



Overarching Vision: Calgary is a place that empowers every resident to live a creative life, fuelling a vital, prosperous and connected city.

Mission: To align and activate Calgarians in creating a vital, prosperous and connected city through the arts.

LIVING A CREATIVE LIFE is an arts development strategy for Calgary, built by Calgarians. Over 1,000 voices helped create this strategy over a rigorous, nearly two-year consultation process. Interested citizens from many backgrounds, community groups, educators, civic and provincial partners, arts administrators from organizations of all sizes, and independent artists of all disciplines contributed to its vision and goals.

Calgarians' vision for the arts coalesced into five major focus areas: Creative Communities, Centre City Arts District, Arts Incubation, Artistic Exchange, and Youth & Education.

Each focus area is broken down into a framework made up of the following elements:

Focus area: Each of five major goals that will contribute to **LIVING A CREATIVE LIFE**'s overarching vision. Each focus area is broken down into a vision, outcomes, drivers and tactics.

Vision: The aspirational description of what Calgarians would like their city to look like, as it pertains to the focus area.

Outcome: The state or condition that does not currently exist but must exist in order to achieve the vision.

Driver: A movement coordinated by various stakeholders to help achieve the outcome.

Tactic: A single program, task or initiative that contributes to the driver.

This document outlines the vision, outcomes and drivers of one of the five focus areas. Tactics for each driver are detailed in separate tactical plans, which will be updated annually and made available at LivingCreative.ca. These plans will summarize the work currently being undertaken in support of the focus area, the activities of relevant signatories, as well as report on results as time progresses.

This document also includes the success indicators that will provide evidence of progress for each outcome. The success indicators are systems-level measurements that will be evaluated on an annual basis to assess whether the strategy is achieving its goals and having impact in our city. Each success indicator is attached to a number of specific measurements that will be detailed and reported on in each focus area's tactical plan.

FOCUS AREA:

Creative Communities

Vision: Calgary's communities enjoy access to a rich spectrum of arts experiences.

One of Calgary 2012's great successes during our year as a Cultural Capital of Canada was reaching into diverse neighbourhoods and communities to foster arts participation. These efforts clearly resonated with Calgarians, as the idea of embedding arts experiences throughout the city geographically as well as engaging and embracing our varied communities found strong traction during the process of creating **LIVING A CREATIVE LIFE**.

Making the arts accessible to Calgary's many communities has several dimensions; with many arts organizations concentrated in the city's core, distributing arts experiences geographically throughout the city will make the arts accessible to all residents. Additionally, reaching diverse communities is important in creating equitable arts experiences for all.

Outcome one: A wide variety of arts experiences are embedded in neighbourhoods across the city.

DRIVERS:

- Encourage the private, public, community and arts sectors to incorporate the arts into the daily lives of Calgarians in both purpose-built and alternative arts spaces
- Increase awareness within the arts community of opportunities to create and present work in neighbourhoods throughout Calgary, in both purpose-built and alternative arts spaces

SUCCESS INDICATORS:

- Quantity and usage of arts spaces across the city
- Quantity and diversity of arts events across the city
- Calgarians' engagement in the arts

Outcome two: Calgarians' arts participation and the arts sector itself are reflective of Calgary's diversity, its inclusivity and the desire of Calgarians to learn more about one another.

DRIVERS:

- Encourage cross-cultural collaboration during the artistic process to create more diverse arts programming that will attract audiences from across the city
- Increase support for Calgary-based artists who are new to Canada
- Diversify the range of cultural, social, geographic and economic voices within the arts community

SUCCESS INDICATORS:

- Artists and arts participants represent diverse populations
- Quantity and variety of culturally diverse arts events across the city

DEFINITIONS**COMMUNITIES:**

In this context, this term can apply to both geographic neighbourhoods as well as cultural groups.

DIVERSE:

Representing a variety of cultural, social, geographic and economic perspectives.

FOCUS AREA:

Centre City Arts District

Vision: Calgary's Centre City radiates creative energy from the core out, making it a destination for Calgarians and visitors alike.

Calgarians have told us that they want their city to have a central, iconic arts hub. This part of the city will be a locus for festivals and spectacles, showcasing the highest-quality art from Calgary and around the world. Additionally, citizens want our central public spaces to be inspiring and infused with public art and safe, street-level experiences.

The borders of the Centre City arts district are defined in alignment with The City of Calgary's *Centre City Plan*: the Bow River to the north, the Elbow River to the east, 17th Ave. and the southern tip of the Stampede grounds to the south, and 14th St. to the west. Creating a central arts district will be mainly about

building on the existing strengths of this area, such as the EPCOR CENTRE for the Performing Arts, the Glenbow Museum, and many other arts organizations that present in and operate out of the Centre City.

There are also several prospective developments that will lend fresh energy to a Centre City arts district. The revitalization of the East Village will be supported by major institutions, such as the new site for the National Music Centre as well as a new Central Library in coming years. There is also a massive Stampede expansion underway that will feature an extensive arts campus. Finally, both existing and future iconic architecture and public art permanently enrich Calgary's downtown core.

Fostering a wide variety of arts experiences in the Centre City and improving access to those experiences will make our downtown an arts destination for both Calgarians and visitors to our city, and will benefit our own city by spreading its vibrancy to the rest of Calgary. **LIVING A CREATIVE LIFE** is committed to aligning its Centre City Arts District priorities with The City of Calgary's *Centre City Plan*.

Outcome one: A wide variety of arts experiences are embedded in the Centre City, creating a dynamic, central arts hub for the city.

DRIVERS:

- Prioritize the creation and upkeep of purpose-built arts spaces within the Centre City
- Ease the process of creating arts experiences in alternative Centre City spaces
- Include an artistic element in key aspects of Centre City planning

SUCCESS INDICATORS:

- Quantity and usage of Centre City arts spaces
- Quantity and diversity of arts events in the Centre City

Outcome two: Calgarians and tourists often visit the Centre City specifically to experience the arts.

DRIVERS:

- Provide resources to create remarkable arts experiences in the Centre City
- Create incentives to travel within and to the Centre City from other parts of Calgary

SUCCESS INDICATORS:

- Attendance at Centre City arts events
- Number of people travelling to or within the Centre City outside of business hours

DEFINITIONS

CENTRE CITY:

Living a Creative Life defines Calgary's Centre City in alignment with The City of Calgary's *Centre City Plan*: its borders are the Bow River to the north, the Elbow River to the east, 17th Ave. and the southern tip of the Stampede grounds to the south, and 14th St. to the west.

FOCUS AREA:

Arts Incubation

Vision: Calgary strongly attracts artistic talent to live, work and achieve artistic excellence.

To have a thriving arts community, Calgary needs artists. While this may seem straightforward, there are many factors involved in creating a city that not only sustains both the practices and overall wellbeing of its artists, but also attracts new creators to live and work within it.

Emerging, mid-career and established artists all require an array of resources to make artistic creation possible. Space and funding are perennial issues for artists: in Calgary there is a shortage of creation, exhibition, rehearsal and performance space, and the grants currently available at all three levels of government do not meet the needs of Calgary's artist population. Recent arts graduates and other artists who are building a new practice benefit greatly from emerging artist programs, internships, mentorships and artist residencies. This focus area seeks to leverage the resources already available to the arts community, and develop new models for allowing artists access to the resources essential to their livelihoods.

On average, Calgary artists earn less than a living wage, which can impact their health, living conditions, and overall safety and wellbeing. **LIVING A CREATIVE LIFE** aspires for Calgary to be a place that values the contributions its artists make to the vitality of our city and its citizens, resulting in a better quality of life for our professional artists.

Outcome one: Calgary artists and arts organizations have access to an ample range of resources required to support artistic creation.

DRIVERS:

- Develop sustainable funding models and other initiatives to address the evolving needs of Calgary's arts sector
- Provide ample opportunities for emerging artists to transition from school to their professional arts careers
- Increase opportunities for artists and arts organizations to network, learn and share their knowledge and resources.

SUCCESS INDICATORS:

- Financial health of arts sector
- Labour capacity of arts sector
- Access to an inventory of arts spaces
- Quantity and diversity of professional opportunities for artists

Outcome two: A strong arts sector is highly valued by Calgarians and is part of what defines us as a city.

DRIVERS:

- Raise Calgarians' artistic discourse to a higher level
- Encourage Calgary's private and public sectors to incorporate the arts into their operations and business practices in a way that is meaningful for them and impactful to their stakeholders
- Increase Calgarians' familiarity with arts opportunities available to them across the city

SUCCESS INDICATORS:

- The Calgary Foundation's *Vital Signs Arts & Culture* grade
- Calgarians' familiarity with and awareness of local arts activities
- Increased media coverage of the arts in Calgary

Outcome three: Calgary's arts professionals are able to dedicate themselves to their careers while maintaining a healthy and fulfilling quality of life.

DRIVERS:

- Increase the affordable housing options available to Calgary arts professionals
- Increase the resources available to arts professionals to help them manage their personal health, wellness, safety and finances

SUCCESS INDICATORS:

- Housing security of arts professionals
- Financial security of arts professionals
- Access to health care for arts professionals

DEFINITIONS

ARTS PROFESSIONAL:

Someone who makes their living through the arts sector, such as a professional artist, arts administrator or arts educator.

EMERGING ARTIST:

An artist within the first five years of a professional career.

FOCUS AREA:

Artistic Exchange

Vision: Calgary is regarded as a world-class city because its artists, arts organizations and presenters import and export the highest quality of work on regional, national and international markets.

Calgary's arts community deserves to be considered in an international context. Both our artists and our citizens must have the chance to experience the best of all artistic disciplines from around the world, without having to travel beyond city limits. Calgary is already home to many festivals and organizations that present acclaimed art and artists from around the globe, and in supporting this type of activity we can ensure that Calgarians are able to see the best the world has to offer in their very own city.

Conversely, Calgary artists have already proven that they can produce world-class art, earning accolades across the country and beyond. **LIVING A CREATIVE LIFE** imagines a city that is able to help its artists transition from creating local artistic offerings to being viable on the regional, national, and international market.

Outcome one: Calgarians benefit from experiencing world-class art presented locally.

DRIVERS:

- Support and strengthen arts events and organizations that present national and international artists, performers and productions as part of their mandates
- Ease the process of importing artistic work from outside the city

SUCCESS INDICATORS:

- Quantity of artistic work from outside Calgary presented locally
- Calgarians' perception of Calgary as a world-class city
- Local media coverage of national and international art presented in Calgary

Outcome two: Made-in-Calgary artistic work has a high profile outside the city and is often found on tour in other regions, provinces and countries.

DRIVERS:

- Raise the profile of our outstanding artists and arts organizations
- Ensure that artists are included in trade missions at the municipal and provincial levels
- Ease the touring process for Calgary artists and arts organizations

SUCCESS INDICATORS:

- Quantity of Calgary-based artistic work exported beyond the city
- Non-Calgarians' perception of Calgary as a world-class city
- National and international media coverage of Calgary-produced artistic work

DEFINITIONS

EXPORT-READY:

Possessing attributes that make a product attractive to an international market.

WORLD-CLASS:

Ranking among the foremost in the world; of an international standard of excellence.

FOCUS AREA:

Youth & Education

Vision: Calgary's youth become highly engaged and innovative citizens as they connect with their communities through the arts.

Calgary's young people are the next generation of artists and arts patrons, and many educators and policymakers are identifying the arts as a means to develop critical thinking and creative competencies that will help youth succeed. Authentic arts experiences through direct contact with professional artists are key, whether in the context of artists guiding youth in creating art themselves or presenting high-quality art.

Ensuring that all of Calgary's youth have access to high-quality arts experiences involves a wide spectrum of stakeholders: educators, school administrators, parents, freelance arts educators, artists, arts administrators, community groups and, of course, the youth themselves. Achieving the vision of this focus area will involve providing sufficient resources to facilitate arts experiences for youth, but also ensuring that Calgarians recognize the value of the arts for our young people. Alberta has made great strides in prioritizing arts education, valuing arts and sciences equally in their 2010 *Inspiring Education* report.

This strategic framework seeks to include all school systems, such as the Calgary Board of Education, the Calgary Catholic School District, charter schools, private schools and home schools. Post-secondary institutions that offer arts programs (the University of Calgary, Mount Royal University and the Alberta College of Art + Design) also have a role to play in fostering the next generation of artists, which links up to outcomes in the Arts Incubation focus area. However, the goals of the Youth & Education focus area are not limited to the school system. Other exciting drivers for increasing arts experiences exist within community programs and opportunities outside of schools.

Outcome one: Calgarians recognize the value of the arts in developing creative thinking, and seek out authentic arts experiences for youth.

DRIVERS:

- Increase awareness of the programs and events offered for youth by freelance arts educators, artists and arts organizations
- Emphasize the value of the arts through their inclusion in a wide variety of youth programs

SUCCESS INDICATORS:

- Youth arts participation
- Perception of the value of arts experiences for youth
- Correlations between arts participation and academic achievement among youth
- Correlations between arts participation and community involvement among youth

Outcome two: A strong base of resources facilitates authentic arts experiences for youth.

DRIVERS:

- Sustain a healthy baseline of funding dedicated to arts programs in schools and communities
- Optimize the use of resources already present in school and community settings to increase access to authentic arts experiences

SUCCESS INDICATORS:

- Quantity of arts experiences available to youth
- Equitable access to arts experiences for youth

AUTHENTIC ARTS EXPERIENCE:

An opportunity for youth to engage with professional artists and their work, both inside and outside of the school environment.

CREATIVE COMPETENCIES:

An interrelated set of creative and innovative attitudes, skills and knowledge applied to a particular context for successful learning and living.

EDUCATION:

Learning both inside and outside of the school environment for those aged 18 or younger.

YOUTH:

Person aged 0-18 years.