

# Nanaimo Art Gallery

## 'FUTURE GALLERY' UPDATE TO NANAIMO CITY COUNCIL

Dec 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Presented by



With



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## Agenda

**1. Nanaimo Art Gallery's Recent Work**

Carolyn Holmes,  
Nanaimo Art Gallery

**2. Update on 'Future Gallery' Project Work**

Louisa Plant, Nordicity

**3. Next Steps**

Carolyn Holmes



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## Our Recent Activities

- **Strengthen organizational capacity and financial sustainability**
  - Increased core operating funding
  - Developed a five-year Strategic Plan
  - Developed new roles and hiring new employees
- **Sharing stories and fostering deeper dialogue with communities**
  - Developed a new interactive website and online platform
  - Increased the Gallery's social media presence



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## Our Recent Activities

- **Creating a welcoming and accessible experience for all**
  - Serving 21,889 visitors in 2022/23 (double our pre-pandemic numbers)
  - Celebrating 7 years of hosting Hul'q'umi'num classes
  - Prioritizing accessibility improvements
  - Establishing a 'Pay It Forward' program
  - Joining the City's LEAP program



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## Our Recent Activities

- **Thriving as a creative space to gather and share artistic encounters**
  - Developed 12 in-house exhibitions and hosted 3 touring exhibitions since the pandemic
  - Worked with over 150 artists in 2022/23
- **Preparing for a New Nanaimo Art Gallery**
  - Secured funding from 3 levels of government for feasibility work
  - Completed two years of feasibility work



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## Recap of Feasibility Study Findings (2022)

Explored the feasibility of **3 routes**: 1) Redevelop the existing building, 2) Build a new gallery on the existing site, and 3) Build a new facility on a greenfield site.

### **Key findings:**

- **Solid community support for an expanded gallery:** 60% of community members surveyed consider expanding Nanaimo Art Gallery's size a priority.
- **The current facility does not meet accessibility standards** for a public building, nor suitable temperature/humidity controls to preserve artworks.
- **The community values having the Gallery downtown** but wants the facility to incorporate outdoor space.
- **Redeveloping the existing building would be more costly** than a replacement facility and it would still not reach 'Class A' status.
- Building a new facility at 150 Commercial St or a greenfield location would both be feasible options; estimated cost of \$21m at the existing location or \$19.5m greenfield.



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## 'Future Gallery' Project Overview

The scope of this follow-up Future Gallery project encompassed:

1. **Additional community engagement**
2. **Engagement with Snuneymuxw First Nation**
3. **Site options analysis** working with the City's Real Estate team
4. **Capital Campaign Strategy** (Global Philanthropic Canada)



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## 'Future Gallery' Community Engagement Findings

### Summer Engagements

- To spread the word of plans for the Future Gallery and to seek public input
- Events attended: Nanaimo Pride, Artful Resilience, GoByBike, Silly Boat Races, Tourism Pop-ups, Youth Can Group and Commercial Street Night Markets,

### Key Findings:

- Over 700 survey participants over the summer
- Of 285 survey responses, **over a third (36%) visit the Gallery every few months**
- When survey participants who have visited Nanaimo Art Gallery were asked the 'top 3 things' they most like about it, responses included its **downtown location** (33%), the **Gallery's support of local artists** (32%), and **Art Lab/learning and engagement programs** (26%).
- Of 279 respondents who have visited the Gallery, **46% would like to see new spaces** in a future facility including exhibition spaces, rental spaces, and/or a café with outdoor spaces.



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## 'Future Gallery' Engagement with Snuneymuxw First Nation

- Meaningful engagement with Snuneymuxw First Nation (SFN) is a priority
- Nanaimo Art Gallery continuously working to build strong relations with Snuneymuxw Elders, artists, and other community members through its projects and programming
- Strong desire by the Gallery to build a relationship with SFN at the organizational level
- SFN administration interested in working with Nanaimo Art Gallery on the Future Gallery project as one of their key special projects



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## 'Future Gallery' Site Options Analysis

### Working closely with the City of Nanaimo's Real Estate team to:

- Develop siting study criteria and scoring framework to help select potential locations for Future Gallery
- Analyze potential site options.

### Study Criteria and Scoring System: *Mandatory criteria and preferred criteria*

- **Weighted scoring system** (0 – 100%) for preferred criteria
- **Ranking sites** from 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent) in relation to preferred criteria

### Site Options:

- **36 sites long-listed** by the City of Nanaimo Real Estate Team that met mandatory criteria
- **14 sites short listed** within Nanaimo's inner downtown circle and selected for further review (including by walking tour) short-listed



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## 'Future Gallery' Fund Development Strategy

Global Philanthropic developed observations and recommendations for implementation of a funding strategy.

**Key findings** include the Gallery needing to:

- Focus on establishing relationships in the community with community donors, political leaders, and persons of influence
- Work toward confirming as many details as is possible on the site and proposed facility – public sources of revenue will likely be available to the project once more details are known
- Develop a detailed Case for Support
- Secure funds from the private sector



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## Next Steps

- Develop a detailed Business Plan for the Future Nanaimo Art Gallery
- Develop Case for Support and Test Case for a Capital Campaign.

**We respectfully request that Council direct City staff to work with us to identify two to three sites so that we can develop a detailed business plan, a Case for Support, and Test Case for a Capital Campaign.**



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**Thank you!**  
**Questions?**

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