is a well-established non-profit society with a Board of Directors, professional staff, and many dedicated volunteers from the community. We are recognized as leaders in our field and in the cultural community, and our work in visual arts, theatre, dance, music, and heritage impacts large and diverse audiences in Central-Vancouver Island and beyond.

### Capital Projects to Maximize the Potential at 150 Commercial, a Timeline

2013

- The City approves the Gallery's three-phase plan for facility development at 150 Commercial

2014

- The Gallery and the City enter into a 10-year Co-Management Agreement
- The Gallery leverages a \$50k capital contribution from the City to receive matching funds from The Province of British Columbia, funds from Artsvest, and major in-kind contributions. Phase 1 renovations, including the creation of Art Lab are completed!

2015

- The Gallery departs its first home on VIU's Nanaimo campus to amalgamate services at 150 Commercial and establishes its first full-time curatorial position.
- The five organizations in the Arts Centre collaborate and pool resources to improve exterior signage at the Wharf Street entrance for increased visibility and to contribute to pride of place.

2016

- The Gallery completes Phase 2 renovations which transforms our exhibition space with the installation of new environmentally sound LED lights, builds space-saving storage for our permanent collection, and creates our flexible, shared Studio Kitchen/meeting space on the lower floor. This project is funded by BC Arts Council, The Province of BC, and Canadian Heritage.
- Our first multi-lingual welcome signage, and a first for downtown Nanaimo, is installed at the entranceway in English, Hul'q'umi'num and French.

2017

- Renowned artist Marianne Nicolson is commissioned to create a new public artwork in response to our site in Nanaimo for the Wharf Street façade of our building. Called *Inquiry to the Newcomers*, this project is supported by Nanaimo Foundation and the Community Fund for Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> and accessioned to the Gallery's permanent collection.

2018

- The Gallery's public entrance way on Commercial Street is transformed to be more visible, welcoming and iconic. Noted local carvers Joel and William Good create a new public artwork, called *Supernatural Eagle Bringing the Sun Back to the World*, especially for the Gallery. The project is supported by City of Nanaimo, Canadian Heritage and many community donors through a Gallery lead crowd-funding campaign.

2019

- This year we will address maintenance issues to ensure the health, safety and well-being of building users, and that appropriate conditions and standards are met to realize programs for growing audiences. Issues to be addressed include air quality and humidity levels, pest control, restrooms, automatic door openers, and exterior door improvements for security and environmental control.

## Arts & Culture for the People: Community Impact & Public Involvement

- This space is well utilized. **The partner organizations of the Arts Centre involve over 80 people as staff, board members and volunteers, all who frequent the building and have regular access to our shared spaces.** Our five organizations host a full calendar of meetings—with our boards and committees, donors, stakeholders, audience members, staff, musicians, artists, actors, designers and other creative professionals—our spaces are in demand, 365 days a year.
- **This building is a site of artistic production;** in addition to Gallery exhibitions and programs, in this building actors rehearse, auditions take place for the Symphonic Choir and Children's Choir, rehearsals and workshops are held for dancers like Crimson Coast's teen Body Talk Cru.
- **Through our combined efforts 75,000+ people participate in our programs annually.** Each of our organizations at the Arts Centre host a year-round program of theatre productions, concerts, performances, exhibitions, educational programs, talks, fundraisers, and networking events that serve audiences from across Vancouver Island and draw tourists to our region.
- Our organizations are employers who **support the development of artistic practice and the livelihoods of artists by paying fair market rates in fees** to artists, dancers, musicians, writers, designers, and other creative professionals.

## Links to Plans & Priorities for a Vibrant City

- The corporate community understands the value of our work; in the recent year, our five organizations worked **with 95+ corporations and business who provided sponsorship.**
- Access to excellent cultural infrastructure is important to our quality of life, and was identified as a priority in the City of Nanaimo's *Cultural Plan for a Creative Nanaimo* (2014); the Gallery's plan for phased development is specifically noted in the plan.
- The 2014 report commissioned by Nanaimo Economic Development Corporation revealed that our sector directly contributes \$94 million and 880 jobs, with a total economic impact of \$154 million annually, supporting 1,330 jobs in the community ([www.investnanaimo.com](http://www.investnanaimo.com)).
- The value of arts and culture in a community goes far beyond economics and the work of the organizations at the Arts Centre contributes directly to priorities related to education, social cohesion, health, reconciliation, civic identity and pride of place.

Having worked together since the late 1990s at the Arts Centre, our creative hub is a good example of a strong, sustainable partnership and a site of creativity and potential. Ongoing investment in our home base at the Arts Centre will improve conditions and contribute to our long-term success and amplify our impact in the communities we serve everyday.

