This document has been prepared for the Manitoba Centennial Centre Corporation by Public City Architecture Inc. with Sinclair van Nostrand Architects + Planners and Sever Lupu Construction Cost Consultants and was completed in February, 2017 with input from a broad range of stakeholders.
The Plan is arranged in three sections as follows:

**PLACE: Principles for Redevelopment** defines the boundaries of the District and the MCCC’s provincial authority within the area. The Plan is about placemaking and describes the development of a Cultural District around the MCCC’s principle assets.

**CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE: Proposed Capital Projects** defines the development of a campus in the East Exchange of Winnipeg, and outlines necessary steps to manage and develop the lands and assets within the district.

**A FRAMEWORK FOR FINANCIAL AUTONOMY** defines the necessary leadership role in which the MCCC should continue to invest in order to manage its critical cultural infrastructure and land.

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In 2016, Manitoba Centennial Centre Corporation (MCCC) commissioned Public City Architecture to develop a Conceptual Cultural Arts District Plan which will assist them to identify priorities for the next fifty to one hundred years of operation. The Manitoba Centennial Centre Act itself provides a framework upon which this Conceptual Plan has been based and the development priorities explored in the Plan are consistent with the mandate laid out in the Act. The MCCC has a certain jurisdiction over the use and character of the lands around its principle assets east of Main, has the capacity to borrow money to develop its lands, and is mandated with supporting and developing arts and culture for all Manitobans. This Plan develops the concept of a cultural district by emphasizing the importance of developing a heart to Centennial Centre at the intersection of Lily Street and James Avenue, an idea initially proposed in a 1967 development model of the Centennial Centre.
INTRODUCTION

Approaching its sesquicentennial in 2018, the Manitoba Centennial Centre Corporation (MCCC) faces a number of development and management opportunities that will guide it towards a prosperous future as Manitoba’s principal steward of the performing and cultural arts. The MCCC currently houses and maintains 38,000 square metres over seven major buildings that were either designed for, or acquired for, the purpose of supporting some of the province’s most treasured performance companies. Principally, these include the Centennial Concert Hall, the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, and the Manitoba Museum. The Royal Winnipeg Ballet’s headquarters on Graham Avenue is not owned, operated, or managed by the MCCC and therefore is not included as part of this study. But there are other facilities owned by the MCCC such as Artspace in the West Exchange and the Manitoba Production Centre in the Pacific Industrial Park. These smaller or lesser known institutions are just as critical to the MCCC’s development plans as it continues to look for ways to strengthen its role in supporting the province’s cultural economy.

In a province largely perceived to be a rural and resource-based economy, the cultural arts contribute more than do agriculture and utilities to the gross domestic product. Consistent with national and international trends, Manitoba’s arts and creative sector is the fastest-growing sector in the province’s economy. Statistics Canada data shows that Manitoba’s creative sector produces $1.7 billion annually and employs nearly 25,000 people. From her research into the impact of the arts on Manitoba’s economy, Roberta Christianson has concluded that “with an annual GDP growth of 23 per cent since 2010, it is outpacing the provincial economy and all other sectors” (Culture, Not Oil, is Our Economic Future, Winnipeg Free Press, Oct, 29, 2016). With nearly 80% of the provincial population living within a 100km radius of Winnipeg, this is an urban province, and so it is reasonable to expect that the cultural arts sector will continue to contribute significantly to the province’s economy.

Each year, 930,000 visitors attend events in the MCCC’s facilities. This kind of annual attendance is comparable to the MTS Centre and nearly triple that of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. If both national and provincial growth projections in the cultural arts are correct, then it is reasonable to assume those attendance
numbers will grow at the MCCC. It is in this context that this Conceptual Plan has been created.

Through consultation with company directors, staff, operations, and senior staff, areas of development that comprise this Plan have been identified as priorities. The Plan describes the importance of upgrading the existing Centennial Concert Hall to make it more accessible in both physical and programmatic terms. The reconfiguration of the dated and cumbersome continental seating is discussed along with identifying a number of critical code compliance and maintenance upgrades throughout the facility. Also explored are opportunities to better synthesize the ticketing software as well as improve revenue generating opportunities for the MCCC such as increasing the food and beverage provisions along the mezzanine. Some of the more obvious vacant tenant spaces are identified as having revenue-generating opportunities. A series of capital maintenance and code compliance investments are required across all of its facilities on an on-going basis. The Conceptual Plan envisions a significant restructuring of the campus to keep up with demands and growth in our cultural economy. The MCCC should anticipate the emergence of new performing art forms and companies while maintaining its existing assets. It needs to establish financial autonomy to fund its mandate. And lastly, the MCCC needs to work closely with local and provincial authorities to develop policy that assists in the creation of a vibrant arts district in the heart of Winnipeg.

THE ACT
Since its inception in the sixties, the Manitoba Centennial Centre Corporation has been mandated by Provincial Act to support culture and the arts in the province for the benefit of all Manitobans. It states that the MCCC will maintain and develop the buildings and property within The Centennial Centre, a district further described in the Act as:

land owned by the Crown in right of Manitoba within the area in the City of Winnipeg bounded as follows: I) on the west by Main Street, ii) on the south by the lane south of Market Avenue, iii) on the east by the Red River, iv) on the north by Pacific Avenue, and includes all of the buildings, structures, walkways, gardens and open spaces within that area and pertain to the arts centre...including Artspace.

Today, not all of the MCCC’s assets are located within those original boundaries but the land around the Centennial Concert Hall, the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, and the Manitoba Museum remain as the primary physical identity of the MCCC. Along with Artspace (an important residence of smaller cultural industry icons such as the Winnipeg Film Institute and Cinematheque and cultural start-up organizations) the MCCC also owns and operates the Manitoba Production Centre and Film/TV Sound Stage in the Pacific Industrial Park, which is located four kilometres to the northwest and is currently under a year to year lease to NBC for the production of a popular television series. Across all of its land and infrastructure holdings, balancing development opportunities with fiscal responsibility is critical to the economic sustainability of the MCCC. As it invests in cultural infrastructure and the District, the MCCC will need to continue to invest in its role as a developer of the cultural arts in Manitoba. Strengthening its leadership role inside the cultural economy, and assuming a reasonable level of risk combined with sound strategic planning, may be the surest way for the MCCC to support arts and culture for all Manitobans.

HOW TO READ THIS CONCEPTUAL PLAN
The Conceptual Plan is intended to be a tool that assists policy decisions, new internal managerial models, and stimulates positive urban development around the Centennial Centre. Ultimately, the Plan will assist the MCCC and the various organizations to which it is responsible by establishing shared priorities for growth, emergence, and profitability in a collective future. The recommendations take into account past studies undertaken by previous consultants and government departments. In studying the issues, the consultant team toured all facilities, reviewed existing deferred and imminent maintenance plans, studied the Act, and reviewed a number of reports dating back to the eighties that relate to the facilities and the neighbourhood in question. The team met with internal and external stakeholders in developing this Plan and as a result Public City Architecture now houses an extensive library of compiled research related to the evolution of the MCCC. Critical research, reports, and findings are compiled in an Appendix which accompanies this Plan.

With this Conceptual Plan in hand, the MCCC will need to develop new strategic collaborative plans with the City of Winnipeg and will need to work closely with the Property, Planning, and Development Department and Public Works to coordinate development in and around its major assets. As a critical first step in this regard, the MCCC should retain a professional representative who is educated in issues of urban design and development to sit on the City’s Urban Design Advisory Committee where development within its mandated boundary is concerned.

The Conceptual Plan lays the groundwork to strengthen the MCCC’s voice as a key stakeholder in the broader evolution of the Exchange District. As a Crown corporation, it should use its jurisdiction in the area to encourage the development of effective mixed use, transcultural, pedestrian friendly urban development from both the public and private sector. The MCCC should expect to collaborate with those municipal authorities engaged in the development of the open space, transportation strategies, infrastructure development, pedestrian realm upgrades, and civic competitions that are active within its boundaries. By formalizing its relationship with the City, the MCCC can expect to see well-coordinated implementations of a number of projects that are recommended in the Conceptual Plan and find potential cost-share opportunities for project implementation going forward.

The MCCC should consider partnering with the City to develop a policy which is based on this document. This would be a Council-adopted Local Area Plan which does not require the same degree of public consultation as a statutory Secondary Plan. An example of a similar plan is “Go to the Waterfront” which was a partnership between the Forks-North Portage Partnership and City of Winnipeg. It established high level strategies and objectives to re-orient the City towards its rivers. The Plan was effective in directing the development of adjacent riverside communities and policy toward the same ends. While not “drilling down” to detailed land use controls, an MCCC Area Plan would enable the City to evaluate future investments, studies and developments in the area with an eye to the Conceptual Development Plan.
PLACE: Principles for Redevelopment

MCCC’S VOICE AS CITY BUILDER

Research for the Conceptual Plan has concluded that the only guides to development in the District are zoning bylaws and the Manitoba Centennial Centre Corporation Act. We believe it is time to synthesize a development strategy between MCCC and the City. The authority granted to the MCCC to develop and manage its lands provides it with implementation tools that could assert the MCCC as a key downtown stakeholder. After all, the MCCC has been mandated with the programmatic and physical stewardship of a significant portion of downtown Winnipeg.

The MCCC should deliver a letter to the City encouraging discussions about the application of the Act and the opportunity to build collaborative planning relationships on everything from parking strategies to street design, from density targets to architectural character, from zoning to policy. The outcome of this exercise might include the formation of a Memorandum of Understanding that establishes expedited planning processes for projects within its boundaries. That Memorandum could also establish the MCCC as one of the senior commenting bodies on all development applications, public works projects, or planning initiatives within its boundaries.

The MCCC needs to work collaboratively with private landowners, business owners, and other stakeholders to affect positive change in the District. CentreVenture or the Exchange Biz and the Downtown Biz should be viewed as partners. Again, a statutory planning document can include development guidelines for MCCC-owned and privately-held properties within the District that will maintain focus on this area as the Cultural Arts District going into its next fifty years and position the MCCC as a major contributor to city building.
THE DISTRICT

The original 1967 Master Plan established the grounds for a Cultural Arts District Plan around the Centennial Centre. That master plan envisioned a major civic spine of activity towards the Red River along James Avenue. A defined urban plaza around the intersection of James Avenue and Lily Street saw a kind of campus commons there. The waterfront was conceived of as a civic place with ferris wheels, boat docks, and other infrastructures designed to support social and cultural activity. The east side of what is now the Centennial Concert Hall was envisioned as the front lawn of the District.

The pace of development in the area since 1967 has not been robust enough to evolve the original district plan but in recent years development pressures inside the district boundaries have introduced new opportunities for the MCCC. It is time to re-evaluate how to best serve its tenants and develop the District. Today, the District's planned central public space is nowhere to be found. While the MCCC's collection of assets make up a significant portion of the East Exchange District in downtown Winnipeg, the cultural assets are cut off from other active entertainment areas within the downtown core, especially given the high speed nature of Main Street as a significant traffic artery that isolates it.

Taking a cue from the 1967 Plan, we are proposing a new entry to the District and imagine an animated public plaza located at James Avenue and Lily Street as the center of the cultural campus. Its relationship to the River is a primary ordering structure for the patron experience and the District as a whole. On the water’s edge a new dock is envisioned that might link seasonal events with the Forks. Without investments and leadership, the District will remain isolated from downtown. The MCCC should co-ordinate public events and programming opportunities to enable the Forks and the Arts and Culture District to cooperate as bookends of activity along Waterfront Drive. With Main Street isolating the East Exchange from the West Exchange the MCCC should look to Lily Street as its new front door and to the Steinkopf Gardens as its new Welcome Hall.
Today, each MCCC asset is oriented almost independently of one another. They tend to face different streets or squares, which makes the District’s cohesiveness elusive to visitors. Different building styles, incongruous approaches to the public realm, and many long impenetrable walls along the streets make for a natural perception in the public eye that the area is underused. Going forward from today, it will be important for the MCCC to acknowledge that a cohesive and welcoming pedestrian realm is going to be one of the driving forces for the successful evolution of the District.

DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES WITHIN THE DISTRICT

The MCCC District is a distinct area within the East Exchange, but its connections to the West Exchange are affected by limited surface pedestrian crossings at Main Street and a poor connection to other cultural infrastructures along the Waterfront such as the Canadian Museum for Human Rights and the Forks. In its first fifty years of operation, the land around the Centennial Concert Centre faced limited development pressure. Warehouses became vacant and wide empty streets with underused loading zones contributed to a sense of barrenness. Marginal at-grade activity and hundreds of feet of sixties era windowless facades designed in the Brutalist style, left the neighbourhood barren. But in recent years, private and commercial development in the District has been increasing. As residential development on Waterfront Drive continues to attract high levels of disposable income, and as the West Exchange continues to be a strong cultural and commercial destination, an opportunity exists to capitalize on the renewed interest in this area. The MCCC will do well to strengthen the relationship between East and West Exchange by developing a strong link from the Waterfront to the Exchange through the Centennial Centre lands.

New development has also led to decreased parking availability in the area. Add to this, the closing of the municipal parking garage at City Hall (still connected directly by way of tunnel under Main Street to Centennial Centre) and the opening of Sport Manitoba in 2017, parking pressure within the District has quickly become the number one capital investment priority for the MCCC.

PROGRAMMING PRESSURES WITHIN THE MCCC

A variety of internal operations and programming pressures exist within the MCCC and these have contributed to prioritizing and phasing the proposed capital projects within the Plan. Underused existing spaces in some areas of the Centennial Centre combined with overcrowded scheduling and use demands on other spaces is causing strain on the resident companies and their ability to operate efficiently. A functional use program study of the whole complex of assets should be commissioned in the immediate future to assist the MCCC in planning future growth for itself and its resident tenants.

In response to expansion plans expressed by resident companies to meet their own projections, the Plan takes into account the existing capital planning initiatives to expand the Manitoba Museum toward Rupert Avenue. It identifies the location and size of a new experimental black box theatre for the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre who believe that the Tom Hendry Theatre does not really suit the needs of the type of emerging experimental theatre they expect to produce in the future. The Plan sets out the parameters for an expansion along the east facade of the Concert Hall to make room for an expanded Rehearsal Hall to better accommodate the needs of the Manitoba Opera Company, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, and touring commercial acts. That expansion will provide new upper level office space and new commercial retail space along Lily Avenue. The Plan envisions an iconic New Music Hall that is designed for the rigorous acoustical demands of music, with a smaller auditorium, and thereby helps the MCCC opening their larger performance venue at the Concert Hall for revenue generating commercial acts.

Today, as the province’s population tops 1.2 million people and the diversity of the cultural demographic continues to expand, the MCCC is poised to develop its role as a steward and a host to both traditional and emerging cultural art forms in Manitoba. A diverse cross section of cultural art forms will continue to find their home at the Centennial Centre.
NEW RUPERT AVENUE PARKADE STREE ST PARKING UPGRADES ACTIV THE EXISTING PUBLIC REALM

CENTENNIAL CONCERT HALL UPGRADES EXPANSION OF REHEARSAL HALL

NEW RMTC BLACK BOX THEATRE RMTC PARKADE AND DECOMMISSIONING OF TOM HENDRY THEATRE

NEW ARTS PLAZA DECOMMISSIONING OF EXTENSION SERVICES BUILDING PUBLIC REALM UPGRADES AND AUTHORITY OVER NEW DEVELOPMENT

NEW MUSIC HALL

NEW STEINKOPF ATRIUM AND WELCOME CENTRE
OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED CAPITAL PROJECTS

The priority capital investment that the MCCC needs to undertake in the near future is parking. This is a revenue generating opportunity that will assist in securing capital for future endeavours and a necessary support infrastructure for its tenants and programs. In its Annual Report for 2015, revenue generated from existing parking shows that MCCC can match what it collects from box office sales. The provision of parking for patrons, staff and performers is of utmost importance to the MCCC’s ability to support its arts tenants. A parkade is a relatively low-risk, high-yield development opportunity given current demand and available build-ready sites already in the MCCC’s land holdings. The MCCC should assess the best cost to value to risk ratios of a variety of development scenarios for its build ready site at Martha Street and Rupert Avenue. With a view to stewarding the MCCC towards its financial autonomy, the Conceptual Plan identifies a new parkade constructed on the existing surface lot. The parkade can be designed to accommodate street level commercial retail space, improved museum storage and loading, while being designed in such a way so as to co-ordinate with the planned expansion of the Museum on the remainder of the block.

Some of the parking demand in the neighbourhood can be alleviated by working with the City to improve parking density and extending time limits on existing streets in the neighbourhood. Improving street parking strategies integrated with improved bike routes and introducing safe public bike parking kiosks in the district is an important way to reach a wider array of transportation modes for staff, performers, and patrons.

With parking demands and revenue being addressed, necessary infrastructure upgrades and an investment in revenue opportunities at the Centennial Centre are proposed in the Plan. The performing arts hall was designed to be versatile: it has a flexible orchestra shell that is lowered for symphonic performances, but moves out of the way for theatrical performances such as the ballet or opera. And like the orchestra shell and stage itself, practice rooms and rehearsal space backstage are showing signs of age. With today’s performance menu becoming more culturally diverse, and technologically advanced, and as evolving new art forms require new accommodations, the MCCC needs to keep pace. Consideration for emerging global and local cultural arts must be given room in the capital planning of a flexible auditorium size, state of the art, stadium-style seating, and advanced interactive programmable interfaces to enhance the visitor experience. New and diverse food and beverage venues for before, during, and after shows will continue to enrich and modernize the MCCC’s offerings while continuing to increased revenue. Upgrades to elevators, washrooms, rehearsal halls, workshops, offices, along with ongoing accessibility and code compliance upgrades throughout the Centre should be given serious privilege in the capital planning entries of all annual budgets going forward from 2017.

When improved Museum storage is provided whether through finding efficiencies though targeted functional program studies of existing tenant use, or through the construction of new space, the Extension Services building can be repurposed. Once vacated, it can be leased temporarily to other arts organizations or other complimentary district-type builders. But ultimately, the Plan expects this building to be demolished to make way for the Arts Plaza.

The Royal Manitoba Theatre Company has expressed a need to modernize the Winnipeg theatre experience by providing a new Black Box Theatre in lieu of their existing Tom Hendry Warehouse Theatre. This can be built on the west side of the existing main workshop on the parking lot between RMTC and the Pantages Playhouse. The new theatre will do away with redundancies by making use of the existing workshop and sharing box office, public hall and administration space. The Black Box will be built to accommodate expanded parking.

Once the Black Box Theatre is built, the Tom Hendry Warehouse Theatre can be demolished making way for the expansion of the Arts Plaza and ultimately the construction of a New Music Hall. The Plan proposes that by constructing a purpose built smaller sound hall, Winnipeg’s world class symphony will be performing in a venue on par with symphonies in other Canadian cities. The Concert Hall is oversized for the purposes of most symphony orchestras. Even the WSO themselves have indicated that a smaller sound hall with an auditorium capacity around 1600 people is appropriate for a city of our size. As a result, the Concert Hall would become more available to MCCC enabling it to capitalize on the lucrative commercial touring-performance business. The WSO would still book the Concert Hall for performances that require a larger auditorium.

And finally, the Plan conceives of a new Steinkopf Atrium which is a covered new welcome hall extending from Lily Street to Main Street. Here cultural and performing arts can come together in a common space of public engagement. The existing Steinkopf Garden is underused and can be reconceived of as four season, transcultural performance space. It could be open to the public all year, managed 24 hours a day and programmed 365 days a year by the MCCC. It is conceived of in the Plan as a glass atrium not dissimilar to Santiago Calatrava’s BCE Place in Toronto. Connected to the tunnel via the Centennial Centre, the Steinkopf Atrium will become a link between East and West Exchange.

Establishing strong and interactive public realm connections is a key driving idea behind this Conceptual Plan. The development of a public Arts Plaza at the heart of the new District will affirm the MCCC’s commitment to support arts and culture in Manitoba by stimulating a vibrancy of activity within its public realm.

All in all, the total proposed capital build-out as presented in the Plan could total $250,000,000 in construction cost over the next two to fifteen years. We are recommending that plans to commence work on the Rupert Street Parkade begin in 2017 with plans to be open to the public sometime in the 2018/2019 season.

PLACE: PRINCIPLES FOR REDEVELOPMENT

10
CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE: Proposed Capital Projects

1. NEW RUPERT AVENUE PARKADE
   STREET PARKING UPGRADES
   ACTIVATE THE EXISTING PUBLIC REALM

2. CENTENNIAL CONCERT HALL UPGRADES
   EXPANSION OF REHEARSAL HALL

3. NEW RMTC BLACK BOX THEATRE
   RMTC PARKADE AND
   DECOMMISSIONING OF TOM HENDRY THEATRE

4. NEW ARTS PLAZA
   DECOMMISSIONING OF EXTENSION SERVICES BUILDING
   PUBLIC REALM UPGRADES AND
   AUTHORITY OVER NEW DEVELOPMENT

5. NEW MUSIC HALL

6. NEW STEINKOPF ATRIUM AND WELCOME CENTRE

7. NEW MANITOBA MUSEUM EXPANSION

8. MCCC OUTSIDE THE DISTRICT

9. EAST/WEST CONNECTION

10. NORTH/SOUTH CONNECTION

SECTION THROUGH MCCC ALONG NORTH/SOUTH CONNECTION LOOKING EAST
ELEVATION FROM LILY STREET LOOKING WEST
The preferred site for a new parkade is a portion of the surface parking lot between Rupert Avenue and Pacific Avenue positioned between the Manitoba Museum and the newly constructed Sport Manitoba. This site can be developed immediately and has good proximity to the District’s major assets. A 400 to 600 stall parkade would quickly provide increased parking revenue to the MCCC and would provide an excellent return on investment. The street level of the parkade should include commercial style rental units (CRU) that can be leased to arts organizations or to the Museum who might use those spaces as vitrine-like displays, laboratories, or dioramas that animate the street.

An updated version of some past Parkade studies conducted by MMM Group should be initiated and construction of a new parkade at Rupert should begin as soon as possible. We believe that a denser street parking strategy in the District should be explored in the immediate future in parallel with this capital investment.

**NEW RUPERT AVENUE PARKADE**

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**OPINION OF PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COST**

- Proposed Development Area: 180,000 sf
- 6 levels of parking
- 10,000 sf of commercial retail
- and storage space at ground floor
- 600 parking stalls at $35,000 to $40,000 stall
Maximized Parallel Parking
Back-In Angle Parking where Possible
Reconfigured Loading Zones
Lily Street as a Loading Zone
New Pedestrian Crossings at Main Street
Street parking within the District is underused and undervalued. Currently, street parking is limited as a result of an abundance of underused loading zones and areas of no parking. The historic use of the area as a warehouse district required streets to be wider than in other areas of downtown. Three major streets, Rupert Avenue, James Avenue, and Market Avenue are wide enough to accommodate a variety of street parking/cycling/pedestrian configurations. The MCCC should work with the City to study and implement the following strategies to maximize street parking availability while increasing active and public transportation options:

**ELIMINATE LOADING ZONES WHERE POSSIBLE AND INCREASE TIME LIMITS**

There is an abundance of loading and no parking zones in the District. Lily Street acts as a central spine and should be used as the major loading zone for amenities in the area including school buses for the Museum and Centennial Centre. Narrower streets like Amy, Bertha, and Elgin should be designated for loading purposes only to afford maximum street parking on Pacific, Rupert, James, and Market. Parallel parking on both sides of those streets will increase the number of parking spaces significantly in the district. There is currently a two-hour time limit for street parking. This has direct effects on the length of visits to the MCCC assets and time available for rehearsals held by tenant companies. The MCCC should work with the City to increase street parking time limits to four hours on some streets.

**BACK-IN ANGLE PARKING**

Over the last ten years, a number of significant urban centres have been exploring back-in angle parking as an alternative to front-in angle parking. The primary focus of these studies is to increase density of parking while offering safer streets for pedestrians and cyclists. There is potential to include back-in (or reverse) angle parking in some areas of Rupert, James, and Market. The affect of angle parking on the quality of pedestrian spaces should be carefully considered when determining where angle parking may be appropriate.

**MANAGED STREET PARKING**

Digital street parking signage can be used to manage street parking and allow flexibility of use. For example, digital signage could be used to identify a paid parking space as loading during an event. Digital signage could also be used to show the number of parking spaces available on each street in the District, similar to signage at the entry to a parking garage.

**ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION**

The width of the streets in the District should also be considered for active transportation uses such as bike lanes. As the District and urban realm develops there will be demand for progressive strategies that maximize the potential of the streets and public spaces. The streets should be designed to be adaptable for future urban priorities.

A pilot project in the District should be implemented by the City of Winnipeg and the MCCC in order to immediately address the Centennial Centre’s parking issues and to allow the City to further test the benefits of new parking configurations.

The implementation of these strategies could double the available street parking in the area and significantly increase revenue for the City and the MCCC.
AN OUTDOOR CONCERT IN THE NEW ARTS PLAZA

THE NEW STEINKOPF ATRIUM AND WELCOME CENTRE LOOKING WEST
Public streets and open spaces in the MCCC District are under-programmed compared to the West Exchange District. Many open spaces, streets and lanes could be actively programmed by the MCCC, the Exchange BIZ, the City of Winnipeg and grassroots arts organizations. The MCCC should take a leadership role in activating these spaces with markets, festivals, public art opportunities, small-scale interventions, and concerts to begin to define a local, clearly Manitoban, identity that is specific to the District.

The Steinkopf Garden is a prime example of under-programmed public space. The Garden should be redefined as a central axis and gathering space within the District through an intensive programming initiative led by leaders in the design and arts community in Manitoba. A new creative, inspiring, and local identity for the Steinkopf Garden is key to the immediate act of ‘placemaking’ in the District.

Imagine an autumn evening. A boat pulls up to the new James Street dock with a passenger from the Forks. On board, a quartet is playing, and patrons for tonight’s show proceed up the James Avenue promenade, lined with storefronts, through the Arts Plaza where a small performance is taking place, and on into the Steinkopf Atrium. In Winter, the same arrival event happens by snowbus off the snowy river trail and it crawls up through the Arts Plaza to deliver patrons for a night at the Opera.
ELEVATION OF THE CENTENNIAL CONCERT HALL, FROM MAIN STREET LOOKING EAST
MCCC is not generating sufficient funds to maintain and renovate the existing facility. MCCC’s deferred maintenance strategy is tied to budget availability. Maintenance depends on revenue generated by the Centennial Concert Hall, parking facilities, and the fixed annual operating and capital budgets provided to MCCC by the Government of Manitoba (refer to Appendix).

The MCCC needs to generate more revenue to keep up with the maintenance and renovation requirements of the Concert Hall. Refer to the section called Framework for Financial Autonomy for detailed recommendations.

Short and long-term funding and maintenance plans are required and should be consistently updated. The plans should be reviewed with the resident tenants to minimize conflicts with performances and schedules.

The following upgrades are considered high priority:

**ORCHESTRA SHELL**
The orchestra shell is not functioning correctly and has been temporarily secured in the open position. The mechanical repair of the shell is estimated at $2M by Wenger Acoustical Products of New York. MCCC is sourcing funding for this repair and has meanwhile provided a digital sound system to replicate the shell’s performance.

**SEATING CONFIGURATION**
The aisles and access to Concert Hall seating do not meet current building code requirements. The Concert Hall has 2,305 seats configured in continental seating which means there is no centre aisle. This makes for awkward seating and egress conditions for patrons it also limits performance opportunities for the resident tenants and visiting companies. In order to reconfigure the auditorium seating, the number of seats will be reduced by approximately 150.

**STAGE AND SOUND SYSTEM UPGRADES**
Enhancements to the stage and auditorium are required to improve sound quality and visitor experience for some of the emerging contemporary digital and new music shows at the Concert Hall.

**CODE COMPLIANCE**
The Concert Hall does not meet the requirements of the current building and energy codes. The majority of the HVAC equipment and major infrastructure dates back to initial construction in 1966. A Risk Assessment Study should be commissioned.

**ELEVATOR UPGRADES**
In 2016, a report prepared by Kone Elevator presented a five-year upgrade and maintenance plan for necessary upgrades to the elevators. The report was prepared simultaneous to this Conceptual Plan and identifies the types of services needed to bring the existing system up to current standards of operation.

**UNIVERSAL TOILET ROOMS AND BARRIER FREE REQUIREMENTS**
Winnipeg’s Human Rights Code requires the installation of Universal Toilet Rooms and transgendered washrooms. These kinds of accommodations should be considered at the Centennial Centre complex along with ensuring that all washrooms provide at least one barrier free stall consistent with Winnipeg’s universal access policy.

**UNDER-USED SPACES**
In New Streams of Revenue, page 36, opportunities are presented for the MCCC to explore how to capitalise on a number of revenue generating capacities within the existing Centennial Centre. These include the restaurant and kitchen which has not been in use since the early nineties and 2,800sf theatre across from the Planetarium which should be actively marketed to local arts groups to increase its usage. As well, food and beverage opportunities are explored. Preparations for these opportunities will need to be accounted for in future capital plans.

**OPINION OF PROBABLE COST**
Proposed Upgrades: $60,000,000
The east facade of the expansion to the Rehearsal Hall echoes the existing iconic architectural language of the west facade of the Centennial Concert Hall, working towards establishing a consistent architectural identity throughout the District. Interior activity is visible from the Arts Plaza, enhancing a District identity.

The expanded Rehearsal Hall with cafe space and an outdoor patio enliven the pedestrian experience along Lily Street within the Arts Plaza.
The existing Rehearsal Hall which is located to the east of the Concert Hall stage is considered by the resident companies to be too small. It is rarely used for its intended purposes and as an example, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet tends to do all of its rehearsals off site. As well, the practice schedule of one company will typically conflict with the performance schedule of another, and since performances often rely on the use of the Rehearsal Hall for staging purposes and scene changes, a larger more adaptable rehearsal space will improve this strain on resident companies.

The WSO has indicated that they would benefit greatly by practicing in a rehearsal space that has similar acoustics to the Concert Hall’s Orchestra Shell. Currently, they pay premium rates to rehearse on stage and this has the negative impact for the MCCC of making the stage unavailable for potential commercial bookings. Improving the size condition and character of the Rehearsal Hall will have reasonably predictable financial benefits for the MCCC.

An expansion on the east side of the Concert Hall is proposed to accommodate a larger improved Rehearsal Hall for the resident companies. The expansion should include a more contemporary and visible relationship to the street that would include a commercial/retail style type of space that can be leased out. The expansion should include a second floor to accommodate new, high quality office space for a resident tenant or emerging arts organizations.

**OPINION OF PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COST**

Proposed Expansion Area: $450 to $700/sf

- Rehearsal Hall and CRU: 4,200 sf
- CRU (Bistro or Store): 1,000 sf
- Office Space: 5,000 sf
The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre has identified a need for performance space that allows for experimental theatre and film. In 1981, RMTC suggested the decommissioning the Tom Hendry Theatre and moving the operations closer to the RMTC. The RMTC building was designed to easily expand to the west, into the adjacent surface parking lot.

A new 14,000 sf Black Box Theatre for about 300 patrons would fill a void between the RMTC and the Pantages Playhouse, creating a consistent and animated ‘theatre street’. This location would eliminate the need for the RMTC to have two workshop spaces, allowing the two theatres to share workshops, loading spaces, and administration space. By connecting the lobbies of the two theatres an ‘indoor street’ parallel to Market Avenue is created, a valuable public asset in winter. The Theatre should become a rentable venue for small concerts and events by arts organizations in Manitoba as well as the resident tenants.

A parkade needs to be considered in the design of the new Black Box Theatre to replace the stalls on the existing vacant lot. This can be incorporated into the first floor of the theatre and it is plausible that this is an up-down split ramp or a two floor parkade accessed from John Hirsch Place to the south.

**NEW RMTC BLACK BOX THEATRE, RMTC PARKADE AND DECOMMISSIONING OF TOM HENDRY THEATRE**

The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre has identified a need for performance space that allows for experimental theatre and film. In 1981, RMTC suggested the decommissioning the Tom Hendry Theatre and moving the operations closer to the RMTC. The RMTC building was designed to easily expand to the west, into the adjacent surface parking lot.

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**NEW RMTC BLACK BOX THEATRE**

**OPINION OF PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COST**

Proposed Development Area: 15,000 sf

$450 to $700/sf

**PARKADE OFF JOHN HIRSCH PLACE**

**OPINION OF PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COST**

80 stalls at $35,000 per stall
NEW ARTS PLAZA AND DECOMMISSIONING OF EXTENSION SERVICES BUILDING

There is no clear centre within the MCCC District. Public open spaces are either too small or not designed to accommodate large public gatherings. A large plaza at the corner of James Avenue and Lily Street would reinforce the east side of the Centennial Centre as the new main entrance to the Concert Hall and Manitoba Museum. The Arts Plaza would create an identifiable centre for the MCCC, which is important for any significant cultural district.

The central public open space in the West Exchange is Old Market Square. It is highly programmed but functions like a park rather than an urban plaza. The Exchange Biz expressed interest in a large, flexible paved space that could be used to facilitate outdoor concerts, markets, and festivals in the East Exchange. The Arts Plaza as a venue has the potential to generate revenue, much like Nathan Philips Square in Toronto, and should be highly programmed at all times of the year.

OPINION OF PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COST

Proposed Development Area: 40,000 sf
$500/sf
Plus parking below - 40 stalls at $40,000/stall

The 10,400sf Extension Services Building located at this site is not an effective storage facility for the Manitoba Museum in its current state. It is not temperature controlled and artifacts could easily be damaged. Most artifacts have been moved to other storage areas and the facility is nearly empty allowing the warehouse to be decommissioned. This site and the adjacent surface parking lot on James Avenue should be redeveloped as an urban plaza. The streets adjacent to the plaza should be pedestrian priority streets and raised to plaza level, eliminating curbs and creating a flexible space for large and small events.

NEW ARTS PLAZA SITE PLAN

The MCCC should establish design guidelines that all new public and private developments within the district boundary must address. The guidelines should encourage high quality design that responds to a pedestrian oriented public realm. These design guidelines should be developed by the MCCC and an Architect.

The MCCC should permanently employ (or hire on a yearly retainer) an Architect to implement the guidelines and ensure they are being met. The MCCC should have a representative on the Urban Design Advisory Council who must give approval to all new developments, public and private, before they can move forward.

All upgrades to the public realm within the district boundary should be consistent with the design guidelines. The MCCC should consider developing an Open Space Masterplan to address these guidelines in more detail to ensure a consistent use of material and an appropriate response to context. The District should be developed as a campus and should provide a safe and pedestrian scaled public realm that addresses the architecture of the Centennial Centre.

As the MCCC District and the City develops, there will be an increased demand for sustainable design practices to become part of the urban form. The scale and servicing of the MCCC assets allows for the possibility of a district wide energy policy modeled after Target Zero at the Forks. The Forks program aims to achieve zero garbage, zero water waste and zero carbon emissions throughout the Forks site.

The MCCC District is within an area of the city that has a combined sewer system. This means that whenever there is a high volume of stormwater runoff, the sewer system quickly becomes overloaded. Instead of diverting sewage to a treatment plant, the outfall leads directly to the Red River. On average, this happens over twenty-five times per year. The MCCC should lead the City of Winnipeg in a progressive stormwater strategy to slow the flow of water into the sewer system. This can be done in many ways such as integrated street and parking lot bioswales, green roofs, and rain gardens.

A Sustainable District Strategy/Energy Policy should be developed and implemented by the MCCC or a representative with knowledge in the field. All new developments should meet or exceed the requirements in this strategy.
NEW MUSIC HALL AND ARTS PLAZA, FROM LILY STREET AND JAMES AVENUE LOOKING NORTHEAST
The resident tenants of the MCCC have a preferred booking schedule at the Centennial Concert Hall. The WSO books the Centennial Concert Hall for the most number of nights and up to three years in advance. This severely limits the MCCC from booking large commercial shows, concerts, and other events that require more flexible venues. The Concert Hall was designed as a ‘multi-purpose’ performing arts centre and does not meet the requirements of a symphony hall.

There is the opportunity to provide a new cultural asset in the District that could address the need for a smaller, classical concert venue. This asset should be used by the WSO, traveling orchestras, and as an educational facility.

It is reasonable to assume that as the City grows, it will be able to easily support this type of venue and that it would attract a new and younger audience to classical music concerts. It would allow the MCCC to expand programming within the Centennial Concert Hall.

The new 35,000sf Music Hall should be located beside the Arts Plaza at the site of the decommissioned Tom Hendry Theatre. The Hall should further reinforce the new centre of the District and should accommodate outdoor music events in the Plaza.

**OPINION OF PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COST**

- Proposed Development Area: 35,000 sf
- $1,500 to $1,700/sf
The current Centennial Centre entry on Main Street and the Manitoba Museum entrance on Rupert Avenue have limitations. Neither connect well with the District nor provide a clear identity to the MCCC as a place. The Plan proposes a central access spine that brings cohesiveness to all of its programs.

A new primary entry to the Centennial Centre accommodates all tenants by providing centralized visitor orientation and a Welcome Centre. This could act as a central information area if not also a central ticketing booth. This strategy would connect each of the resident companies and unify the visitor and patron experience.

A study prepared by Wardrop Engineering Inc. in 2008, indicated that the walls on either side of the Steinkopf Gardens are capable of supporting at least one additional level. This allows for the possibility to expand above the Museum and close-in the Gardens. By enclosing the exterior space to create a covered Atrium, the space would become an all-season interior counterpoint to the proposed Arts Plaza. It should be an activated, lively, accessible spine that engages with the programming around it.

The Steinkopf Atrium would address an intersection of the public realm with the addition of a Welcome Centre. Located close to Main Street at the intersection of the Steinkopf Atrium and a new north-south spine, the Welcome Centre would be a place for the public to access information about all events within the MCCC District, and could provide central ticketing opportunities. The Atrium anchors the active civic space and connects the East Exchange, City Hall, to the Centennial Centre District, and on to the Waterfront.

**OPINION OF PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COST**

- Proposed Development Area: 14,000 sf
  - $550 to $700/sf

- Proposed Upgrades:
  - Link through Manitoba Museum: 3,700 sf
  - $400 to $600/sf
The Manitoba Museum has launched a capital campaign for a new Science Centre located at Rupert Avenue and Main Street with a bridge connection tying to the second floor of the existing Manitoba Museum. The Science Centre will bring a significant number of new visitors, families, and school groups to the District.

The additional visitors will increase the demand for parking. Parking facilities have not been proposed as part of the Science Centre capital campaign. The current design addresses Main Street and should also address the Rupert and Pacific Avenue streetscapes. Rupert Avenue should remain open to pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The design of the new facility should address Museum storage concerns and should link to the new Rupert Avenue Parkade and the proposed north-south spine to the Welcome Centre.

The MCCC should play an active role in the Manitoba Museum’s initiative to develop a Science Centre. The Manitoba Museum should consider and incorporate the recommendations of this Plan into future design decisions.

**OPINION OF PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COST**

A capital campaign lead by the Manitoba Museum is currently underway for the Science Centre expansion. Information on the proposed scheme, its scope, and cost should be taken from that campaign. The Plan acknowledges and accommodates the proposed capital plans developed by other consultants, but has not been included in the Opinion of Probable Costs.
ELEVATION FROM MARKET STREET LOOKING SOUTH

ELEVATION FROM LILY STREET LOOKING EAST
There are a number of the MCCC stakeholders that do not reside within the established boundaries for the arts and cultural district defined by the Act. The Royal Winnipeg Ballet owns their own facility at Edmonton Street while Artspace and the Manitoba Production Centre are tenants of the MCCC in two separate facilities. The first at Market Square, and the second at the Pacific Industrial Park.

WSO leases office space at the Richardson Building. They support the opportunity to return to the MCCC District if new contemporary facilities with good daylight, parking, and presence to the street could be provided to their staff and visitors.

The Manitoba Production Centre was built as a temporary facility more than 30 years ago and is in need of a major overhaul. It has currently been leased by NBC for television production purposes for the next three years. Discussions with experts in the television studio field have suggested that this is the only television production facility of its sort in the city and there is an opportunity for the MCCC to develop similar types of facilities.

The RBW has owned their building and adjacent parkade on Edmonton Street for 25 years. The facility has been recently upgraded and the parking garage and dance school are major sources of income. They use the Concert Hall for their major productions.

Artspace leases space to artist groups and below-market rates and was designed as an incubator for new arts organizations. Some of its tenants have been there for many years and can support slightly higher rental rates. Artspace should move its largest and most established tenants to other available spaces with the MCCCs assets in order to make room for new emerging arts organizations.

The MCCC should use its existing properties to develop new facilities for tenants who are not currently located within the District.

"Artspace can add incredible outreach leverage for MCCC and this should be pursued. Artspace is already very interested in expanding their reach within the community."

Randy Joynt, Artspace
AUTONOMY: The Conceptual Framework

FINANCING THE FUTURE

A REVISED BUSINESS MODEL

In order to deliver its mandate, the MCCC must adjust its business model. Manitobans are not likely to bear a higher price for performances, which leaves increasing sales volume as the key to financial improvements. In order to generate revenue, the MCCC must engage in:

• Revenue generation from rental of its facility and stage to a varied performance program and other revenue generating sources; and
• Provide revenue-earning services to its tenants in the immediate term and other arts organizations in Manitoba in the long term.

Paul Jordon, CEO, The Forks North Portage, suggests that “MCCC is effectively running a Centre for the Performing Arts and Sciences with no leadership or community stature.” MCCC needs to demonstrate a strong leadership and development role. Dr. Ed Bruning in the Strategic Business Plan prepared for MCCC in 2014 summarizes it best by saying that “many of the opportunities for MCCC involve organizational process changes and financial investment. Communications improvements, establishing a marketing presence within the organization, asserting leadership within the organization and with tenants, defining new partnerships with other cultural groups, and redefining utilization plans are all non-investment initiatives. Building an arts campus and creating amenities that complement arts programming are investment opportunities.”

The revenue generation approaches of Roy Thomson Hall in Toronto and Place Des Arts in Montreal provide excellent examples. While both of these organizations serve much larger and more diverse urban populations, they are valuable benchmarks for the following reasons:

• Roy Thomson Hall provides a diverse musical program, while at the same time giving the Toronto Symphony Orchestra preferential scheduling privileges and rates. This is similar to MCCC privileges to resident tenants.

• Place Des Arts is a Crown Corporation like MCCC and operates with the same governance structure and strong provincial funding. While both the Finnigan and Bruning Reports compared MCCC to similar cultural venues, none were run by Crown Corporations.

This Plan recommends increasing the percentage of revenue that is generated through Concert Hall rental of both its performance and non-performance spaces. It also recommends ways to increase revenue from expanded concessions and parking. MCCC’s current proportion of revenue generation is structured as follows (Annual Report, 2015):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MCCC REVENUE</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Government Grants</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concert Hall Programming</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concessions</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The MCCC currently relies on government funding in order to operate. In order to attain more self-sufficiency, new streams of revenue need to be developed by the MCCC. In light of limited government funding, the Corporation must develop new models and approaches to revenue generation.

The ultimate benefit to MCCC of increased revenue generation is to further support the Arts in Manitoba. The more financial strength the MCCC has, the more infrastructure support and service it can deliver, thereby freeing organizations to focus on their respective artistic mandates. This benefit will remain the central consideration in all of the recommendations proposed in this Plan.

A reliance on government funding means that basic maintenance and repairs are attended to as budget is available. There continues to be a long deficiency list and new capital developments cannot be realized in the current scenario. Both the MCCC Strategic Plan, 2015-2020 and the Bruning Strategic Business Plan, 2014 call for the MCCC to take on a stronger revenue generating role. [Finnigan Report]

STAFF REVISIONS

A revised business model for the MCCC will require a redefinition of staff roles and responsibilities. The Plan recommends a new organizational chart with revision to Senior Management positions. This will expand both the capacity of the MCCC’s business office and the collaborative support provided to resident tenants. Suggested revised titles and responsibilities include the following:

• Director, Finance, IT, Administration, Payroll and Ticketing: Delivery of IT, payroll and ticketing services to all of the resident tenants.
• General Manager, Centennial Concert Hall and Manitoba Production Centre: Responsible for programming, rentals and scheduling of the Concert Hall.
• Director of Sales, Marketing, Communications and Digital Content: Provision of marketing and centralized website service for all resident tenants, and community arts groups in the long term. Resident tenants to retain their own respective web presence and patron relationships.
• Director, Customer Service, Capital Development and Physical Plant: New focus on customer greeting and welcome service and presenting the Concert Hall complex as the collective home of the MB Museum, the WSO, the MB Opera, and potentially other arts groups in the long term.
NEW STREAMS OF REVENUE

RENTAL OF NON-PERFORMANCE SPACE
A stronger sales capacity will result in a more aggressive rental of front of house, lobby area, piano nobile, and board room. These spaces can be rented for weddings, corporate functions, meetings, and trade shows. The utilization records for non-performance space shows that the MCCC hosted only 3 receptions in 2015. By comparison, Roy Thomson Hall generated 25% of its revenue from Corporate and Lobby events in 2015.

Sam Baardman, Arts Branch Director, Department of Tourism, Culture, Heritage, Sport & Consumer Protection suggests that “When MCCC was conceived, it was to support the traditional arts. Today’s cultural ecosystem is far more complex. Available spaces flanking the auditorium can be used for art making, exhibitions, galleries and community cultural activity”.

The new Director of Sales and Marketing, Communications and Digital Content would begin by pricing the Concert Hall non-performance space at a similar rate to other venues in Winnipeg and would actively market the spaces.

The rental rates in each of the following categories should be analyzed against other popular venues in Winnipeg to determine their competitiveness. Rate adjustments may be required to make the Centennial Concert Hall more competitive. Current rental rates are as follows:

Piano Nobile:
$700.00 per day for commercial
$500.00 for not for profit
$425.00 for resident companies

Front of House Lobby:
$4,500.00 per day for a conference, meeting, or trade show
$2,800.00 per day for a Not-for-Profit group

Board Room:
$75.00 for four hours for Not-for-Profits and resident companies
$100.00 for four hours for commercial

Additional charges of front of house, sustaining fund, commission of net sales, catering surcharge and cost for phone use should be reconsidered in the context of competitive rental rates.

RENTAL OF PERFORMANCE SPACE
The 2015 utilization rate of the Concert Hall was 61%. This rate should be increased to at least 75%. With 144 open dates, there is the opportunity to promote and co-promote the use of the Centennial Concert Hall stage to generate increased revenue and further supporting the Arts in Manitoba. Current performance space utilization is as follows:

- Resident company performances: 113 days
- Commercial performances: 34 days
- Community and Not-for-Profit performances: 22 days
- Open dates: 144 days

The Finning Report, the Bruning Report and interviews with stakeholders and community groups, corporations and government agencies all confirm that the MCCC should take a more entrepreneurial role in promoting and selling the Centennial Concert Hall stage.

The MCCC’s first priority does not change. It will continue to give the scheduling and booking preference to the WSO, RWB and the Manitoba Opera in support of these art forms that require a unique performance stage. It can, however, expand its role and take on more risk. For example, Roy Thomson Hall operates as a non-profit organization in Toronto, and delivers a mix of event types in several venues. The Toronto Symphony is the key resident tenant in the Roy Thomson Hall venue. RTH gives the TSO Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday evenings/afternoons for performances. It reserves Saturday night for other performances.

This innovative mix at Roy Thompson Hall allows for a diverse cultural program as follows:

- Classical including the TSO: 31%
- Rock, pop, jazz, roots, world music and variety: 26%
- Corporate and Lobby events: 25%
- Film: 5%
- Comedy and Lectures: 6%
- Multi-cultural, school and religious events: 7%

RENTAL OF REHEARSAL HALL AND ADMINISTRATION SPACE
The Manitoba Arts Council (MAC) has determined that there is a demand in the community for both administration and rehearsal space.

The MCCC could address the demand by offering rental space in the underutilized spaces in the Concert Hall and the ground floor of the proposed new parking garage on Rupert Avenue. The organizations identified by MAC include the following:

Music:

Dance:
- NAfro Dance, Winnipeg Contemporary Dancers, School of Contemporary Dance, Young LungsGearshifting Performance Works, Q-Dance, Alexandra Elliot Dance, Nova Dance Collective, Mouvement Dance.

Theatre:
- Theatre Projects Manitoba, SIR, One Trunk Theatre, Zone 41, Urban Indigenous Theatre, Moving Target Theatre Company, Sick + Twisted, Rainbow Stage, Little Opera Company, Underground Opera, Flipside Opera.

Other:
- Aboriginal Arts, Digital Arts, Literary Arts, Visual Arts/ Media.
The MCCC has an opportunity to increase the “spend per patron” immediately and realize more profit with each performance. In 2015, only 6% of revenue came from concessions. There is a significant opportunity to increase the revenue in this area. For example, Roy Thomson Hall earns 26% of its revenue from bars and catering at each performance. Winnipeg venues such as the MTS Centre, West End Cultural Centre and the Burton Cumming Theatre rely very heavily on food and beverage sales and in particular the advantages of Stadium Service. MCCC should take advantage of this opportunity.

In 2008, William Caruso & Associates Inc. prepared a Food and Beverage Audit and Recommendations for the MCCC. The company conducted an audit of the Concert Hall during a performance of Riverdance. The findings from the audit that pertain to revenue generation include the following:

There are opportunities to provide expanded bar, coffee and food services throughout the Concert Hall in the main foyer, the orchestra lobby, piano nobile and the first and second balconies. The Concert Hall was not built to provide the amenities that today’s audience expects from a performance. It was built when patron amenity services were not recognized as important sources of revenue. Today’s audiences expect beverage, food and wi-fi services as part of a complete evening.

The Foyer is the introduction to the Concert Hall and to the performance. It should be celebrated with food that complements the evening.

The Orchestra Lobby is recognized as one of the most underutilized food/beverage revenue source areas of the building.

The Piano Nobile was recognized as having potential for a “special” dining and service area where seating and service could be expanded.

The First Balcony Lobby and the Second Balcony Lobby have a “skybox” feel and could be serviced by both food and beverage.

Food and beverage also creates new opportunities for the Concert Hall to realize additional revenue through advertising and sponsorships related to kiosks or menus.

Kenny Boyce, Manager, Film & Special Events, City of Winnipeg, suggested that the MCCC could use innovative local caterers and Red River College Culinary students to provide service to the MCCC. This local talent and energy will bring enthusiasm and spirit to the preparation and delivery of food service at the MCCC. Additional recommendations include the following:

Replace cash boxes with electronic point of sales to enable a venue wide inventory tracking system.

Strengthen the MCCC marketing and sales of food and beverage. Promote menu items with each performance through the website. Introduce café bars, carveries, grills, coffee kiosks, and expanded bar service.

The Foyer – Introduce two new food stations to serve a variety of hot and cold drinks, expanded bar with beer, wine, martinis and cocktails. The introduction of food at the entry level will be welcoming to the audience as they first enter the building and set a tone for the evening.

The Orchestra Lobby – Through the use of portable, thematic food and beverage stations, introduce a menu that would be available for purchase before the performance and at intermission.

The First Balcony/Second Balcony – Introduce mobile food stations to serve bar, coffee and food.

The Piano Nobile - Use of this space will depend on the production or Concert Hall event. It can accommodate overflow from the Orchestra Level or be configured to provide its own unique dining experience.

Using an advanced MCCC database, the Concert Hall could notify patrons or post on their website the food offerings at each performance and potentially cross promote with local hotels or restaurants in Winnipeg.
SHARED SERVICES FOR MCCC TENANTS

Securing funding for the arts is challenging across the country. The MCCC’s opportunity to provide collaborative back end support services to tenants in the Concert Hall as well as additional arts organizations in the future would:

- Allow the resident tenants to focus on their respective goals and mandates;
- Allow the tenants to economize in the collaborative delivery of service;
- Allow the MCCC to engage in the cost recovery of service provision.

The MCCC has a unique opportunity to provide “back end” service to the resident tenants. Proposed services would include payroll, information technology, marketing, sales, ticketing and materials management. This Plan is very clear that the patron relationship belongs to the resident tenants. The MCCC’s role is to provide administrative support only.

ADVANTAGES OF A CENTRALIZED TICKETING SYSTEM

The MCCC is currently using Ticketmaster to sell tickets to commercial performances and “walk up” tickets to the WSO performances. All other tenants are using their own ticketing source and have created separate databases for customer management. The MCCC could create a centralized customer relations management (CRM) system to create one cultural database for ticket purchase, promotions and advertising.

This Plan recommends a centralized ticketing agency for MCCC and resident tenants. In the long term, this MCCC ticketing capacity could be offered to other arts organizations funded by the Manitoba Arts Council. This would be a very significant way for the MCCC to support the arts in Manitoba.

A centralized CRM system would allow the MCCC to reach out to Winnipeg audiences and more actively promote the events at the Concert Hall. It would also create a strong web presence to include a centralized portal for ticketing for cultural events across Winnipeg. This more active marketing role is suggested in response to the Conceptual Plan Stakeholder interviews as well as the commitment of the MCCC in their Strategic Plan to provide cooperative and supportive services.

TICKETING SERVICE PROVIDERS

The Conceptual Plan recommends Tessitura and Archtics as good examples of companies that would have advantages for both MCCC and resident tenants. The advantages of both systems are as follows:

TESSITURA

- RMTC and RWB have already invested considerable time and resources establishing this system within their organizations and have their own licenses. The MO is using Theatre Manager and is looking for an alternate and better performing ticketing resource.
- MCCC would establish itself as the Master License Holder and provide primary IT resources. It would not be involved in any of the tenant patron relations or fundraising. Its position as the Master License Holder would mean that the residents could establish their own Tessitura functionality, CRM configuration for their respective patron relations, fundraising and marketing/communication purposes as sub-licenses of the MCCC system. The advantage is a lower price for each of the sub-licenses and a centralized CRM system for the Concert Hall.
- WSO, MO and Artspace (as required) would join the consortium and each have their own sub-licenses.
- Each of the resident companies would set up Tessitura according to their own business policies and each maintains their own separate ledgers, charts of accounts and financial systems.

ARCHTICS – TICKETMASTER’S CRM PROGRAM

Archtics features ticketing, a comprehensive funds development program, customer relationship management and marketing tools, and extensive reporting capabilities. Archtics’ flexible technology would provide additional cost savings and efficiencies across MCCC tenants. Archtics would allow the MCCC and tenants to create and manage their own events, define ticket prices and manage custom fields for patrons and donors. The MCCC and each resident would have complete ownership over the customer data fields they wish to capture for reporting and marketing purposes. Archtics could be integrated into Ticketmaster’s distribution channels.

The MCCC’s existing relationship with Ticketmaster features access to the strategic support of Jana Holth-Bach, Director, Client Development, Ticketmaster. Jana believes that Archtics would help MCCC develop more strategic marketing tools including season and single ticketing and a customized marketing collateral and targeted marketing programs. It would also give the MCCC an effective reporting system to allow for sophisticated analytics on Concert Hall attendance. Ticketmaster Archtics, like Tessitura, comes with dedicated support from Ticketmaster’s network of technical, operational, and marketing consultants. Archtics would also connect MCCC to its partner cultural community and expand its network of peers to share insights, networking and best practices among a full range of Arts clients. Archtics Arts consortium is currently being used by Place des Arts in Montreal, also a Crown Corporation.

ADDITIONAL SHARED OPPORTUNITIES

The Business Council of Manitoba: The MCCC should work in tandem with the current analysis being conducted by the Business Council of Manitoba. The Council is working with the resident tenants of the MCCC to define sustainable business practices going forward. Sustainable business practices of the MCCC must align and support the practices of each of the resident tenants.

Cultural Policy Review: In addition, the Team suggests that this Conceptual Plan be included as part of the Province’s Cultural Policy Review. This will position MCCC in the arts community and give Manitobans an opportunity to respond to the Plan.

Facility and Management Training: In addition to co-operative services, Randy Joynt, former Executive Director of Artspace suggests that MCCC take on a training role for cultural venues going forward. Sustainable business practices of the MCCC must align and support the practices of each of the resident tenants.