

# City of Yellowknife Arts & Culture Master Plan

Final Report

September 2022



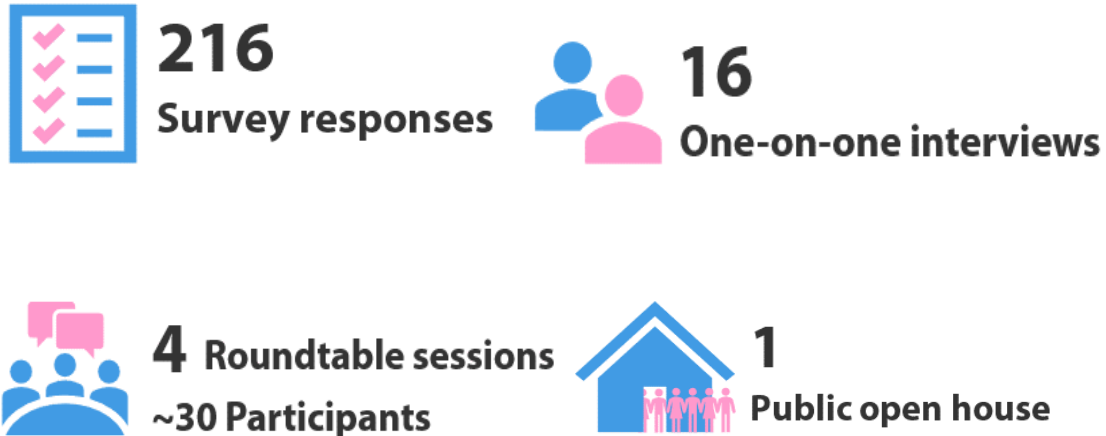
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## Executive Summary

### An Arts & Culture Plan for Yellowknife

The Arts & Culture plan for Yellowknife was developed over five phases, in close collaboration with artists and the community. The public consultations can be seen at a glance in the image below.



Through this process, a vision for arts and culture emerged, and this plan will help the City of Yellowknife to support this vision.

#### A Vision for Arts & Culture in Yellowknife

*The diverse cultural fabric of Yellowknife is evident in the richness of arts, culture and Indigenous identities, which all contribute to quality of life for everyone who calls Yellowknife home, attracts tourism and supports economic growth.*

The Arts & Culture plan is structured around four strategic pillars – strategic directions that will support arts and culture in Yellowknife and ensure they continue to thrive. The four pillars are visualized below.



Advancement on each strategic pillar can be achieved by adhering to the objectives developed for each pillar. The actions and overview of each pillar are summarized below. Specific actions are proposed for each objective, to enable the City of Yellowknife to achieve these objectives. The actions can be thought of as actionable by the City of Yellowknife, though many in collaboration with the community.

The pillars and objectives are visualized on the following page.

### Leadership & Support

The necessary leadership to move initiatives forward and continue to support the arts in the appropriate ways. This pillar will help the City to determine their cultural leadership role; consider how municipal by-laws/policies best support the arts; and, provide the necessary support for artists to thrive.

**Objective 1:** Establish strong City leadership around arts and culture.

**Objective 2:** Facilitate capacity building for the arts sector.

**Objective 3:** Solidify role as a champion and advocate for Yellowknife arts.

### Spaces & Places

The spaces and places for artists to display, perform, and create as well as for audiences to experience arts & culture. The pillar will support the City to assess and plan for cultural infrastructure and assets; to connect artists, people and places, and encourage environmental stewardship as the natural environment is a cultural asset in and of itself.

**Objective 1:** Assess and plan for cultural infrastructure to meet short and long-term needs.

**Objective 2:** Connect artists and audiences with space to create and engage with the arts.

**Objective 3:** Activate public spaces to unite people with culture and their community.

### Celebrating Diversity

Arts and culture that celebrates all of the diversity of Yellowknife. The pillar will guide the City to promote Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; engage people of all ages and cultural backgrounds with the arts; and, ensure Indigenous leadership.

**Objective 1:** Cultivate a welcoming environment where all people and backgrounds are represented.

**Objective 2:** Celebrate and protect Indigenous culture.

**Objective 3:** Celebrate the diversity of backgrounds for visitors and new residents.

### Connections & Visibility

The building of networks across the arts, and with other partners (e.g., tourism). This pillar will ensure the arts are visible and promoted for audiences, both local and visiting; and, that connections are encouraged across the sector to help individuals thrive.

**Objective 1:** Increase the visibility of arts & culture throughout the city.

**Objective 2:** Ingrain arts & culture into the identity of the city.

**Objective 3:** Reduce barriers to arts & culture participation.

## Introduction

Yellowknife boasts a thriving artist community, as well as a rich natural and cultural heritage. As the capital and largest city in the Northwest Territories, the city's unique northern context makes its arts and culture sectors exceptionally unique, providing opportunities to drive a supportive environment for artists, socio-economic development, and tourism.

The Yellowknife Arts and Culture Master Plan, the City's first such plan, establishes the City of Yellowknife's commitment to supporting and advancing arts and culture. This plan is the result of extensive research, engagement, analysis and design to provide the City of Yellowknife with specific actions to further support artists, highlight the diverse cultural makeup of the city, integrate arts and culture into the community, and ensure the City remains focused and responsive to community needs.

This plan aligns aspirations and resources around key pillars, objectives, actions, and implementation considerations to provide a roadmap to guide the City to realize the community's vision. This vision is summarized into the following vision statement.

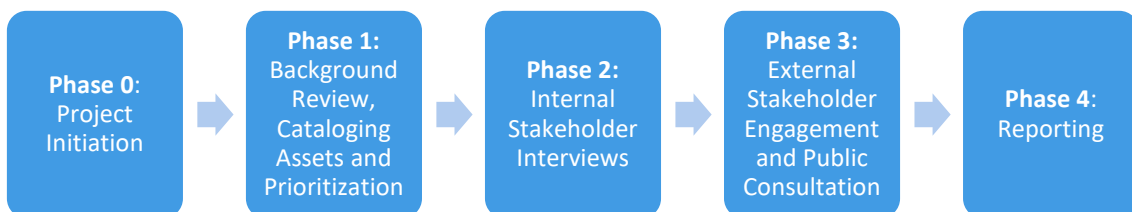
### **A Vision for Arts & Culture in Yellowknife**

*The diverse cultural fabric of Yellowknife is evident in the richness of arts, culture and Indigenous identities, which all contribute to quality of life for everyone who calls Yellowknife home, attracts tourism and supports economic growth.*

## Project Process

This strategy was developed using a 5-phase process: project initiation; background review, cataloging assets and prioritization; internal engagement; external engagement; and reporting. The strategy was developed in consideration of the existing City of Yellowknife Community Plan and other City guiding documents, as well as Government of Northwest Territory (GNWT) arts and culture initiatives. Work was led by the City of Yellowknife in collaboration with City staff, arts and culture stakeholders, and the public. A quick overview of the process follows:

**Figure 1: 5-Phase Strategy Development Process**



### **Phase 0: Project Initiation**

The outset of the project involved convening with relevant project authorities to confirm the scope of the work, discuss the priorities and context of the City of Yellowknife related to arts and culture, and discuss the projects engagement approach. This phase also involved conducting a culture planning 101 webinar for City staff and stakeholders.

### **Phase 1: Background Review, Cataloging Assets and Prioritization**

Project initiation was followed by conducting a thorough background review of relevant City documents, policies and plans to formulate a clear picture of the current arts and culture landscape in Yellowknife. The review also considered a variety of external sources such as Government of NWT arts and culture initiatives to identify existing best practices and approaches being pursued in the sector. Following the background review was identifying Yellowknife's current arts and cultural facilities through an asset mapping exercise. Phase 1 culminated in establishing the foundation for the project and informed the types of themes and questions that would be used in internal and external stakeholder engagement. Documents reviewed included:

- City of Yellowknife – Community Plan (December 2019)
- City Council Goals & Objectives 2019-2022 Action Plan
- City of Yellowknife – Economic Development Strategy, 2020-2024
- Immigration Matters- Economic Profile Series: Yellowknife, Northwest Territories (Spring 2020)
- Intercultural Heritage & Placemaking Plan (June 2018)
- NWT Arts Strategy: 2021- 2031
- NWT Film Strategy and Action Plan
- 2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework
- City of Yellowknife Public Art Policy
- City of Yellowknife Reconciliation Action Plan

### **Phase 2: Internal Stakeholder Interviews**

For Phase 2, Nordicity conducted a series of 1:1 interviews with City staff to learn about the existing resources, capacity, and structure of the City and the City's ability to implement an Arts and Culture Master Plan. Following internal interviews, Nordicity submitted a Research Summary Report to the City that provided a summary of background research and preliminary engagement findings. It included a review of existing City plans and policies; identification of current arts and culture programs and initiatives; a profile of Yellowknife's cultural assets; and an assessment to the strengths, challenges and opportunities for arts and culture in Yellowknife.

### **Phase 3: External Stakeholder Engagement and Public Consultation**

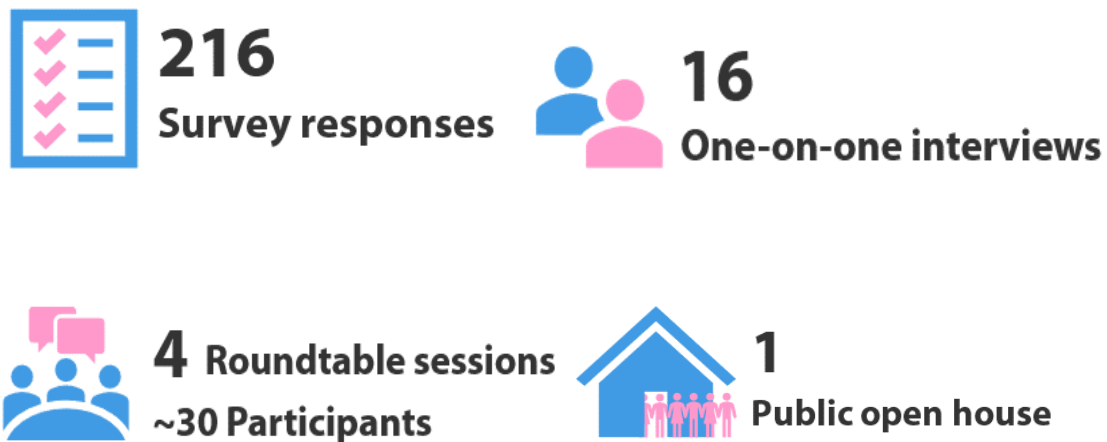
To support and advance arts and culture in Yellowknife, the work included an extensive engagement process involving a range of stakeholders including residents, arts and culture organizations and businesses, individual artists, and Council and City staff. Consultations were

designed to encourage participants to share their insights, opinions, and ideas on a wide variety of topics facing the city in arts and culture development.

Public consultation began with external stakeholder interviews that led to understanding the Yellowknife arts and culture context and the start of priority identification. The interviews were then followed by an online survey that focused on the specific barriers/challenges, needs and priorities of both Yellowknife artists as well as Yellowknife residents more broadly. At the same time, three themed virtual roundtable sessions were conducted: Business and Economic Development, Community Planning and Development, Diversity and the Arts. Indigenous advisors were also consulted through the process. Finally, an in-person public open house and visioning session were held with City Council in Yellowknife.

In total, 216 residents responded to the public survey, approximately 30 people participated across the four roundtable sessions, ~40 residents attended the public open house, and 16 one-to-one interviews occurred.

**Figure 2: Public Engagement at-a-glance**



The end of Phase 3 involved analysis of all the engagement and survey findings using a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods. Analysis findings were discussed and vetted during the onsite visioning session with City Council and played a key role in developing the strategies pillars, actions, and recommendations of the Plan.

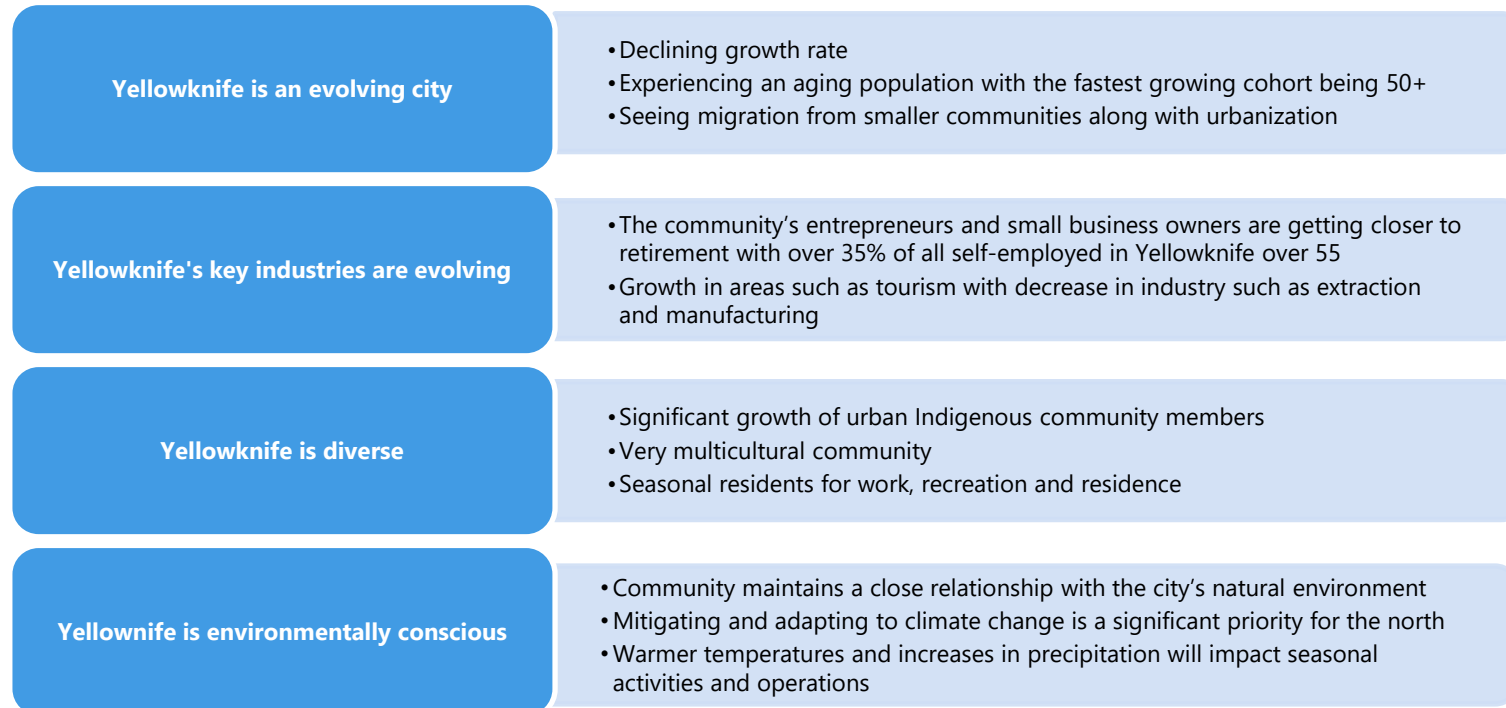
**Phase 4: Reporting**

The work culminated in the development and delivery of a Final Report, Implementation Plan, and presentation to City Council.

## Planning Context

### City Context

There were several Yellowknife- specific dynamics that were important to understand as this plan was developed. Some key contextual insights are summarized in the figure below.



**Source:** City of Yellowknife – Community Plan (December 2019), City Council Goals & Objectives 2019-2022 Action Plan, City of Yellowknife – Economic Development Strategy, 2020-2024, website for the City of Yellowknife.



### City of Yellowknife Priorities

This arts & culture plan was not developed in a vacuum. The City’s planning priorities were assessed and considered for potential alignment. Extensive background research revealed several overarching priorities for the City of Yellowknife’s future that are relevant to its arts, culture, and heritage sectors. They include: improving the quality of life of its citizens; using land in an economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable manner as well as mitigating and adapting to climate change; growing and diversifying the Yellowknife economy, including by fostering a robust and diversified tourism sector; recognizing and respecting the inherent right of the Indigenous peoples in the region and reconciliation with all Indigenous peoples that are represented in the city and the region; maintaining a close relationship with the city’s surrounding natural environment; providing a diversity of opportunities for a diversity of artists. These priorities were explicitly identified in one or more key City documents or emerged as recurring themes across several documents.

### Arts & Culture in Yellowknife

Yellowknife is home to a rich number of arts and culture assets including various tangible and intangible assets that contribute to the vibrant landscape of the community. The city has immense opportunity to diversify its economy through the sector and serve as an arts and culture destination for tourists.

### Cultural Resources Framework

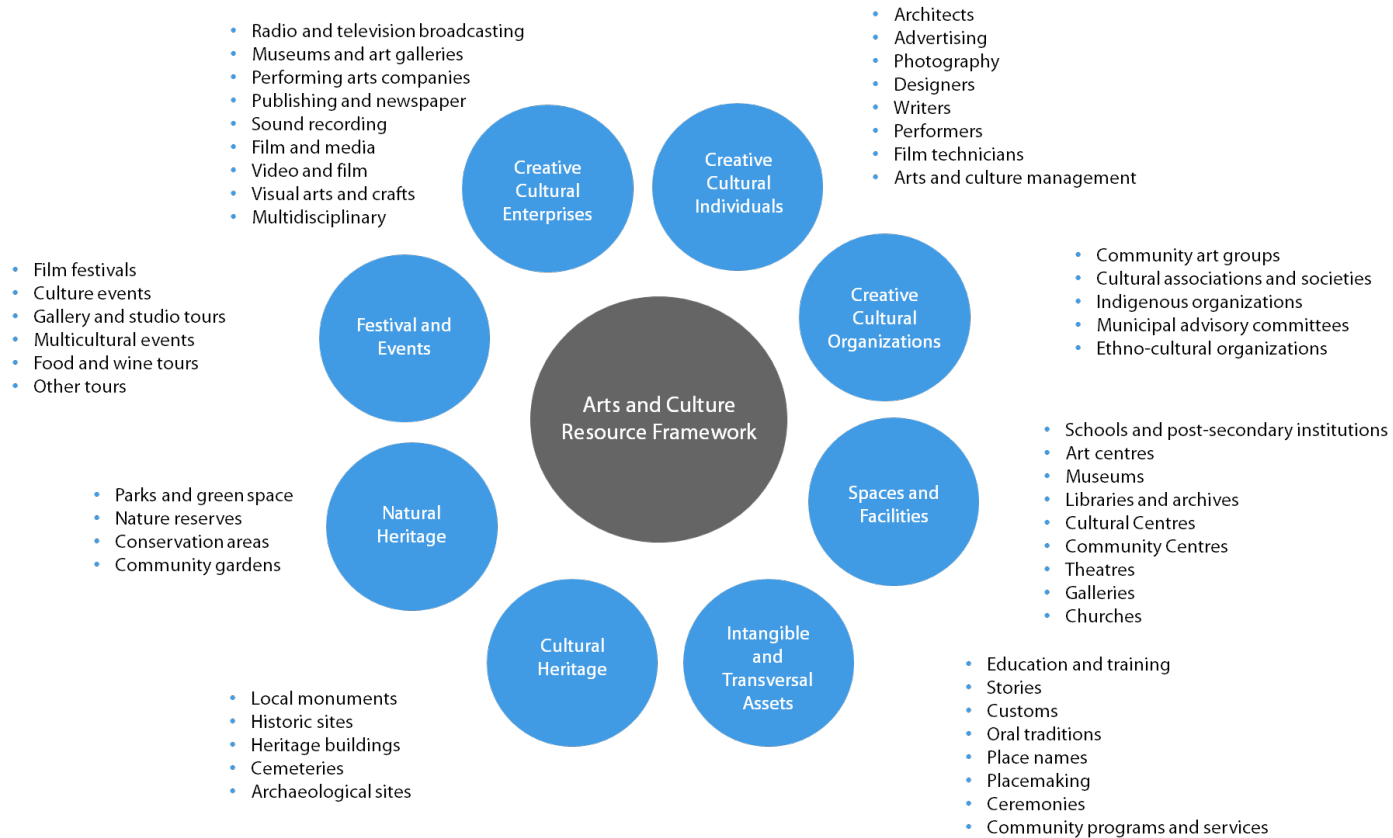
A cultural resources framework was developed to fully assess the arts & culture landscape of the city. This framework was adapted from a universal approach used by the sector and informed by existing mapping best practices.<sup>1</sup> The Yellowknife Arts and Culture Resource Framework – visualized below -- identifies eight overarching categories and several subcategories that all contribute to creating a sense of place and being in Yellowknife.

Figure 3: City of Yellowknife Priorities



<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada. Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics.

Figure 4: Yellowknife Arts and Culture Resource Framework<sup>2</sup>



<sup>2</sup> Sources: City of Yellowknife identified cultural assets, Miller Dickinson Blais (2014) City of Windsor Cultural Mapping Project, City of Abbotsford Culture Plan 2018, Government of NT Arts and Culture Strategy.

In summary, the cultural resource framework development process revealed that:

- A diverse range of community arts and culture assets exist in the City of Yellowknife, from physical to natural and oral to artistic expression.
- Art and culture are richly woven into the community through active areas such as public placemaking, events and attractions, and educational and engagement opportunities.
- Yellowknife has been identified to have a very transient community of assets as many open and close (or move online), only run seasonally or occasionally, move communities, etc.
- Yellowknife is fortunate to be surrounded by an abundance of nature, wildlife and identified urban natural assets which play an important role in its identity, heritage, and culture—natural assets comprise a large portion of the community.
- Yellowknife has a wide variety of facilities and spaces (both natural and built) where cultural activities take place from institutions, venues, outdoor spaces, to found-space types. However, the number of dedicated arts spaces is limited.

Additional details on the assets reviewed can be found in the appendix.

## **Research Takeaways & Key Insights**

As outlined in the project process section, several research avenues were undertaken to arrive at this plan. Desk research, interviews, roundtable discussions, a survey, and an open house all contributed to the understanding of Yellowknife, and the strengths, challenges and opportunities for arts and cultural planning in the city. This section will summarize the key insights that informed the development of the plan.

### **Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities – An Overview**

As a result of research, engagement, and consultation with important internal and external stakeholders, a number of strengths, challenges, and opportunities were revealed. These findings directly informed the development of the final Master Plan, its pillars, and recommendations.

**Figure 5: Yellowknife Strengths, Challenges, and Opportunities**

Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rich cultural heritage and diversity of peoples.</li> <li>• Renowned location.</li> <li>• Natural heritage.</li> <li>• Many of artists, creators and assets found in Yellowknife.</li> <li>• Strong entrepreneurial spirit seen across arts community.</li> <li>• A lot of existing spaces that could be better utilized.</li> <li>• Capital/largest city and hub for the Territory.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current ad-hoc structure of arts and culture that exists in Yellowknife.</li> <li>• Organizations are heavily run by volunteers, which leads to high turnover.</li> <li>• There is a lack of focus around support and funding to increase foundational capacity building.</li> <li>• Arts are spread out in pockets across city.</li> <li>• Lack of formal creative spaces.</li> <li>• Lack of accessible infrastructure for people with disabilities.</li> <li>• Lack of formal collaboration between the City and community arts and culture organization.</li> <li>• Public grants that are too general and not necessarily dedicated to arts.</li> <li>• Transient nature of the community leading to inconsistent/limited stable workforce.</li> <li>• Limited long-term labour, capacity, and resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipal arts and cultural leadership.</li> <li>• Greater collaboration between the City and community arts and culture organizations to meet shared goals.</li> <li>• Creating cultural tourism opportunities.</li> <li>• Leveraging arts and culture as a vessel to achieve other City goals.</li> <li>• Connect the community through a celebration of the diverse arts and culture in the city.</li> <li>• Celebrate and support Indigenous art and artists.</li> </ul>

## What We Learned

Several key takeaways emerged from the research and community consultation process.

- There is incredible talent and dedication to arts and culture in the city. However, the arts community has been held back – butchered even – by lack of infrastructure and opportunity.
- Yellowknife residents perceive that there are limited opportunities for involvement in arts and culture near them.
- There is a view that culture can be used as a catalyst for a more accessible, welcoming, and connected Yellowknife.
- The visual arts and performing arts can enhance and create a vibrant downtown core.
- There is a desire to see the City of Yellowknife as an arts and culture leader, playing an important role as the convenor and advocating voice for the arts and culture community.
- There is a desire to see further collaboration between the City of Yellowknife and arts organizations, as well as between arts organizations.
- Performance/display space/facilities and rehearsal/creation space are the most critical needs for Yellowknife artists.
- Professional development and organizational capacity building, as well as sector leadership and advocacy are also critical needs for the sector.

- Purposeful approaches are needed to protect Indigenous heritage and support local Indigenous culture and artists.
- Cost is the largest barrier to accessible participation for the public in the arts.
- There is a lack of non-commercial visual arts space.
- Artists report they need increased funding/resources.
- There are concerns around lack of investment into infrastructure for arts spaces and performance spaces including existing spaces and facilities, but especially purpose-built spaces.
- There is a strong desire for a dedicated arts centre.
- There is a desire for greater utilization of outdoor spaces and parks (e.g., for music popups and organic performance), as well as the use of existing indoor space such as vacant buildings downtown, mall space, museum and library space, schools and churches.
- There could be greater clarity/understanding of the division of roles/relationship between the City of Yellowknife and GWNT Arts and Culture services.

## Engaging the Indigenous Community

Figure 6: Indigenous Engagement Priorities



The inclusion of Indigenous arts, culture, values, and perspectives is of paramount importance to Yellowknife arts and culture. Several key themes and priorities emerged from the consultations with Indigenous Yellowknife artists and residents.

- **For meaningful inclusion and appreciation of Indigenous arts and culture, it is critical to have consultation and collaboration** with Indigenous governments, as well as Indigenous representation across all levels of the sector. As one resident said, “Anything Indigenous in NWT should be Indigenous led!” Another resident expressed, “Every board, organization, and government committee should have at least two seats or positions reserved for Indigenous individuals.”
- **Indigenous artists often have additional, and/or different needs to other artists in Yellowknife.** For example, survey results revealed that Indigenous artists often do not feel like their culture is represented in the city’s arts and culture sector. In addition,

Indigenous survey respondents and interviewees largely indicated that market and audience development support as well as diversity and inclusion initiatives in the sector were critical needs. These concerns and priorities were not shared by the majority of other respondents.

- **Indigenous artists need a safe space to create, sell, experience and appreciate arts and culture.** One resident shared their personal dream - an Indigenous cultural centre downtown with space for art and music making, performing and presenting, promotion of Indigenous artists and companies, a gallery, language lessons, an outdoor fire pit, cookhouse, and garden, and an indoor kitchen and hydroponic farm.
- There is a need for **increased funding for Indigenous artists**, as well as **better access to affordable supplies**.
- **Reconciliation efforts and interpersonal and community healing are necessary component for Indigenous arts and culture.**
- **Cultural/arts legacy projects** (i.e., celebrating significant Indigenous artists or bodies of work through permanent public arts displays) offer potential for increased awareness and appreciation of Indigenous arts and culture, and economic opportunity for artists.
- **Indigenous artists need support, possibly through workshops, on grant writing.** A lot of new or emerging indigenous or Inuit artists have no idea about what support is available to them and how to access it.
- An area of focus needs to be **supporting Indigenous art made by Indigenous artists, education on cultural appropriation, and the blocking or slowing of fakes.**
- Indigenous artists want **support and opportunity for more arts classes**, including those where Indigenous teachers/knowledge keepers are hired to facilitate workshops or to mentor other artists

## Arts & Culture Plan

All the preceding research informed the development of a plan for arts and culture. Four pillars were developed, which can be thought of as **strategic directions** and/or buckets of actions that will support arts and culture in Yellowknife and ensure they continue to thrive. The four pillars are visualized below.



Advancement on each strategic pillar can be achieved by adhering to the objectives developed for each pillar. Specific actions are proposed to enable the City of Yellowknife to achieve these objectives. The actions can be thought of as actionable by the City of Yellowknife, though many in collaboration with the community.

“Approaches of Interest” are noted in this section and included in the appendix, to provide insight into how other jurisdictions have undertaken similar actions/solutions.

## Pillars, Objectives, Actions – At a Glance

### Leadership & Support

The necessary leadership to move initiatives forward and continue to support the arts in the appropriate ways. This pillar will help the City to determine their cultural leadership role; consider how municipal by-laws/policies best support the arts; and, provide the necessary support for artists to thrive.

**Objective 1:** Establish strong City leadership around arts and culture.

**Objective 2:** Facilitate capacity building for the arts sector.

**Objective 3:** Solidify role as a champion and advocate for Yellowknife arts.

### Spaces & Places

The spaces and places for artists to display, perform, and create as well as for audiences to experience arts & culture. The pillar will support the City to assess and plan for cultural infrastructure and assets; to connect artists, people and places, and encourage environmental stewardship as the natural environment is a cultural asset in and of itself.

**Objective 1:** Assess and plan for cultural infrastructure to meet short and long-term needs.

**Objective 2:** Connect artists and audiences with space to create and engage with the arts.

**Objective 3:** Activate public spaces to unite people with culture and their community.

### Celebrating Diversity

Arts and culture that celebrates all of the diversity of Yellowknife. The pillar will guide the City to promote Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; engage people of all ages and cultural backgrounds with the arts; and, ensure Indigenous leadership.

**Objective 1:** Cultivate a welcoming environment where all people and backgrounds are represented.

**Objective 2:** Celebrate and protect Indigenous culture.

**Objective 3:** Celebrate the diversity of backgrounds for visitors and new residents.

### Connections & Visibility

The building of networks across the arts, and with other partners (e.g., tourism). This pillar will ensure the arts are visible and promoted for audiences, both local and visiting; and, that connections are encouraged across the sector to help individuals thrive.

**Objective 1:** Increase the visibility of arts & culture throughout the city.

**Objective 2:** Ingrain arts & culture into the identity of the city.

**Objective 3:** Reduce barriers to arts & culture participation.

## **Pillars, Objectives and Actions**

### **Pillar 1: Leadership & Support**

#### *Rationale:*

- *Yellowknife has many artists, as well as arts and cultural organizations, but is lacking a centralized body to facilitate, convene, and support the sector.*
- *The City can play an important role as the convenor and advocating voice for the arts and culture community.*

#### **Objective 1: Establish strong City leadership around arts and culture.**

- Earmark in the job description of an existing staff position and/or consider hiring a permanent arts & culture development officer for the City.
- Conduct a review of the current service delivery model and identify recommendations to support growth of arts leadership (e.g., an arts advisory committee – with clear separation of mandate between the heritage committee and arts).
- Determine what the role of the City is in arts and culture, incorporate that role into a clear vision, and make this vision public (in terms of City's role in supporting the city's arts & culture).
- Actively recruit more Indigenous candidates for public service, particularly for communications, arts and heritage support, and other public facing positions.

#### **Objective 2: Facilitate capacity building for the arts sector.**

- Within the City's Community Grant funding, establish dedicated funding for arts organizations to achieve sustainability through more reliable core funding.<sup>3</sup>
- Empower an arts & culture development officer (*see Pillar 1, Objective 2 "Earmark in the job description of an existing staff position and/or consider hiring..."*) to be main point of contact for artists; to offer guidance and develop resources and professional development opportunities.
- Make resources available on arts & culture hub online (e.g., list of funding opportunities, who to contact, how to apply FAQs, etc.).
- Formalize a City "artist in residence" program (for local artists). (***see Approaches of Interest 1 in Appendix***).

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<sup>3</sup> [Community Grants - City of Yellowknife](#)



**Objective 3: Solidify role as a champion and advocate for Yellowknife arts.**

- Ensure regular communication and coordination between municipal and territorial government to keep artists informed of all opportunities.
- Make a more evidence-based case to federal government (in partnership with territory) for specific program support (on behalf of artists and arts organizations).
- Emphasize the role of Yellowknife as a cultural hub for the territory, and strengthen its ties to smaller NWT communities.

**Pillar 2: Spaces & Places***Rationale:*

- *New and/or improved art spaces inside and outside were a primary need/desire from both artists and the community.*
- *There is existing space that could be more effectively utilized (and made more accessible), and an opportunity to assess for more long-term purpose-built spaces to close gaps (e.g., non-commercial gallery space, central artistic hub).*
  - *Centre Square Mall and the Ruth Inch Memorial Pool were the top responses noted in public consultations as having the potential to be utilized for the arts.*
  - *There is an opportunity for the Library to be increasingly utilized by and for the arts.*
  - *Additionally, new spaces such as the Yellowknife tourist centre and Makerspace YK also provide opportunities to explore for use by and for arts & culture.*
  - *There is also existing space (e.g., NACC) where affordability remains a barrier to access (i.e., rental rates that are inaccessible for many artists/arts organizations).*
- *Yellowknife is rich with natural heritage that should be protected and celebrated.*

**Objective 1: Assess and plan for cultural infrastructure to meet short and long-term needs.****Actions**

- Develop a centralized list of all the existing spaces that do not need extensive adaptation, to respond to near-term space needs.
- Explore formal partnership opportunities with existing non-City owned spaces (e.g., Makerspace YK), for City-led programming and/or to meet artist's near-term needs.
- Assess zoning by-laws and provide land and tax incentives for development or repurposing of spaces focused on arts programming and work.
- Establish dedicated arts space in existing City-owned spaces.
- Explore the further integration of the library into arts & culture programming and the potential for co-location.

- Undertake a “cultural facilities feasibility study” study for an arts centre (new space) for long term needs that considers, in particular, location, Indigenous cultural space needs and business/governance models for managing arts space (**see Approaches of Interest 2 in Appendix**).

## **Objective 2: Connect artists and audiences with space to create and engage with the arts.**

### **Actions**

- Review and add specificity to the guidelines around the not-for profit rental rate of City-owned spaces, to ensure artists and arts organizations are eligible. Promote not-for-profit rate for arts rentals, so artists know this rate is available to them (**see Approaches of Interest 3 in Appendix**).
- Explore methods to incentivize private businesses to rent space to artists.
- Develop an arts and culture hub on the City website. Use this space to promote cultural offerings (including events and non-professional arts and cultural-related classes).
- Develop an interactive space finder tool (to be housed on online arts and culture hub on City website).

## **Objective 3: Activate public spaces to unite people with culture and their community.**

### **Actions:**

- Plan and provide for amenities in parks and open spaces that allow for spontaneous creativity and organic cultural gatherings, aligning with park development plans (e.g., permanent public stages, external electricity for speaker systems) (**see Approaches of Interest 4 in Appendix**).
- As part of the by-law review (under Pillar 2, Objective 1), look for opportunities to encourage more organic or pop-up performance (i.e., busking).
- Develop a sustainability policy and manual, to guide those who are developing City-run arts and culture programming (aligned with the establishment of a dedicated arts & culture development position).
- Develop an education and interpretation program to animate public space, with solutions (e.g., self-guided tours, audio tours, etc.) that highlight local natural and cultural heritage, including an emphasis on highlighting Indigenous culture.

## **Pillar 3: Celebrating Diversity**

### *Rationale:*

- *Yellowknife is a diverse city – which is expressed in the diversity of its arts and culture.*
- *Different communities have different needs and thus a variety of ways to support should be developed.*

- *There is an opportunity to more actively celebrate all that makes up Yellowknife's unique culture.*

**Objective 1: Cultivate a welcoming environment where all people and backgrounds are represented.**

**Actions:**

- Set goals around funding allocations and programming opportunities for equity-seeking groups (artists, cultural groups, etc.).
- Identify strategies for more effective outreach and communication with youth and underrepresented groups (e.g., partnership with SideDoor Youth Centre), and incorporate strategies into special event planning and Community Grant processes.
- Build relationships with a variety of cultural communities (e.g., Philippine Cultural Association of Yellowknife) to further their participation in the cultural life of Yellowknife.
- Highlight the unique cultural diversity of Yellowknife in City communications and social media; Profile various cultural group on City social media.
- Explore ways to encourage small/micro-infrastructure projects to support cultural practices (e.g., firepit).

**Objective 2: Celebrate & Protect Indigenous culture.**

**Actions:**

- Within the Community Grant funding process, earmark dedicated funding for Indigenous artists.
- Develop an Indigenous public art program that includes commissioning public art projects in the downtown core by Indigenous artists.
- Dedicate seats for Indigenous representation in decision making roles related to arts and culture. Continue to be guided by the Reconciliation Action Plan, to build and expand existing partnerships to identify representatives<sup>4</sup>.
- Ensure Indigenous leadership in any leadership/governance structure that results from plan.
- Seek engagement with Indigenous community on policy development to reflect local Indigenous knowledge and heritage.
- Incorporate Indigenous knowledge into City-led programming through co-designed programs (building upon formalized partnerships).

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.yellowknife.ca/en/living-here/resources/Reconciliation/Reconciliation-Action-Plan.pdf>

### **Objective 3: Celebrate the diversity of backgrounds for visitors and new residents.**

#### **Actions:**

- Promote arts as a way to emphasize Yellowknife's attractiveness to Canadians and immigrants.
- Integrate arts into the brand of Yellowknife in attracting visitors, including younger demographics.

### **Pillar 4: Connections & Visibility**

#### *Rationale:*

- *There is an opportunity to tie arts and culture into the visual identity of the city more.*
- *Public art increases the accessibility of arts and culture – making it available to everyone.*
- *Not only does such visibility support artists and increase their exposure, but it also supports the image of Yellowknife to those living in the city and those visiting.*
- *By increasing the connections between artists and cultural organizations, this also increased the collective visibility of the arts in the city.*
- *The public noted barriers to participating in the arts, in particular that there are limited opportunities for involvement, and that participating in arts and culture is expensive. The City can play a role in increasing the accessibility of the arts for all residents.*

### **Objective 1: Increase the visibility of arts & culture throughout the city.**

- Expand the activities and outcomes of the public art policy to include increased acquisition of local artists, as well as the support, maintenance, presentation and promotion of public art. Empower the Public Art Advisory Committee to turn the policy into implementation.<sup>5</sup> (*note: this action is connected to the Pillar 3, Objective 2, Action "Develop an Indigenous public art program"*).
- Develop a "percent for public art" investment program and explore grants that include the maintenance/upkeep of public art. (**see Approaches of Interest 5 in Appendix**) (*note: this action is connected to the preceding action "expand public art policy"*).
- Develop a rubric to abet communications and messaging around the arts, including:
  - Leverage the Territory's artist directory to profile Yellowknife artists on City social channels and in marketing efforts.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.yellowknife.ca/en/living-here/resources/Arts-Culture--Heritage/City-of-Yellowknife-Public-Art-Policy.pdf>

- Incorporate a communications database/messaging board onto the arts & culture hub page to facilitate connections between artists.
- Develop a “what’s going on in the arts” events calendar (to live on the hub page) to connect audiences with the arts.

**Objective 2: Ingrain arts & culture into the identity of the city.**

- Work with tourism to tie in arts & culture, including:
  - Develop weekend itineraries that include arts and cultural activities.
  - Promote arts walking tours on tourism channels (*note: this action is connected to pillar 1, objective 3, “Develop an education and interpretation program to animate parks and other public space”*).
  - Incorporate arts and culture into City marketing campaigns.
  - Anchor larger scale marketing and promotional efforts around festivals (e.g., Ramble and Ride, Folk on the Rocks, etc.).
- Create a visual brand around Yellowknife artists (*note: this action is connected to leveraging the GNWT artist directory and profiling Yellowknife artists on City social channels and in marketing efforts in Pillar 4, Objective 1*).

**Objective 3: Reduce barriers to arts & culture participation.**

- Conduct a review to understand how municipal data can be leveraged to promote participation and address barriers to participation (e.g., affordability, accessibility, location).
- Continue to work towards all City-owned spaces being physically accessible and explore a City rebate for accessibility upgrades to private arts spaces.

## Implementation Roadmap

The following section outlines the recommended actions to be undertaken each year, over the next three years (colour-coded by pillar). An attached spreadsheet outlines the implementation further.

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Earmark in the job description of an existing staff position and/or consider hiring a permanent arts & culture development officer for the City. (Objective 1, Pillar 1)	Within the City's Community Grant funding, establish dedicated funding for arts organizations to achieve sustainability through more reliable core funding. (Objective 2, Pillar 1)	Explore methods to incentivize private businesses to rent space to artists. (Objective 2, Pillar 2)
Conduct a review of the current service delivery model and identify recommendations to support growth of arts leadership (e.g., an arts advisory committee – with clear separation of mandate between the heritage committee and arts). (Objective 1, Pillar 1)	Empower an arts & culture development officer to be main point of contact for artists; to offer guidance and develop resources and professional development opportunities. (Objective 2, Pillar 1)	Plan and provide for amenities in parks and open spaces that allow for spontaneous creativity and organic cultural gatherings, aligning with park development plans (e.g., permanent public stages, external electricity for speaker systems). (Objective 3, Pillar 2)
Determine what the role of the City is in arts and culture, incorporate that role into a clear vision, and make this vision public (in terms of City's role in supporting the city's arts & culture). (Objective 1, Pillar 1)	Make resources available on arts & culture hub online (e.g., list of funding opportunities, who to contact, how to apply FAQs, etc.). (Objective 2, Pillar 1)	Develop a sustainability policy and manual, to guide those who are developing City-run arts and culture programming (aligned with the establishment of a dedicated arts & culture development position). (Objective 3, Pillar 2)
Actively recruit more Indigenous candidates for public service, particularly for communications, arts and heritage support, and other public facing positions. (Objective 1, Pillar 1)	Formalize a City "artist in residence" program (for local artists). (Objective 2, Pillar 1)	Develop an education and interpretation program to animate public space, with solutions (e.g., self-guided tours, audio tours, etc.) that highlight local natural and cultural heritage, including an emphasis on highlighting Indigenous culture. (Objective 3, Pillar 2)
Develop a centralized list of all the existing spaces that do not need extensive adaptation, to respond to near term space needs. (Objective 1, Pillar 2)	Ensure regular communication and coordination between municipal and territorial government to keep artists informed of all opportunities. (Objective 3, Pillar 1)	Explore ways to encourage small/micro-infrastructure projects to support cultural practices (e.g., firepit). (Objective 1, Pillar 3)

Explore formal partnership opportunities with existing non-City owned spaces (e.g., Makerspace YK), for City-led programming and/or meet artist's near-term needs. (Objective 1, Pillar 2)	Make a more evidence-based case to federal government (in partnership with territory) for specific program support (on behalf of artists and arts organizations). (Objective 3, Pillar 1)	Incorporate Indigenous knowledge into City-led programming through formal partnerships and co-designed programs. (Objective 2, Pillar 3)
Assess zoning bylaws and provide land and tax incentives for development or repurposing of spaces focused on arts programming and work. (Objective 1, Pillar 2)	Emphasize the role of Yellowknife as a cultural hub for the territory, and strengthen its ties to smaller NWT communities. (Objective 3, Pillar 1)	Develop a "percent for public art" investment program and explore grants that include the maintenance/upkeep of public art. (Objective 1, Pillar 4)
As part of the bylaw review (above), look for opportunities to encourage more organic or pop-up performance (i.e., busking). (Objective 3, Pillar 2)	Explore the further integration of the library into arts & culture programming and the potential for co-location. (Objective 1, Pillar 2)	Conduct a review to understand how municipal data can be leveraged to promote participation and address barriers to participation (e.g., affordability, accessibility, location). (Objective 3, Pillar 4)
Establish dedicated arts space in existing City-owned spaces. (Objective 1, Pillar 2)	Undertake a "cultural facilities feasibility study" study for an arts centre (new space) for long term needs that considers, in particular, location, Indigenous cultural space needs and business/governance models for managing arts space. (Objective 1, Pillar 2)	Continue to work towards all City-owned spaces being physically accessible and explore a City rebate for accessibility upgrades to private arts spaces. (Objective 3, Pillar 4)
Develop an arts and culture hub on the City website. Use this space to promote cultural offerings (including events and non-professional arts and cultural-related classes). (Objective 2, Pillar 2)	Review and add specificity to the guidelines around the not-for profit rental rate of City-owned spaces, to ensure artists and arts organizations are eligible. Promote not-for-profit rate for arts rentals, so artists know this rate is available to them. (Objective 2, Pillar 2)	
Develop an interactive space finder tool (to be housed on online arts and culture hub on City website). (Objective 2, Pillar 2)	Set goals around funding allocations and programming opportunities for equity-seeking groups (artists, cultural groups, etc.). (Objective 1, Pillar 3)	
Build relationships with a variety of cultural communities (e.g., Philippine Cultural Association of Yellowknife) to further their participation in the cultural life of Yellowknife. (Objective 1, Pillar 3)	Identify strategies for more effective outreach and communication with youth and underrepresented groups (e.g., partnership with SideDoor Youth Centre), and incorporate strategies into special event planning and Community Grant processes. (Objective 1, Pillar 3)	

Highlight the unique cultural diversity of Yellowknife in City communications and social media; Profile various cultural group on City social media. (Objective 1, Pillar 3)	Develop an Indigenous public art program that includes commissioning public art projects in the downtown core by Indigenous artists. (Objective 2, Pillar 3)	
Within the Community Grant funding process, earmark dedicated funding for Indigenous artists. (Objective 2, Pillar 3)	Ensure Indigenous leadership in any leadership/governance structure that results from plan. (Objective 2, Pillar 3)	
Dedicate seats for Indigenous representation in decision making roles related to arts and culture. Continue to be guided by the Reconciliation Action Plan, to build and expand existing partnerships to identify representatives. (Objective 2, Pillar 3)	Promote arts as a way to emphasize Yellowknife's attractiveness to Canadians and Immigrants. (Objective 2, Pillar 3)	
Seek engagement with Indigenous community on policy development to reflect local Indigenous knowledge and heritage. (Objective 2, Pillar 3)	Integrate arts into the brand of Yellowknife in attracting visitors, including younger demographics. (Objective 2, Pillar 3)	
Develop a rubric to abet communications and messaging around the arts. (Objective 1, Pillar 4)	Expand the activities and outcomes of the public art policy to include increased acquisition of local artists, as well as the support, maintenance, presentation and promotion of public art. Empower the Public Art Advisory Committee to turn the policy into implementation. (Objective 1, Pillar 4)	
Work with tourism to tie in arts & culture. (Objective 2, Pillar 4)	Create a visual brand around Yellowknife artists (leveraging the GNWT artist directory and profiling Yellowknife artists on City social channels and in marketing efforts). (Objective 2, Pillar 4)	



## Appendix

### Approaches of Interest 1 | City-led Artist in Residence Programs

#### *Artist In Residence Programs*

**Saint John, New Brunswick** has an Artist in Residence program, open to artists working in all media currently residing in the City of Saint John. This Artist in Residence Program emphasizes interactive community engagement and encourages applicants to use this opportunity to advance their practice. There are two rounds of funding per year – spring/summer and fall/winter. In addition to providing an honorarium, storage space for supplies, promotion and networking opportunities, the artists are also provided the opportunity to publicly hang work or perform in City-owned spaces. (see link here for more information: [Summer Fall 2022 Guidelines AiR EN.pdf \(saintjohn.ca\)](#))

**Fredericton, New Brunswick** offers a two-week summer residency program in specific locations (2022 locations - the Fredericton Botanic Garden at Odell Park, and Killarney Lake Park). The residency provides local artists the opportunity to work on creative projects in the natural surroundings, culminating in an exhibit of works produced (to be held in the fall). Artists are offered a weekly stipend. (see link here for more information: <https://www.fredericton.ca/en/news/city-hall/2022-summer-artist-in-residence-program>)

**New Westminster, British Columbia** runs an Artist in Residence program through their City Arts Council. Designed as an artist development program, it is open to both established and emerging artists living and/or working in New Westminster (but applicants must be members of the Arts Council). The focus of this program is about providing space for artists to showcase their work (with a very small honorarium offered). Selected artists and organizations have 24-hour non-exclusive access to the City's community gallery. (see link here for more information: [Artist In Residence Program \(artscouncilnewwest.org\)](#))

## Approaches of Interest 2 | Governance Models for Managing Arts Spaces

### ***Governance Models for Managing Arts Spaces***

A wide range of governance models are used in managing arts spaces. Arrangements are often chosen based on a space's priorities and community needs. The three most widely used models being municipality-owned and managed, non-profit, and public-private partnership (a combination of the first two) have varying strengths and weaknesses outlined in the following table.

Model	Strengths	Challenges
Municipality-Owned and Managed (publicly owned)	<p>Town retains the full control of the space.</p> <p>Ensures management and operations of the centre align with municipal goals and objectives.</p>	<p>Can limit access to funding from other government sources such as provincial and federal funding.</p> <p>Vulnerable to municipal cutbacks on resources, labour, and budget as a City-owned asset.</p>
Non-for-Profit	<p>Access to a larger pool of funding, as the non-profit can access funding from all levels of government.</p> <p>Greater independence in the operation and management of the space from the municipality.</p>	<p>Need to secure its own leadership and community champions of the space.</p> <p>Managing an arts organization and the arts centre can prove time consuming and potentially hard to sustain if the space cannot secure staff.</p>
Public-Private Partnership	<p>Can benefit from having an arms-length relationship from the municipality but still include the municipality in management and directional aspects.</p> <p>Collaboration can lead to positive initiatives and programs from out of the space.</p>	<p>The possibility of a greater focus on economic viability and traditional programming than accessibility, attracting small grassroots arts groups and community-based programming.</p>

## Approaches of Interest 3 | Non-profit Rental Models for City Owned Property

### *Non-profit Rental Models for City Owned Property*

Across British Columbia, municipalities have taken different approaches to provide non-profits and community-focused support organizations options for reduced leasing rates for rental of City-owned property. Two of the most commonly used methods are described and summarized briefly through examples below.

#### **Community Rental/Facility Grants:**

The first method described here is providing grants to organizations that meet certain guidelines. Within the model of providing grants, two examples are provided.

To maximize support for non-profit organizations which provide direct services to residents, The **City of Burnaby** allow non-profit societies occupying negotiated amenities or other City-owned facilities apply for a **City of Burnaby Lease Grant** if the organization fall under one of the following types: 1) 50 per cent reduction to market lease rate for agencies whose clientele is at least 75 per cent Burnaby residents, and 2) 25 per cent reduction to market lease rate for agencies whose clientele consists of between 25 per cent and 75 per cent Burnaby residents.

For non-profits occupying amenity or other City-owned space, the **City of North Vancouver** offers the opportunity to apply for a **Community Facility Grant** to organizations that work to reduce social, economic or physical disadvantage, and/or which improve the quality of life of residents. This grant could be a certain amount or cover the full cost of the lease. Considerations include, but are not limited to, grant based on the size of the organization and/or lease space, and grant amount comparable to what other similar non-profit organizations receive.

#### **Lease Payment Programs:**

The second method described is changes to lease payments based on criterial set out by the municipality.

The **City of Vancouver** provides a **mix of below-market and nominal lease agreements** for non-profit organizations in City facilities, including social service and cultural agencies providing critical services. Lease terms are passed by council and determined on a per-case basis with approval from the City.

## **Approaches of Interest 4 | Aligning Arts and Culture with Recreation and Natural Heritage**

### ***Aligning Arts and Culture with Recreation and Natural Heritage: City of Whitehorse***

The City of Whitehorse is the capital of the Yukon and is home to approximately 25,000 residents. Similar to the City of Yellowknife, the City of Whitehorse is recognized as a small-to-medium sized northern town that is rich in natural scenery and heritage, and home to a large urban indigenous community.

Like the City of Yellowknife, the City of Whitehorse celebrates and identify arts and local talent as a key reason it is a wonderful place to live, work and play. Extending beyond this position, Whitehorse has identified how parks and arts, culture, and heritage together are instrumental to creating livable, inclusive, and memorable places and experiences in the community. The City of Whitehorse is a good example of a northern community that is recognizing the synergies between parks, arts and culture, and is taking action through its plans such as the 2018 Parks and Recreation Master plan to consider and align arts and culture and park needs.

The City of Whitehorse 2018 Parks and Recreation Master Plan includes the following strategy direction "Key Strategic Direction #4: Harness the potential of parks, open spaces and arts and culture to enrich and build pride in our community." The City is making strides to connect work between arts and culture and parks areas through actions such as incorporating more functional art in City parks and urban spaces; identifying opportunities to showcase arts, culture and heritage at City spaces; and, identifying opportunities to integrate elements of physical literacy (sport and/or recreation) with arts and culture.

## Approaches of Interest 5 | “Percent for Public Art” Policies

### *“Percent for Public Art” Policies*

To encourage the inclusion of public art in private sector projects and building construction, “One Percent for Art” policies have emerged as a guiding principle for many public entities. Such policies are intended to make buildings and open spaces more attractive and interesting, and to improve the quality of the public realm.

Examples of where such a policy has been established include:

The **City of Prince George** through the City’s **Art in Public Places (AIPP)** program applies at least 1% of the construction costs of certain new civic buildings and major renovations to the acquisition and installation of artwork.

The **City of Toronto** has its **Percent for Public Art Program** where 1% of a projects gross construction cost is dedicated to public arts.

The **City of Vancouver’s Public Art Program** requires that 1% be set aside for public art by the financing of cultural and artistic facilities and/or on-site artwork, or the developer may elect to deposit .5% into the Public Art Fund account to be used for the artistic enrichment of the City’s public spaces.

## Summary of Cultural Resource Assessment

The purpose of an asset review is to provide an inventory of the strengths and gifts of the people who make up a community. Visually portraying the assets through a tool called an asset map can help to:

- Support decision-making in the community
- Raise awareness to cultural assets
- Further reveal and highlight the interconnections among the assets
- Increase access to cultural assets
- Help to connect those within the cultural sector

The tool also hopes to serve as a catalyst to bring cultural considerations to the forefront of other community propositions. Planners, business developers, those considering relocating, creative clusters, and more, need to be aware of the cultural opportunities and narratives in the city when consider their decisions.

The project team conducted an extensive literature review of Yellowknife cultural, drawing from databases (D&B Hoovers Advention), spatial datasets (Google Maps), the City of Yellowknife identified cultural assets. Additional asset mapping best practices were reviewed including:

- The City of Abbotsford Arts and Culture Master Plan
- City of Windsor Cultural Mapping Project
- The Government of NT Arts and Culture Strategy

A list of assets was developed, and subsequently grouped into related categories to create a visualization. Highlights of the asset review revealed the following numbers under each of the cultural resource categories<sup>6</sup>:

**Creative Cultural Enterprises**

- 21 were identified
- The exercise revealed that the most numerous assets were film/video/sound, publishing, digital media, and radio and television broadcasting stations.

**Creative Cultural Individuals**

- Creative individuals include those who work independently or for an organization. Using NAICS2012, Stats Canada has identified 155 individuals working within Arts, Entertainment and Recreation. However, we consider that this number is quite low as it not exhaustive of how "creatives" are found to cross several fields and practices within the community.

**Creative Cultural Organizations**

- 30 cultural organizations including community arts groups and organizations/committees/associations were identified.

**Spaces and Facilities**

- 74 spaces and facilities identified
- Yellowknife has a wide variety of facilities and spaces where cultural activities take place from institutions, schools, venues, to found-space types. However, the number of dedicated arts spaces is limited (i.e. art galleries and museums).

**Cultural Heritage**

- A number of built heritage sites with over 20 buildings and sites identified (both designated and not designated).

**Natural Heritage**

- 20 natural and designated assets identified
- Yellowknife has an abundance of natural heritage such as bodies of water, trails and parks including named urban spots.

**Festivals and Events**

- 20 festivals and events identified
- 24 tour and programs identified

**Intangible and Transversal Assets**

- Intangible and transversal assets identifies assets which are not physical, or span across several of the categories described above.

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<sup>6</sup> Note: This asset identification is an ever-evolving piece, as assets open and close. However, the asset list provides a good snapshot as to what exists in Yellowknife.

- 32 regular programs were identified, most of which were run by the City of Yellowknife, the GNWT, NACC or PWNHC. Some touring operators also run some seasonal programs.

## **Summary of Insights from Interviews and Roundtables**

Nordicity interviewed external stakeholders including art professionals, business owners, and avid-culture participants. Some key insights from these conversations are summarized below.

### **Role of the City**

People spoken to saw the role of the City to be a leader (not necessarily the doer), to provide different types of infrastructure, resources, and development opportunities, to manage and process applications, bylaws, and regulations and to provide core services.

It is felt that the City could play an important role as **the convenor and advocating voice** for the arts and culture community; there is an opportunity for the City to make a firm commitment to arts and culture in the community and prioritize it within their mandate.

The community recognizes that there is **a need to create a position within the City** that would provide some support for local arts and culture organizations. This role could play vital role in terms of: resources, networking, and relationship building between the public-private sectors.

### **Opportunities for Artists/Creators**

Interviewees mentioned that all types of creators do exist in Yellowknife, however, there are a lack of opportunities for them for exposure in all aspects in the community: places to work, sell, perform/exhibit, run events, program and collaborate. It is mentioned that there are a lot of people (both creators and avid-culture participants in the community) who really like to engage and participate in events in the city, however, much of this does not exist or occurs sporadically.

### **Making Yellowknife “arts and culture” friendly**

Examples provided by participants included: existing infrastructure and future infrastructure development needs, vacant building policies, parking regulations downtown, City facility rentals, and the current public grant processes.

### **Places and Spaces for Creativity**

It is noted by most interviewees that there is a strong desire for a stand-alone, dedicated arts and culture facility. That being said, there is varied opinion as to how this should occur: should such a space be created through reusing an existing space vs. purpose built? What should the facility look like and include? How large does it need to be to meet the community’s needs? A community champion is needed and desired in order to push ahead with art space development in Yellowknife.

While it is clear that a dedicated arts and culture space is most desired, it is understood that the need to explore other types of spaces and options is also necessary. Ultimately, it is felt that arts and culture infrastructure is foundational to all other needs and opportunities of the arts and culture community.

### **Coordination and collaboration**

It is widely recognized that better coordination and collaboration could exist between 1) the City and the arts community, as well as between 2) those within the arts community. Convening would provide the community with a stronger: sector presence within community, pooling of resources and skills, ability to tackle common issues across the sector together, and ability to be seen as a leading voice in the community.

### **Affordability**

Affordability for anything arts and culture related – such as rental spaces to use, cost to host events on City property, and other costs to operate – continue to be a challenge. Support currently comes from all levels of government, as well as other organizations such as the Canada Council for the Arts, but is inconsistent and challenging for many in YK to navigate.

### **Arts, tourism, and economic development**

Many have noted that the audience for arts and culture in YK is too small. Not having a huge market makes it challenging to operate a small business or work full-time as an artist.

That being said, many felt that arts connected to tourism is something that could go well. Better coordination with tourism, through seasonal conferences and events that come to town connecting artists with tourists, can create a mutually beneficial relationship between both sectors. There is an opportunity to create further awareness to the YK arts and culture offer through joint-forces.

It is noted that there are a lot of people who are passionate about what they do and what is created in Yellowknife and are keen to participate in the community. However, there are not enough programs, events, and initiatives for all types of members of the community to partake.

### **The cyclical nature of the artistic process**

The artistic process is described to be cyclical in nature. It is felt that it is important to understand this nature when ensuring a dynamic community: artistic development (innovation, creation, exhibiting/performing), supporting young up and coming artists/talent (education, mentorship, development), tourism (seasonal events, activities and programs), make a commitment to youth through arts education, etc. seasonality (winter, spring, summer, fall – transient community).

### **Diversity in arts and culture**

There is an opportunity to look further at how to better address inclusion and ensure that equity seeking groups feel they are being represented and welcomed in the arts and culture space. Participants were cognizant of their position within the ethnic diaspora in their community, and recognized there is much room for improvement in the communities processes. The City of Yellowknife has a great opportunity to lead the engagement to address equity, diversity and inclusion.

Ensuring the community makes greater efforts to work with the Indigenous community by further engagement, hiring indigenous staff, collaborating on projects, and/or creating new types of grant/partnership requirements for organizations were identified by participants.



## Summary of Survey Findings

The public survey was developed and deployed via PlaceSpeak, Yellowknife’s public engagement platform. As mentioned earlier in this report, 216 survey responses. These responses came from a variety of people, with varying relationships to arts and culture.

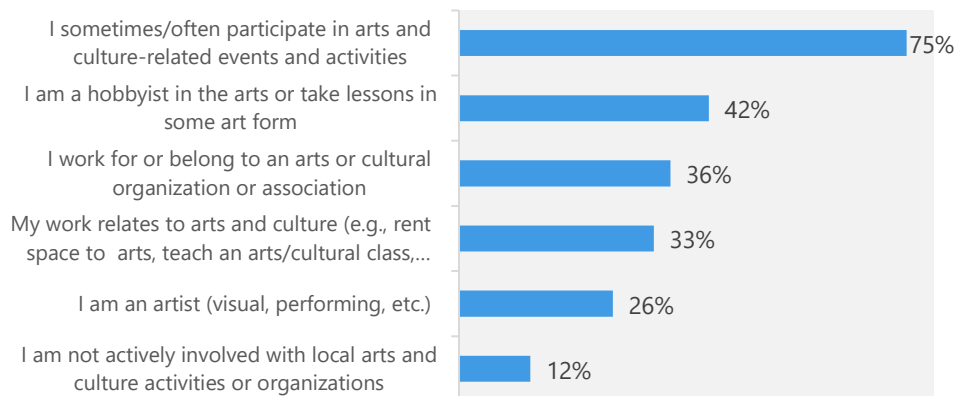
### Survey Profile

#### Relationship to Arts and Culture

Survey respondents have varied relationships with arts and culture in the City of Yellowknife.

Which of the following best describes your relationship to arts and culture in Yellowknife?

(n = 216)

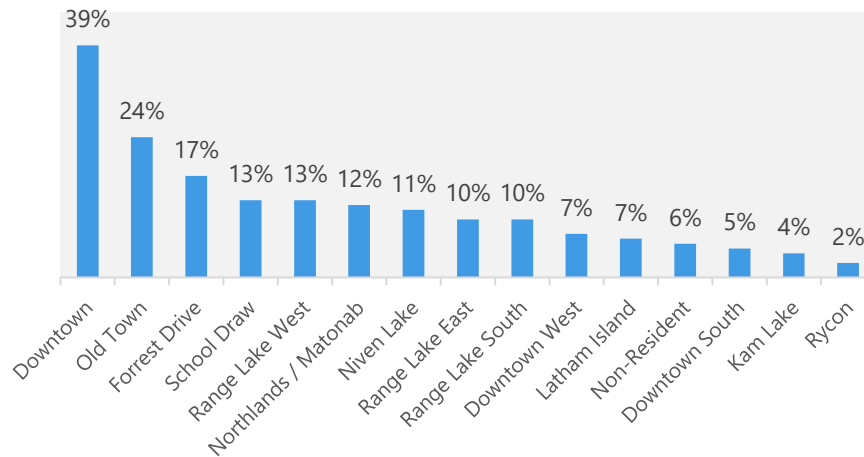


The vast majority (75%) participate in arts and culture related events and activities at least sometimes, while a small proportion (12%) are not involved with local arts and culture activities and organizations. A large proportion (42%) are hobbyists in the arts or take lessons in some art form, 36% work for or belong to an arts or cultural organization or association, 33% do work that relates to arts and culture, and 26% called themselves artists.

## Neighbourhood

The largest proportion of survey respondents (39%) are located in Downtown, followed by Old Town (24%) and Forrest Drive (17%). The smallest respondent pools are from the Downtown South, Kam Lake and Rycon regions. 6% of survey respondents are non-residents.

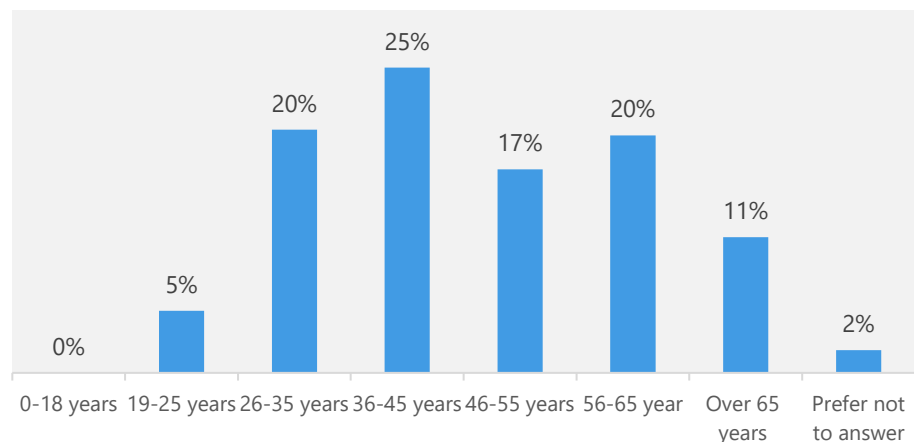
What neighbourhood do you live in?  
(n = 122)



## Age

The largest proportion (25%) of survey respondents were from the 36-45 years age group. Individuals from the 26-35 years and 56-65 years age groups each made up 20% of survey respondents. They were followed by the 46-55 years age group, that made up 17% of survey respondents. Those over 65 years made up 11% of survey respondents. The younger demographics were least represented in the survey sample. None of the survey respondents were between the ages of 0-18 years, and only 5% were from 19-25 years.

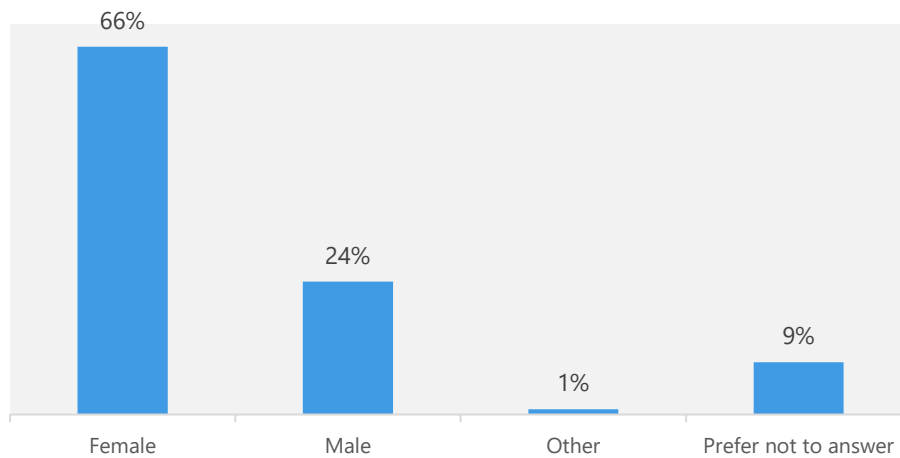
What is your age?  
(n = 214)



## Gender

The majority (66%) of survey respondents identified as female and 24% identified as male. Another 1% identified as a gender other than female or male, and 9% preferred not to answer.

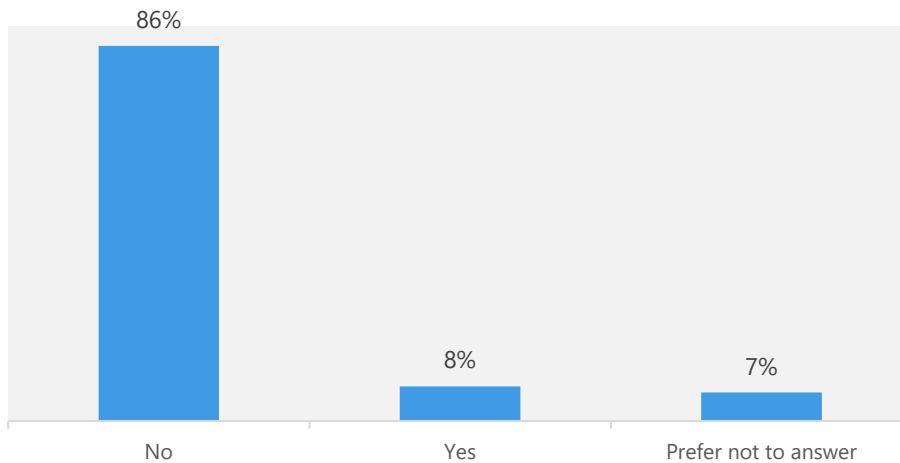
What is your gender?  
(n = 215)



### **Indigeneity**

8% of survey respondents identified as Indigenous. Of the remaining, the majority (86%) said they did not identify as Indigenous, and 7% preferred not to answer.

Do you identify as Indigenous?  
(n = 215)

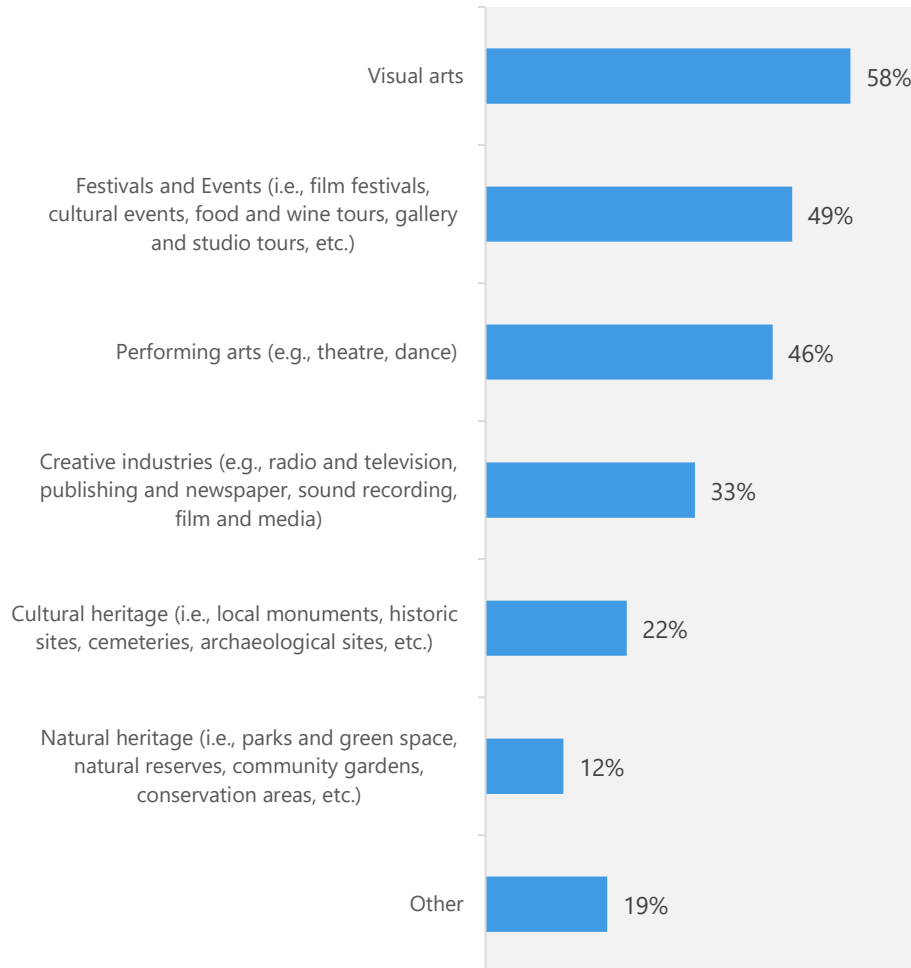


### **Artists – Area of Arts and Culture**

Artist respondents could select more than one option for this question. The majority (58%) worked in the visual arts. Next were those who worked in festivals and events (49%) and those who worked in the performing arts (46%).

Another 33% worked in the creative industries, 22% in cultural heritage, and 12% in natural heritage.

What area of arts and culture do you work in?  
(n = 129)



19% of survey respondents selected "Other". Several respondents indicated that they worked in arts education-related activities. Other responses included, "literary arts" and "language", "arts therapy", and "storytelling".

### **Critical Needs for Yellowknife Artists**

While Yellowknife's arts and culture sector has several needs, artists across the City revealed that performance/display space/facilities and rehearsal/creation space were the most critical needs. This was followed by professional development and organizational capacity building, and sector leadership and advocacy.

What do you think are the most critical needs in order for arts and culture to thrive in Yellowknife?

(n = 123)

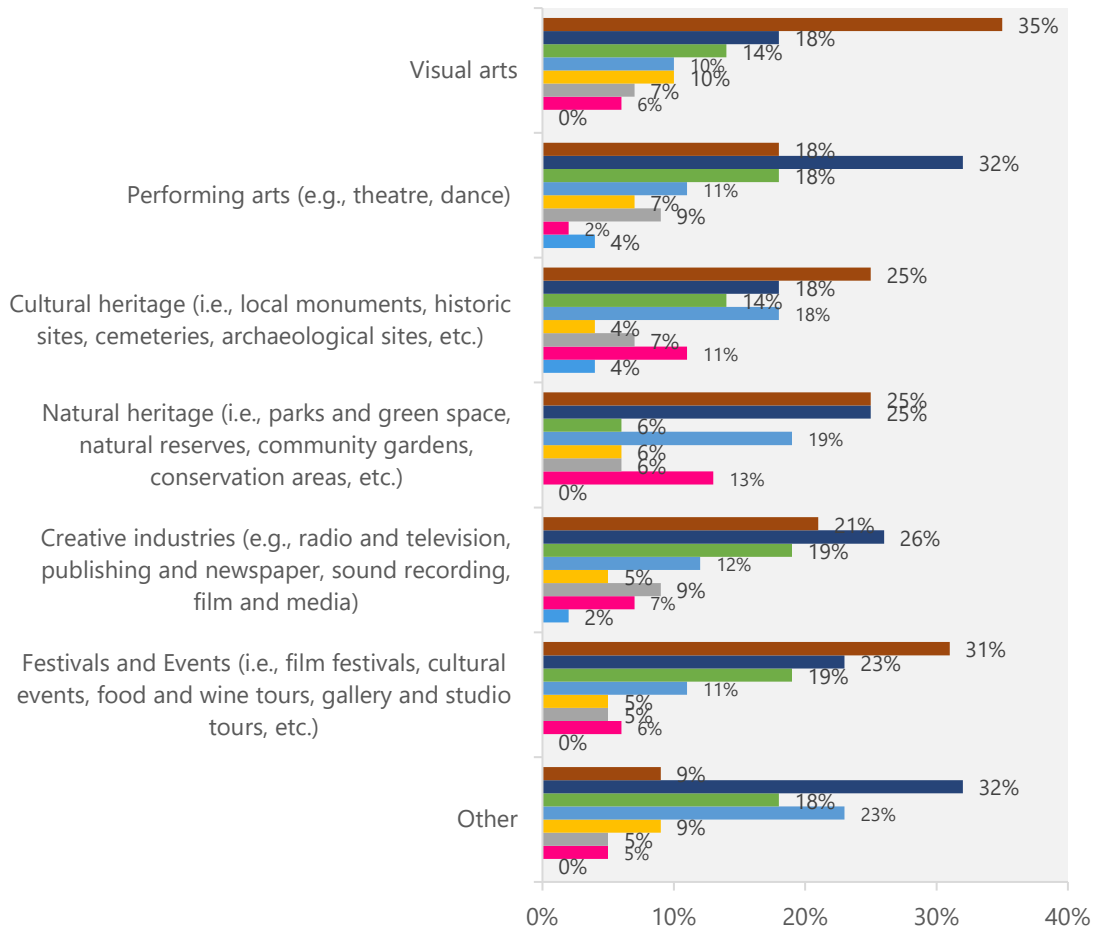


These findings were relatively consistent across the different artist types. Although the order of priority changed, the top three most critical needs remained the same for most. Only respondents in cultural heritage listed sector leadership instead of professional development and organizational capacity.

Visual Arts	Performing Arts	Cultural Heritage	Natural Heritage	Creative Industries	Festivals and Events
Performance and display space (35%)	Rehearsal/creation space (32%)	Performance/display space (25%)	Performance/display space (25%)	Rehearsal/creation space (26%)	Performance and display space (31%)
Rehearsal and creation space (18%)	Performance/display space (18%)	Rehearsal/creation space (18%)	Rehearsal/creation space (25%)	Performance/display space (21%)	Rehearsal and creation space (23%)
Professional development and organizational capacity (14%)	Professional development and organizational capacity (18%)	Sector leadership (18%)	Professional development and organizational capacity (19%)	Professional development and organizational capacity (19%)	Professional development and organizational capacity (19%)

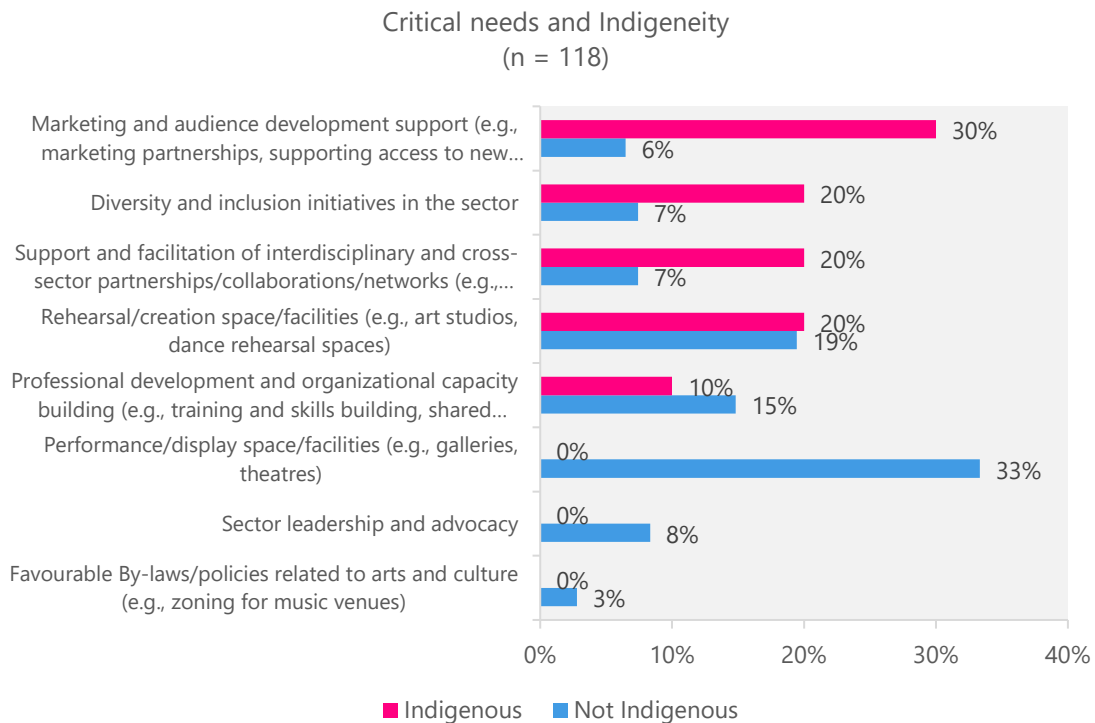
### Critical needs and relationship to the arts

(n = 123)



- Performance/display space/facilities (e.g., galleries, theatres)
- Rehearsal/creation space/facilities (e.g., art studios, dance rehearsal spaces)
- Professional development and organizational capacity building (e.g., training and skills building, shared services, etc.)
- Sector leadership and advocacy
- Diversity and inclusion initiatives in the sector
- Marketing and audience development support (e.g., marketing partnerships, supporting access to new markets and/or new distribution channels)
- Support and facilitation of interdisciplinary and cross-sector partnerships/collaborations/networks (e.g., within the culture sector)
- Favourable By-laws/policies related to arts and culture (e.g., zoning for music venues)

Interestingly, Indigenous artists identified different factors as being the most critical needs for arts and culture in the city. The highest proportion of Indigenous artist survey respondents (30%) indicated that market and audience development support was a critical need, followed by diversity and inclusion initiatives in the sector (20%), support and facilitation of interdisciplinary and cross-sector partnerships/collaborations/networks (20%), as well as rehearsal/creation space/facilities (20%).



## Barriers to Accessing and Participating in Arts and Culture in the city

There are several factors that limit access and participation to arts and culture in the City of Yellowknife.

A large portion (44%) of survey respondents indicated that there were limited opportunities for involvement in arts and culture near them, and another 33% indicated that there were limited opportunities that were of interest to them.

Cost was another major barrier. 38% of survey respondents indicated that accessing and participating in arts and culture in the city is expensive. One respondent specifically noted the price of shows at the NACC, stating that it limited access to a certain social class.

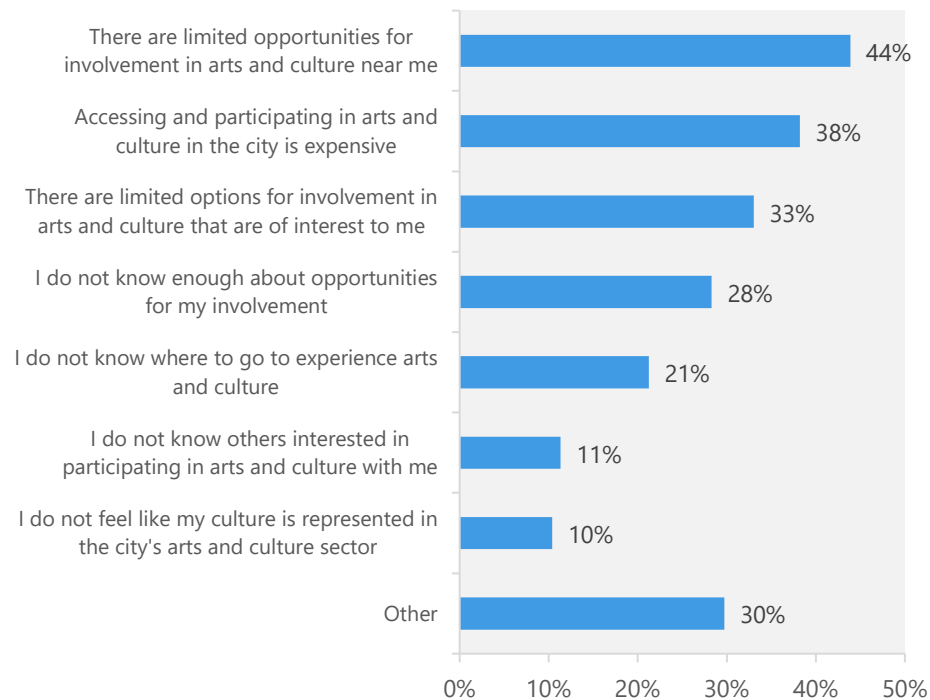
A lack of information and knowledge is another clear barrier. 28% indicated that they do not know enough about opportunities for their involvement, 21% do not know where to go to experience arts and culture, and 11% do not know others interested in participating with them.

10% of survey respondents did not feel like their culture was represented in the city's arts and culture sector.

Several respondents responded “Other”. Their responses included the impacts of COVID-19, lack of physical spaces (gallery, performing, and rehearsal) to display, gather and appreciate the arts, industry cliques that limit external participation, lack of revenue options and funding, lack of arts in schools and general lack of arts training and professional development opportunities, and limited representation of cultural minorities. Several respondents also noted the lack of family-friendly locations to be involved in arts and culture.

What factors might limit you from accessing and/or participating in arts and culture in the city?

(n = 212)



One respondent wrote, “I worry that if I participate the time spent helping to administrate and advocate for the program is disproportionate to the amount of time spent creating art.”

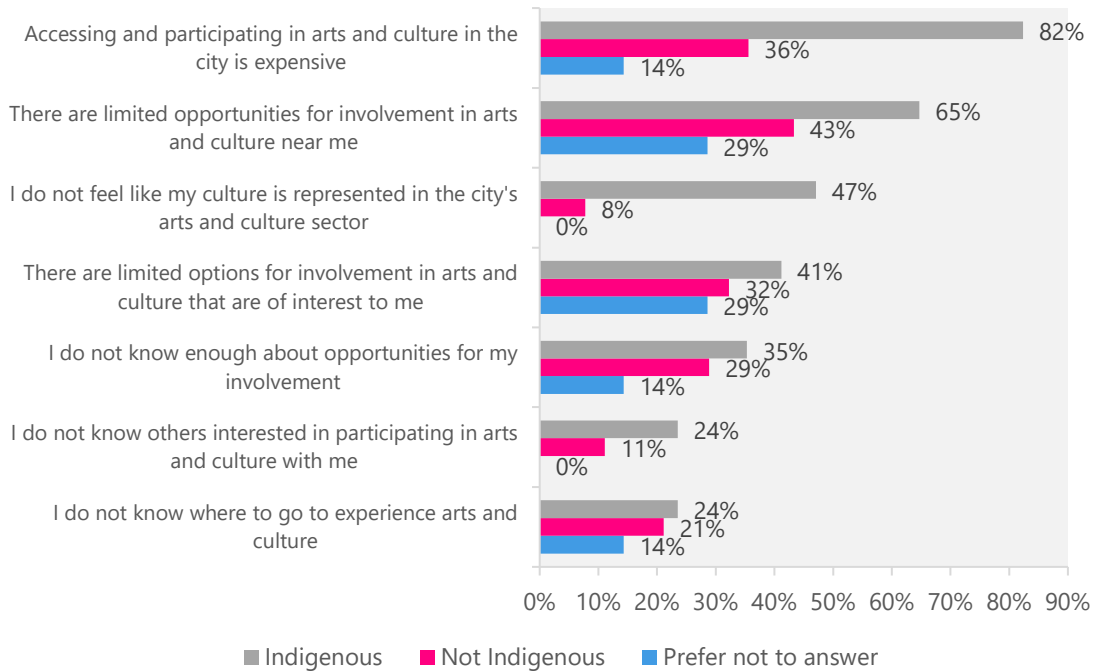
Few respondents mentioned that nothing was limiting their ability to access and participate, and a few mentioned they were uninterested in arts and culture.

**Barriers to Access for Indigenous Respondents**

Again, responses for Indigenous survey respondents varied. While limited opportunities and cost were common shared challenges, a significant portion (47%) indicated that they do not feel like their culture is represented in the city’s arts and culture sector.



Barriers to access and participation by Indigeneity  
(n = 211)



### City Priorities for Yellowknife Residents<sup>7</sup>

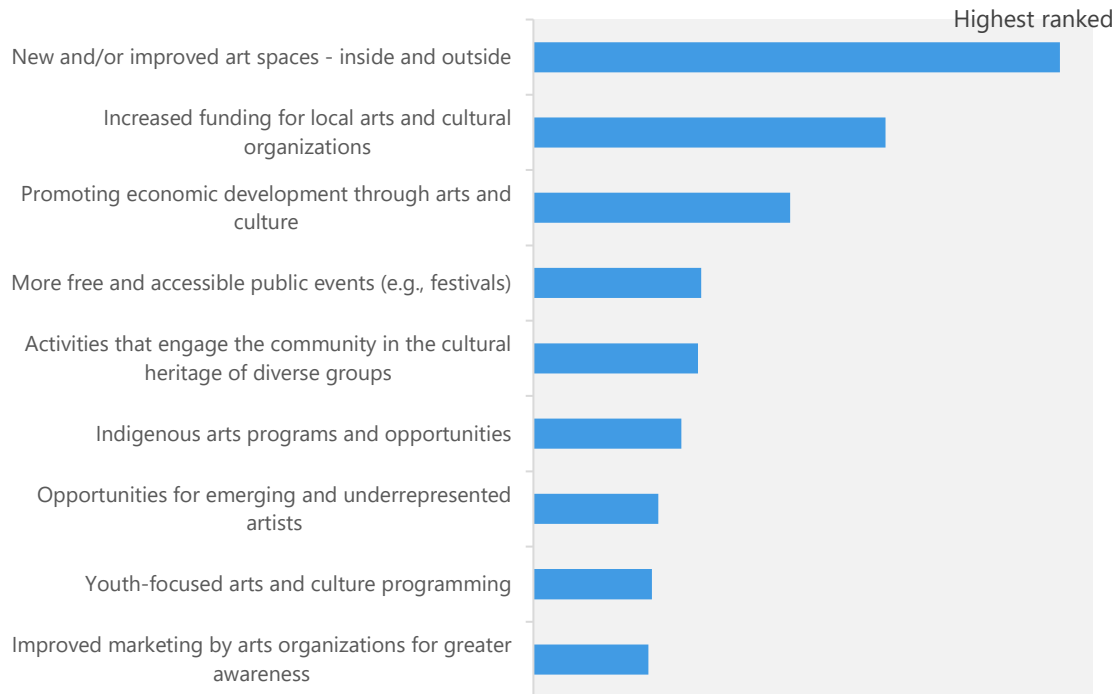
Survey responses revealed that Yellowknife residents felt that the City should prioritize new and/or improved art spaces – inside and outside, increased funding for local arts and cultural organizations, and promoting economic development through arts and culture.

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<sup>7</sup> For this question, respondents selected the top 3 things they thought the City should prioritize and then ranked them. In order to analyze the answers to this question, Nordicity first assigned points to each rank (3 points for rank 1, 2 points for rank 2 and 1 point for rank 3). For each option, we then multiplied the points assigned to each rank by the number of people who selected that option for a particular rank. Finally, we divided the number of points for each option by the total number of people who answered this question.

What do you think the City of Yellowknife should prioritize for arts and culture in the city?

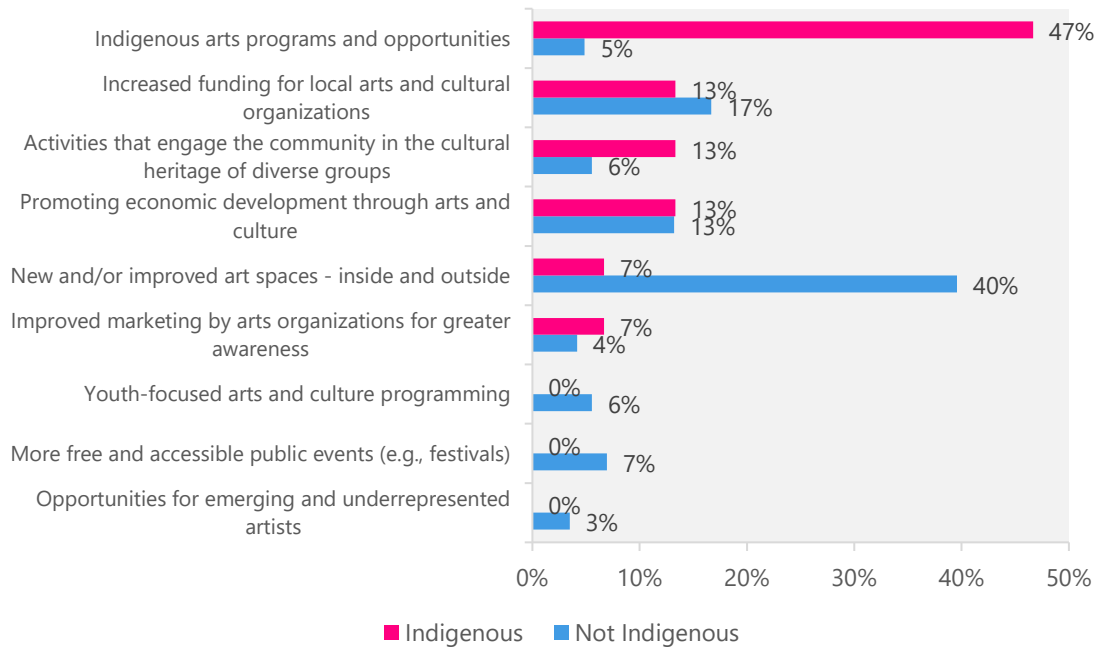
(n = 168)



### City Priorities for Indigenous Respondents

When looking at Indigenous responses to this question, the largest portion (47%) selected Indigenous arts programs and opportunities in their top 3 choices. This is in sharp contrast to the 5% of non-Indigenous folks who selected this option. This option was followed by increased funding for local arts and cultural organizations (13%), as well as activities that engage the community in the cultural heritage of diverse groups (13%) and promoting economic development through arts and culture (13%).

Priorities for arts and culture by Indigeneity  
(n = 171)



### **Arts and Culture Space Needs for Yellowknife Residents**

As “space” was raised repeatedly in roundtables and interviews as a key need in the city, the survey asked about the type of space that is most needed.

38% of respondents selected a cultural hub of several kinds of activities in one space, 31% selected a visual arts space, 21% selected a performing arts space, and 10% selected “Other”.

Several individuals used the write-in option to reiterate the need for a space that could support various art forms, and combine retail, rehearsal and learning. One individual referred to this space as a “NWT Centre for the Arts”. Another mentioned a black box venue that would provide flexible use space.

One respondent highlighted the need for an Indigenous cultural centre. Another explained that ideally the space should include an accessible, outdoor fire pit for feeding the fire ceremonies and access to fresh (uncontaminated) water for things like hide workshops. Somewhere in Old Town would make it more accessible for Ndilo community members.

Multiple people also pointed out that the city has plenty of existing usable space that should be leveraged. Examples provided included the Ruth Inch building, schools outside of school hours, and the possibility of using sidewalks, the Fieldhouse, Multiplex and pool for public art displays. One respondent noted the need for assistance for the Capitol Theatre to keep operational.

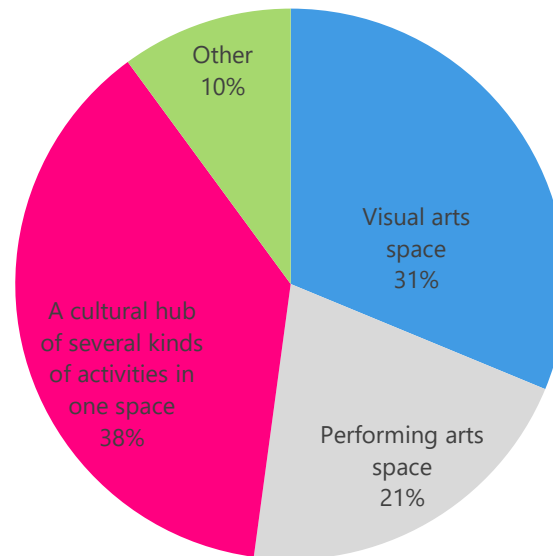
Relatedly, respondents noted the need for a public art gallery and public art displays. One respondent pointed to the need for displays targeted at tourists, to help promote local artists. Live music venues was also noted as a need.

### **Space Needs by Relationship to Arts and Culture**

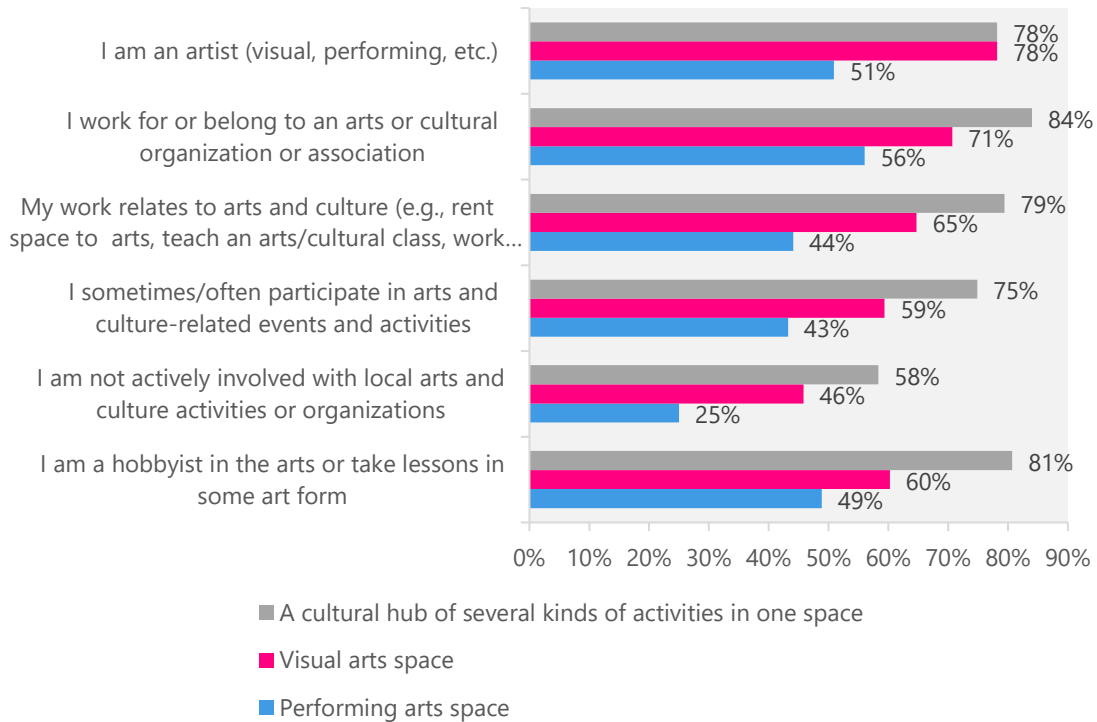
The majority (78%) of artists who responded to this survey indicated they think the city needs a cultural hub and a visual arts space. Another 51% indicated the city needs a performing arts space.

For those who work or belong to an arts or cultural organization, 84% selected a cultural hub, 71% selected a visual arts space, and 56% selected a performing arts space. The order is the same for those whose work relates to arts and culture (79%, 65%, and 44% respectively), those who sometimes/often participate in arts and culture-related events and activities (75%, 59%, and 43% respectively), those who are not actively involved in this space (58%, 46%, and 25% respectively), and those who are hobbyists (81%, 60%, 49%).

What type of arts and culture space do you think is needed in the city?  
(n = 205)



Arts and culture space needs by relationship to arts and culture  
(n = 205)



### Open Answer: Existing Facilities for Shared Use or Repurpose

Survey respondents were asked the question, "Are there any existing facilities you can think of which could be used for shared use/repurpose for arts and culture?"

Respondents provided several recommendations. Many pointed to the availability of vacant buildings downtown, and the ability to use existing mall space, museum and library space, schools and churches, as well as open public space. The most popular answers were the **Center Square Mall, the Ruth Inch Memorial Pool, and the Hudsons' Bay Heritage Building.**

Other suggestions included:

- The Ballanca building
- The Old Legion Building
- Capitol Theatre; City Hall
- Old Bank of Montreal space
- Fieldhouse and Multiplex
- Federal building next to St. Patrick High School
- Tree of Peace Friendship Centre
- Centre Ice Plaza; Samba Ke Park

- Johnson Hardware Bar on Franklin at 46th

Several respondents also pointed out that the NACC is currently under-used and could be expanded.

One respondent pointed to the opening of Makerspace YK in Spring/Summer 2022. Along with a public workshop, Makerspace will contain an area called "Artspace" which is intended to host accessible arts programming, drop-in studio space, and a variety of arts workshops. This space/initiative is run by a non-profit organization that is actively seeking partners to help program the space. They believe the City would be a great partner.

Finally, several respondents indicated that continuing to repurpose "inadequate spaces" will not serve the city well. The city needs new spaces for the arts that are accessible (for persons with disabilities) and are properly designed with the needs of each art form in mind.

### **Open Answer: the Role of the City**

Survey respondents were asked the question, "What role do you see the City of Yellowknife playing in supporting arts and culture?" Several key themes emerged from the responses, including that the City should:

**Provide accessible and affordable space(s) for different artforms to create, perform, share, and learn.** This includes:

- providing a dedicated arts and culture center as well as additional purpose-built facilities (such as a public art gallery)
- maintaining existing public artwork, incorporating art into the urban landscape of the city – parks, walls, sidewalks, and in creating free gathering spaces

**Secure and/or provide more funding opportunities for artists to create, showcase, and market their work, as well as for professional development.** In addition, **secure and/or provide funding for grassroots organizations to build capacity.** This includes:

- providing support for arts organizations to shift away from relying on volunteers to hiring permanent, paid staff
- committing to consistent funding over the longer-term
- supporting artists in other ways such as promoting local artists and their work, as well as directly providing opportunities for paid work and professional development.

**Organize events, promote programming, and increase appreciation for the arts.** This includes:

- dedicated and recurring cultural activities, classes, recreational programs, and summer camps, and a summer arts festival.
- more programming for youth and families, and a need for the city to ensure Indigenous culture is at the forefront.

**Play a major role in policy, advocacy, and ensuring arts and culture recovery.** This includes:

- lobbying and working closely with federal and territorial governments to ensure the arts are increasingly and equitably funded

- emphasizing the role of Yellowknife as a cultural hub for the territory.
- **Develop zoning bylaws and provide land and tax incentives for development or repurposing of spaces focused on arts programming and work.**

## Open House – Key Takeaways

### Question 1: “What do you think the City of Yellowknife should prioritize for arts and culture in the city?”

# of dots	% of dots	Priority
16	23%	New and/or improved art spaces inside and outside
14	20%	Increased funding for local arts and cultural organizations
8	12%	More free and accessible public events (e.g. festivals)
8	12%	Promoting economic development through arts and culture
6	8%	Activities that engage the community in the cultural heritage of diverse groups
5	7%	Youth focused arts and culture programming
5	7%	Indigenous arts programs and opportunities
4	5%	Improved marketing by arts organizations for greater awareness
3	4%	Opportunities for emerging and underrepresented artists

The Dotmocracy activity board #1 collected a total of 69 impressions from the community. The most frequently tagged priority was for new and/or improved arts spaces inside and outside (16 dots), followed by need for increased funding for local arts and cultural organizations (14 dots). The least tagged priority was for opportunities for emerging and underrepresented artists (3 dots).

### Question 2: “What factors might limit you from accessing and/or participating in arts and culture in the city?”

# of dots	% of dots	Factors
15	32%	Accessing and participating in arts and culture in the city is expensive
10	21%	There are limited opportunities for involvement in arts and culture near me
8	17%	There are limited options for involvement in arts and culture that are of interest to me
6	13%	I do not feel like my culture is represented in the city’s arts and culture sector
5	11%	I do not know enough about opportunities for my involvement
3	6%	I do not know where to go to experience arts and culture
0	0%	I do not know others interested in participating in arts and culture with me

The Dotmocracy activity board #2 collected a total of 47 impressions from the community. The two most frequently tagged factors included that accessing and participating in arts and culture in the city is expensive (15 dots), followed by there are limited opportunities for involvement in

arts and culture near me (10 dots). The least tagged factor was that I do not know where to go to experience arts and culture (3 dots), and I do not know others interested in participating in arts and culture with me received zero dots.

**Question 3: “Are there any existing facilities you can think of which could be used for shared use/repurpose for arts and culture?”**

# of dots	% of dots	Facility
10	55%	Ruth Inch Memorial Pool
4	22%	Centre Square Mall
2	11%	Hudson’s Bay Heritage Building
2	11%	The Old Legion Building

The existing facility which was most cited was the Ruth Inch Memorial Pool (10 dots). Other spaces identified by community members included the Old Federal Woodshop, Kam Lake, Wildcat (during the Winter months), Old Town Bike Works Dome, and Old Town Buskers Stage. The idea of a new stand alone, new facility for all was also noted.