

COMMUNITY ARTSPACE



GUELPH CENTRE FOR VISUAL ART

EMPOWERING SUSTAINABLE
ARTISTIC PRACTICE

PROPOSAL

Expression of Interest for Drill Hall Reuse, 23-086

PREPARED BY
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Land Acknowledgement

Located in Guelph, the Drill Hall is situated on the ancestral homelands of Attiwonderonk and the Haudenosaunee. This land is held as the treaty lands territory within the bounds of the Between the Lakes Treaty, No. 3 with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and lies directly adjacent to the disputed Haldimand Tract, part of a long-established traditional hunting ground for the Six Nations of the Grand River.

By recognizing the land, we emphasize our responsibility to weave reconciliation into the core of our proposal. As a community led organization, we vow to align with the principles set forth by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Specifically, we are committed to implementing the guidelines outlined in Call to Action 92, as applicable to our organization's development and programming.

Creative incubators hold a pivotal role in Canada's ongoing journey of reconciliation and healing. The arts not only remind us of our common human experience but also highlight the significance of reckoning with our past as we work towards creating a more unified and inclusive future for everyone.

We aim to establish a Community Artspace that welcomes individuals from all backgrounds, celebrating our common ties and nurturing a sense of community. Our acknowledgment of the land is not just a gesture, but part of an ongoing commitment to fostering a space of true collaboration and respect.

Vision

Imagine a lively cultural hub in the heart of downtown Guelph, empowering a vibrant creative community from across the city, fueling artistic expression and contributing to the local creative economy.

We envision a multi-function Community Artspace where individuals from all backgrounds and walks of life can come together and celebrate diversity through artistic practice. In addition to attracting visitors interested in experiencing our local cultural scene, it firmly establishes a shared community resource that reinforces our interconnectedness and fosters a sense of belonging and unity.

Central to our vision is the creation of a collaborative environment that includes shared workspaces, equipment libraries, and individual studios. Complementing these resources are flexible exhibition, teaching, and gathering spaces providing visual artists with the essential facilities and resources necessary to develop and maintain a sustainable artistic practice.



Executive Summary

The Guelph Centre for Visual Art (GuelphCVA) is a not-for-profit corporation established in Ontario specifically to address the Drill Hall Reuse Request for Expression of Interest. Its board of directors includes local artists who are supported by an extensive and growing Advisory Team of community members with proven experience and expertise (*see Appendix for Biographies*).

Our approach involves collaboration with local organizations, community stakeholders, and individual artists, together with the City of Guelph. Together, this collective effort holds the key elements necessary to address a myriad of indeterminate challenges and seize the unforeseen solutions associated with revitalizing this 156-year-old heritage wooden structure into an empowering Community Artspace that celebrates Guelph's distinctive cultural identity and diversity.

Our Community Artspace proposal provides an opportunity to advance key aspects of Guelph's *Strategic Plan, Future Guelph 2024-2027*. With its emphasis on inclusivity, economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, learning, collaboration, and well-being, the Artspace reflects the core values and objectives of the plan. By establishing a vibrant hub for artistic expression, the Artspace propels Guelph towards a future characterized by unity, creativity, and holistic growth as promoted in the City's strategic vision.

The project embodies the core objectives and vision set forth in the *Guelph Community Plan*. It strongly emphasizes the pursuit of a flourishing arts and culture scene, economic vitality, and collaborative efforts, thereby making a significant contribution to the cultural and creative economy. Our vision seamlessly aligns with the goals and targets outlined in both the *Downtown Secondary Plan* and the *Economic Development and Tourism Strategy*. By fostering economic vibrancy and positioning Guelph as a thriving cultural hotspot, this project showcases the city as a popular cultural destination. (*see Appendix A - Policy Alignment Details*)

By emphasizing transit accessibility, seeking opportunities for indoor bicycle storage, and examining the potential of a shared vehicle for Community Artspace members, we turn on-site parking challenges into benefits for both the community and the environment. Visitors, tourists, and artists who choose to park in one of the nearby downtown garages will be drawn to discover and patronize the local shops, restaurants, and businesses that line the path leading to the Drill Hall.

Our goal is to foster the growth of artists in Guelph while attracting top-tier talent to our locality. Functioning as an artist incubator for emerging creatives, recent graduates, and mid-career professional artists, the Community Artspace holds the potential to not only stand as a welcoming gateway to downtown Guelph but also serve as a hub of excellence extending its influence well beyond the confines of the Drill Hall.

For this vision to be realized, the City of Guelph must complete the restoration of the Drill Hall to ensure the building is safe for occupancy and ready for interior renovations. We suggest that the Drill Hall remain in public ownership and the City of Guelph continue to manage the building's exterior envelope and critical systems.

As project lead, GuelphCVA will work collaboratively with the City of Guelph to develop specifications for the outstanding building renovations, ensuring the Drill Hall reaches a lease-ready state quickly and efficiently. The anticipated third-party fees for the City in the first year, relating to this work leading up to the approval of the conceptual design milestone—which includes defining the scope, budgeting for construction, and scheduling—is estimated at approximately \$200K (*See Appendix E - Phase One Deliverables*).

As the tenant, GuelphCVA would assume responsibility for interior alterations to the building and pay rent calculated as a percentage of the generated revenue. The first year of this five-year strategy focuses on planning, engaging with partners, and developing capital grants and fundraising for interior customization. GuelphCVA aims to raise approximately \$150K in the first year for planning and design relating to tenant fit-out, with the goal of ensuring that the facility can be actively used by the community seven days a week once operational.

Furthermore, GuelphCVA seeks an initial operating investment of \$500K spread over five years from the City of Guelph to help us reach arts-incubator readiness. As our core vision is founded upon empowering sustainable artistic practice, so too our proposal projects the Community Artspace will achieve operational sustainability within a five-year timeframe.

The Community Artspace will enhance the lives of Guelph residents, foster community engagement and stimulate the local economy. It will serve as a platform for education and skills development, promoting accessibility, inclusivity, and mental well-being. By establishing a lively and culturally diverse hub, attracting individuals from throughout the city and even further, we are enhancing the cultural mosaic of the entire region (*see Appendix B - Community Benefits*).

Project Description

Our proposal includes a range of flexible spaces within the Drill Hall, tailored to meet diverse requirements. (*Appendix C - Proposed Community Services*). These spaces include sections for exhibition and display, communal co-working environments, specialized workshops, private studio spaces, and adaptable zones suitable for educational events, meetings, as well as opportunities for artists to showcase their works in a sales gallery.

Further, we will incorporate space for social interactions, allowing people to mingle, collaborate, share ideas, and foster connections between artists, enthusiasts, students, visitors, supporters, and customers.

As part of our first-year planning and development we will complete our engagement with Guelph’s arts ecosystem and complete a detailed operational plan that will determine the precise amenities, services, and layout for the Community Artspace (see Appendix D - Community Collaborators). Our foremost objective is to ensure that our implementation plan aligns with the needs, strengths, and opportunities within the Guelph arts community. We strive to create a Community Artspace that genuinely resonates with and reflects our cultural identity.



Proposal

- A. **That the City of Guelph** continue to own the Drill Hall building and continue to be responsible to maintain its structural elements and primary systems.
- B. That the City enter into an agreement with the Guelph Centre for Visual Art for the City property municipally known as 72 Farquhar Street, to manage and operate the Drill Hall and program the building as a Community Artspace.
- C. That the City undertake the necessary lease-ready preparations to ensure the Drill Hall is in compliance with all codes and regulations required for a safe and functional space including building codes, fire safety regulations, and accessibility standards mandated for City-owned facilities.
- D. That the City takes all necessary actions and bear all associated costs to implement change of use for the property.
- E. **That Guelph Centre for Visual Art** undertake necessary interior remodeling; customizing the Drill Hall according to the needs of a Community Artspace. This may include modifications to interior walls, room layouts, electrical and plumbing systems, and the overall interior design.
- F. That Guelph Centre for Visual Art assume all operating costs and expenses related to the Drill Hall building's administration, management, and operation while having the opportunity to establish and collect all fees, charges, rents and recoveries.
- G. That Guelph Centre for Visual Art develop a collaborative community non-profit business model to ensure the long-term viability of the Drill Hall as a Community Artspace. This may include revenue streams such as membership fees, rental income from space and facilities, grants, sponsorships, donations, sales, and commissions.
- H. That Guelph Centre for Visual Art pay rent to the City based upon a percentage of revenue generated formula. The formula for calculating the revenue-based annual rent paid to the City is determined by deducting the first \$100,000 from the Gross Operating Revenue and multiplying the resulting amount by the following rates.
 - a. There is no % paid on the first \$100,000
 - b. \$100,001 – \$200,000 = 5%
 - c. \$200,001 - \$300,000 = 10%
 - d. \$300,001 - \$400,000 = 15%
- I. An initial agreement term of five years starting January 1, 2024 is proposed with three additional five-year renewals for a total of 20 years.
- J. That the City of Guelph provide Guelph Centre for Visual Art transitional funding totaling \$500,000 over five years (2024 to 2028), assisting with the costs associated with developing and implementing new community programming.

Alternative Proposal (Property Transfer)

There are both advantages and disadvantages to the long-term ownership structure (i.e., leasing vs. ownership). A revenue-based lease agreement offers an alignment of interests, flexibility, risk sharing, incentive for growth, fairness, and the opportunity to build a long-term relationship with the City of Guelph. Alternatively, ownership can offer the GuelphCVA with a range of financial and strategic benefits including equity buildup, stability and the control of costs, tax and grant benefits, legacy opportunities, and private investment opportunities. Should the City of Guelph favor sale over lease, an alternative proposal can be considered without impact to our work plan *(see Appendix X - Alternative Proposal)*.

Work Plan

The GuelphCVA serves as the City of Guelph's primary point of accountability on the project, ensuring that the adaptive reuse of the Drill Hall is not just executed efficiently and economically, but maintains alignment with the requirements of Guelph's diverse artistic community.

Our work plan consists of two connected parts that work in tandem throughout the development process. The first part is about adaptive reuse of the Drill Hall building, and the second part centers on the development of the community driven organization. The project is divided into three phases:

Phase 1. Pre-Development and Detail Design

(See Appendix E - Phase One Deliverables)

Phase 2. Renovations and Fixturing

(See Appendix F – Phase Two Preliminary Scope of Work)

Phase 3. Operations of the Community Artspace

(See Appendix G – Phase Three Preliminary Operations Plan)

In the initial phase of the project, we will research, map out the design, project costs, and lay the groundwork for renovations of the Drill Hall. Concurrently, we will complete a comprehensive engagement and planning process with the art community and build up our organizational capacity to embark on construction and operational stages with confidence.

Following successful completion and council-approved capital funding for the Drill Hall's functional restoration, the second phase takes on the transformation of the building. In the third phase, we will initiate the launch and operation of a thrilling new chapter in our community's cultural evolution.

5 Year Project Timeline

While certain tasks might follow a sequential order, many activities occur simultaneously.

Phase I: 2024

1. Proposal Submission and Evaluation (Duration: 2 months)
 - City officials evaluate the proposals to select the winning project.
2. Presentation to Council and Approval (Duration: 2 months)
 - The winning project is presented to the City Council for approval.
 - City Council reviews and grants approval for the adaptive reuse of the Drill Hall.
3. Change of Use Approved (Duration: 3-6 months)
 - Approve change of use for the property.
(see Appendix H – Proposed Permitted Uses).
4. Community Outreach and Planning Process (Duration 8-12 months)
 - Finalise facilities, resources, and service offering.
5. Complete Detail Design, Specifications and Cost Estimates (Duration: 4-6 months)
 - To complete lease-ready condition of structure, interior renovations and fixturing.
6. Presentation to City Council - **October 2024**

Phase II: 2025

1. Lease-Ready Renovations (Duration: 8-12 months)
 - Concurrently with rezoning, renovations commence on the Drill Hall.
2. Interior Renovations (Duration: 8-10 months)
 - The Drill Hall's spaces are adapted according to the approved plan for the Community Artspace.
3. Grand Opening Exhibition - **November 2026**
 - The Drill Hall is officially launched as a vibrant Community Artspace during the holiday season.

Phase III: 2026-2028

1. Initial Operating Period (Year 1)
 - Phased in capacity of revenue streams
2. Operating Period (Years 2-3)
 - Improved eligibility for grant funding

Financial Projections

Capital Forecast

	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Total Investment	200,000	350,000	140,000	140,000	240,000
Total Expenditures	149,500	650,000	25,000	45,000	55,000
Capital Budget Balance	50,500	-300,000	115,000	95,000	40,000
Cumulative Capital Balance	50,500	-249,500	-134,500	-39,500	500

Operations Budget

	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Total Programme Revenue			66,921	136,350	176,725
Total Contributions	170,000	171,000	169,200	123,640	125,368
Total Income	170,000	171,000	236,121	259,990	302,093
Total Operating Expenses	7,500	20,200	41,700	44,200	44,200
Fundraising and Admin. Expense	120,000	123,500	175,000	200,000	205,000
Capital Cost	0	0	5,000	2,500	2,500
Total Expenses	127,500	143,700	221,700	246,700	251,700
Revenue Less Expenses	42,500	27,300	14,421	13,290	50,393

Operating Assumptions and Notes

- Ground Floor Programme Spaces - \$18/ft²
- Second Floor Studio Spaces - \$20/ft²
- Artist Coworking Spaces - \$45/ft²
- Tenant Improvements - \$100/ft²
- Operational capacity phased in over 3 years
- Projected grants based upon current eligibility (see Appendix J for Grant Details)
- Detailed monthly budgets (see Appendix I – Financial Pro Forma)
- In-kind support (see Appendix K - Strategic Partnerships)

Funding Request

In our proposal, we are requesting \$500K over a five-year period, with the annual allocation as follows: 150K, 150K, 100K, 50K, and 50K. This financial support serves as a robust cornerstone for ensuring long-term operational sustainability. Our financial projections anticipate that rental payments for community programming at the Drill Hall will commence in the second year of operation, reflecting our dedication to a sustainable creative economy in Guelph.

Interior renovation capital costs present a significant challenge we are eager to address. We look forward to collaborating on joint applications for federal and provincial programs. We also anticipate potential funding opportunities from sources such as tourism, downtown revitalization, heritage restoration, and cultural development programs in coordination with the City of Guelph.

Our funding request offers an outstanding Return on Investment (ROI), measured not only in economic gains such as increased business activity and job generation, but more significantly in social and cultural dividends such as improved quality of life, enhanced community cohesion, and cultural enrichment.



Key Performance Indicators

Our proposal is underpinned by a comprehensive set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that encapsulate our commitment to the advancement of artistic expression, community well-being, and sustainable development.

Diversity and Inclusivity: Measuring the representation of diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and underrepresented groups in both participation and programming.

Accessibility: Evaluating the degree to which the Artspace is welcoming and provides opportunities for all members of the community.

Community Engagement: Tracking the number of community members actively participating in Artspace programs and events, gauging the depth of engagement and the fostering of a sense of belonging.

Educational Outreach: Assessing the reach and impact of workshops, classes, and mentorship programs.

Artistic Collaborations: Measuring the number of cross-disciplinary joint initiatives within the Artspace.

Revenue Generation: Tracking income streams, including membership fees, lease revenue, grants, sponsorships, and donations.

Environmental Impact: Monitoring our influence throughout construction, embracing sustainable practices like energy efficiency, waste reduction, and green initiatives during transition to operational phases.

Heritage Conservation: Collaborating with the Guelph Civic Museum, Historical Society, Legion, Navy League, and Armories to identify and track the effectiveness of meaningful heritage preservation of the Drill Hall features.

Race to Zero: Monitoring our advancement in achieving or surpassing benchmarks for net-zero energy consumption, and passive building design. This extends beyond construction, encompassing operational strategies such as effective waste management, rainwater harvesting, collective procurement, resource sharing, and equipment usage.

These KPIs collectively reflect our holistic approach to the transformation of the Drill Hall. By consistently measuring our progress against selected benchmarks, we ensure that our endeavor not only fulfills its intended objectives but also evolves in response to the needs and aspirations of Guelph's dynamic and diverse community.