

Request for Decision City Council



Type of Decision										
Meeting Date		July 11, 2007				Report Date		July 03, 2007		
Decision Requested			Yes	X	No	Priority		X	High	Low
		Direction Only			Type of Meeting		X	Open	Closed	

Report Title
Interim Report - Performing Arts Centre Advisory Panel

Budget Impact / Policy Implication	Recommendation
<p>This report has been reviewed by the Finance Division and the funding source has been identified.</p>	<p>The Performing Arts Centre Advisory Panel was approved by Council on February 28, 2007. Under chairperson Diane Salo, the panel has held several planning meetings and community consultation sessions to develop a business and operational plan for a proposed performing arts centre in the City of Greater Sudbury. The interim report will provide Council with information on the panel's initial findings and areas requiring further examination. The final report is scheduled to be presented to Council in the Fall.</p> <p>Note: The interim report dated July 3, 2007 will be circulated to Council and SMT separately from the agenda. It will be released publicly at the July 11 meeting.</p>
<p>X Background Attached</p>	<p>Recommendation Continued</p>

Recommended by the Department	Recommended by the C.A.O.
<p>Doug Nadorozny, General Manager Growth and Development</p>	<p>Mark Mieto Chief Administrative Officer</p>

Date: July 3, 2007

Report Prepared By	Division Review
Stephanie Harris Business Development Officer	Rob Skelly Manager, Tourism, Culture and Marketing

Background

The City of Greater Sudbury has developed a number of civic priorities for its current term of Council. One of these initiatives is the creation of a Performing Arts Centre.

The Performing Arts Advisory Panel was formed on February 28, 2007 with a mandate to develop a business and operational plan for a proposed performing arts centre in the City of Greater Sudbury.

The panel members are strong and committed volunteers who bring to the table a broad mix of skills and talent that will help move this project forward. They also represent various sectors of the community.

They include:

Diane Salo - Chair, Business Owner, Furniture World and Past President of the Rotary Club.

Councillors and Vice Chairs Joscelyne Landry-Altmann and Doug Craig

Dennis Castellan – Architect, Castellan and Associates

Daniel Gingras – Strategic Consultant and Fundraiser

Steve Irwin – Branch Manager, Scotia Bank

Kerri Jones – Senior Advisor, Corporate Affairs, Xstrata Nickel

David Kilgour – Publisher, The Sudbury Star

Lyn Lebeau – Accountant and General Director of Le Carrefour Francophone

Stig Puschel - Retired Senior Officer from FedNor

Bela Ravi – Community Organizer

Kevin Shaganash – Musician, Juno Nominee and Member of the First Nations Community

Dr. Susan Silverton – Vice President, Academic, Laurentian University

Greater Sudbury is Entering a New Era

Greater Sudbury is no longer just a mining town - it is a City coming of age. The City has matured to become a regional capital and urban centre that has become the focus of technology, government, education, research business and health services.

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Although mining is still the major industry, the economy has diversified significantly and is no longer subject to the cyclical downturns in the past.

The City is entering a new era for growth and our economic strategies are working in multiple sectors - mining supplies and services, health, research, education and tourism.

A number of projects are completed or are underway:

- the Northern Ontario School of Medicine,
- the 12 year plan to complete highway 400 to Toronto,
- the one site Sudbury Regional Hospital, and
- The Sudbury Regional Cancer Centre Expansion.

Vast new opportunities in the Sudbury Basin will generate hundreds of millions in new investment in Greater Sudbury in the next 10 years.

The development of a strong tourism sector is also an essential component of Sudbury's diversification program.

All of these initiatives create jobs that can attract professionals, youth and new talent. These have created a demand for amenities that will enhance the quality of life for our citizens.

Building this aspect of our economy is described in the City's long term Economic Development Strategic Plan.

The Importance of Arts and Culture in Sudbury

Sudbury is unique in the mix and balance of its cultural constituencies both within the general community and among its artists. The mix includes the Anglophone (including multicultural), Francophone and First Nations cultures.

The value and potential of this mix and balance has not been fully mobilized despite the vitality of the cultural content and the community's ability to organize. Panel research to date shows that participation rates are significantly above national averages. If quantified, the economic activity which the arts and culture communities generate would likely characterize it as a significant "industry" in Sudbury.

However, the arts in Sudbury may be said to be thriving in very poor soil. There is a substantial amount of cultural activity that is being led by skilled and resourceful people. However, everyone is operating on minimal or sub-minimal budgets reflecting low per capita support with little capacity for growth. Access to adequate facilities and related cost is a very real issue.

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One of Council's priorities in the last term of office was to build a more vibrant and sustainable arts and culture sector in Greater Sudbury. The arts and culture portfolio was transferred to Growth and Development to be included as part of the City's long term economic development strategy. The strategy focuses on five engines for economic growth with one of them being "a city for the creative, curious and adventuresome". By achieving this goal, Greater Sudbury will become a "people" place that welcomes and encourages talented individuals of diverse cultural backgrounds and lifestyles. The under 35 generation will experience Sudbury as a youth-friendly city with a dynamic urban environment. It will cater to a range of interests, provide a supportive educational, technological policy and financial infrastructure for entrepreneurs, and offer an enviable quality of life.

To help accomplish this objective, Council adopted an arts and culture strategy that was developed using a community based consultative approach. The strategy creates a framework designed to build arts and culture capacity for the City of Greater Sudbury. The strategic process identified a community need for a bookable performance venue to support theatre and performances as well as large public meeting space. There was also an expressed need for venues for studio, practice and rehearsal space along with a desire to create an arts and culture district that would build critical mass.

While there are existing theatres and assembly rooms used for cultural programs in the City of Greater Sudbury, unlike other major centres in Canada, Greater Sudbury does not have a flagship facility that supports and fosters arts and culture or contributes to the development of an arts and culture and entertainment district.

Activities Undertaken by Performing Arts Centre Advisory Panel:

Since Council appointed the Performing Arts Centre (PAC) Advisory Panel, a number of steps were undertaken. The first meeting was held on March 9, 2007 to review the terms of reference, and develop a process for meeting the objectives. Consensus was reached around the need to obtain input from members of Sudbury's arts community.

A second PAC meeting was held on March 23, 2007 with members of the arts community. A questionnaire attached to the invitations asked members to identify their specific needs. Those in attendance addressed the panel outlining their various perspectives on a new performing arts facility and their needs. This second meeting was well attended and gave the panel exposure to a good cross section of the arts community. There was strong support from the arts and culture stakeholders that attended. Consensus emerged around the notion that the task at hand was to 'build a home for culture' - a broad based long term cultural legacy concept out of which the performing arts centre and other cultural projects will emerge. The panel also agreed that understanding Greater Sudbury's arts and cultural needs is critical to the overall success of the panel's work.

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With this in mind, the panel held a facilitated session led by Dennis Castellan on April 13, 2007. The purpose of this session was to gain greater clarity around the notion of what culture we are trying to serve and the development of a home for culture. The panel will ensure its vision for the performing arts centre and the arts and culture sector aligns with the City's arts and culture strategy.

Further meetings were held as the project progressed.

Emerging Themes

Through the work and consultation carried out so far by the panel, some common themes are emerging and must be considered in the development of the project concept.

- First, we cannot look at this project as just a building. It must expand the capacity of existing arts and culture organizations and fit into an overall long term district plan for arts and culture, with the Centre being an anchor or "Jewel in the Crown".
- The general consensus by the arts and culture sector is that it should be built in the downtown core to build the capacity and critical mass that will fuel and develop arts and culture, not only downtown, but in the outlying communities as well.
- The Centre should also be incorporated in an urban design plan that will strive to revitalize the downtown.
- The Centre design must be flexible but with the understanding that it cannot be expanded once built.
- The Centre must reflect and mobilize the unique mix and balance of its multicultural composition that includes Anglophone, Francophone, First Nations and other cultures that have built the fabric of our community.
- The Centre should be a hub for arts and culture for Northeastern Ontario. As such, the project should be high tech and architecturally significant – a regional centre that meets community needs and reflects our sense of pride.
- Also, a sustainable funding model must be developed that will not negatively impact existing arts and culture organizations and the City's arts and cultural grant program.

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Site Tours

Three site tours were arranged for Panel members on May 19th, May 23rd and May 29th. The sites visited represented a cross section of the types and sizes of centres that exist in Ontario. The information gathered from these centres provided Panel members with a better knowledge of the factors to consider when developing a Performing Arts Centre.

The following centres were visited:

- Thunder Bay Auditorium
- Centre in the Square, Kitchener Waterloo
- Hamilton Place, Hamilton
- Proposed Performing Arts Centre, Burlington – under development but further along in the process than Sudbury
- Living Arts Centre, Mississauga
- Rose Theatre, Brampton
- Capitol Centre, North Bay

Representatives of the above centres raised a few interesting points:

- Greater Sudbury is in an enviable position to develop strong programming and attract key performances because of its significance as a Northeastern Ontario regional centre and its strategic geographical location.
- To be successful, a project of this magnitude requires staff support from every department in the City.
- In the case of Thunder Bay, the community had reservations at the early stages of its performing arts centre project. It was passed through Council by only one vote. However, studies conducted 5-15 years later show tremendous community support and pride for the facility. Other cities have shared similar experiences. An exception is the proposed performing arts centre in Burlington where the project has support from 88 to 96% of the community even prior to being built.

A summary table with information on the sites visited is attached.

Subcommittee Activities

To deal with the complexity of the project, four subcommittees were formed. The subcommittees meet separately and report their findings to the panel. The responsibilities and key outcomes of the subcommittee work is outlined as follows:

1) Scope & Cost

Responsibility: *To determine best options for a performing arts centre in terms of size and functionality.*

Key Findings and Outcomes

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a) Strategic Planning Assessment

The panel agreed to engage the services of Brian Arnott, Senior Partner of Novita Consulting, to assist in developing a strategic planning assessment for the interim report. Novita is a theatre consultancy that has been in business for more than 35 years with more than 600 planning and development studies and more than 100 live performance facilities built. The contract included two days of interviews with a cross section of arts and culture stakeholders; background information and attendance at the site tours organized in Southern Ontario; and assistance in the developing the panel's interim report to Council. A copy of the report is attached. The report summarizes the outcome of stakeholder interviews, and provides a strategic direction for the project. It identifies the need for a long term municipal cultural plan in the development of the project and a vision for a centre that interconnects with urban, social and economic development in Greater Sudbury with a focus on the downtown core. The report also provides data on ticket sale requirements to support facility operations for 1,000, 1,500 and 2,000 seats. Samples of capital costs, seat sizes and square footage of other centres in Canada are also included.

b) Estimated Number Seats, Size and Scope of the Sudbury Performing Arts Centre

As the vision develops and more partners are attracted, the panel will be able to provide a firmer estimate to Council. Based on panel findings and the aforementioned report, preliminary estimates for the Centre could conceivably be in the range of 1,000 to 2,000 seats. A minimum of 1 acre would be required for the foot print.

The building is expected to be at the higher performance level standard and architecturally significant. This would likely put the project in the range of \$40 - 60 million.

2) Funding

Responsibility: To prepare a list of possible funding partners and study the potential community fund raising concepts and options. This subcommittee will coordinate its work with the Legacy Projects Liaison Committee.

Key Findings and Outcomes

The funding subcommittee and other panel members and staff met with potential public sector funding partners on June 7th to generate awareness that the Performing Arts Centre project is under development and to learn more about the available programs that could support this project. Organizations in attendance included FedNor, Canadian Heritage, Ministry of Northern Developments and Mines, and the Ministry of Culture. Information on the Infrastructure Ontario Program and the Trillium Foundation grants was also provided.

Funding is available to contribute to the cost of a Feasibility Study and Design

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Concept for the Centre. There is also available funding to contribute to the development of the Creative District Concept of which cultural mapping is a component. This activity was identified as a priority in the City's Arts and Culture Strategy. It will be carried out separately from the Performing Arts Centre project but can be carried out in tandem to support it.

There may be incentives for high tech and green building features and panel members were encouraged to explore this area.

It is likely that opportunities through the federal and provincial government may be limited for capital construction costs. Therefore, the panel will work to carefully comply with their financial partners' criteria and requirements.

Other points raised by the funders include:

- The need to have the City and the community behind the project.
- An operating and fundraising plan must be in place.
- Secured funding must be in place in advance before building.
- Given Greater Sudbury's position and reputation for innovation, there is an opportunity to do something new and innovative that could bring the creative district concept to another level and one that would support a regional plan. There must be a vision for the centre with architectural features of the facility reflecting that vision.
- There must be availability and incentive for artists to participate.
- The project must demonstrate a strong relationship to economic development and be sustainable.
- The more partners that are involved with the project, the stronger the application will be.
- It was recommended that the project be conducted in 2 phases - Feasibility Study and Design Concept. The feasibility study would be required by a well qualified and recognized specialist before funding can be considered

The Funding Subcommittee in their research learned of the importance of keeping overhead down and having no debt on the building. This was viewed as critical in attracting funding from donors as well as lenders. Working capital would also have to be raised at the outset and should be added to the overall cost estimate.

Once a business plan has been completed, a realistic figure for operational costs will be known. The concepts of endowments and reserve funds will be further explored.

This subcommittee will work closely with the Cost & Scope Subcommittee.

3) Governance

Responsibility: To prepare two best options for governance.

Key Findings and Outcomes

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The governance model will influence the level of funding the centre can attract. The Governance Subcommittee tabled notes detailing governance criteria , advantages and limitations of a small and large board, as well as a suggested corporate structure that analyzed a city-owned facility versus a separate not for profit corporation with charitable status. A not for profit corporation with charitable status is the recommended structure at this time.

Staff did confirm with the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation that a Performing Arts Centre building may be exempt from property taxes if it is built on City property and owned by the City.

A common governance model is one that reflects the organization owning its own assets and runs by an appointed board; similar to the model of the Sudbury Theatre Centre where there is representation from the City on the Board. Governance questions were addressed during the site visits in Thunder Bay and Southern Ontario.

4) Publicity and Public Relations:

Responsibility: To communicate the objectives of the project and develop community enthusiasm and support. The subcommittee will establish a consultation process to engage community stakeholders, determine the impact and benefit of the performing arts centre on the Greater Sudbury Community and develop a communications plan that will engage the community in the process.

Key Findings and Outcomes

a) Web Page

A web page for the PAC project has now been developed and is housed in the “mySudbury” community portal (mysudbury.ca/artscentre). The site features:

- A schedule of meetings;
- PAC progress information as it becomes available;
- An area for the public to provide comments; and
- Details of the June 14th Public Input Session.

b) Public Input Session

A public input session was held on June 14th. Approximately 75 people were in attendance with representation from business, education, the general public and the artistic community. Representatives from outside the community also attended. There were 25 presentations and submissions made to the panel. All but one presenter was enthusiastically in favor of developing a performing arts centre.

The absence in Greater Sudbury of a large, modern, regional facility to host a variety of concerts and other types of arts performances was highlighted repeatedly by the presenters.

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The following are a few excerpts from the presentations:

“The project makes good economic sense. Such facilities are not only sustainable but generate millions of dollars in economic spin-offs for the local economy and help attract business and professionals to the community.” John Bonin, Chairman of the Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce.

“In weighing the pros and cons of constructing a centre for the performing arts, I would ask that you remember that outlying areas such as LaCloche Manitoulin look to Sudbury as our ‘big city’ where we come to experience some of the high profile performers that we would never otherwise see. We are a significant part of your market area and our over fifty population is growing rapidly”, Mary Nelder, General Manager, LAMBAC Community Futures Development Corporation.

“We discovered that the five cities of North Bay, Sudbury, Timmins, Thunder Bay and Kenora are logical places of convergence for activity throughout the north and that working together like 5 spokes of a wheel, would provide the broadest structural framework with which to share resources of relative scale, and to support the overall ecology of the arts sector”....”if you want the facility to be the hub of a thriving arts community, if you want it to contribute to the quality of life of all those who do not buy the tickets, if you want it to be authentic, then it has to be relevant to the local and regional arts community in all its diverse forms and mediums”, Ron Berti, General Manager, De-ba-jeh-mu-jjg Theatre Group.

“Sudbury Secondary School’s Sheridan Auditorium has provided the city with a venue for performing arts for the past 50 years but it may not be able to continue to do so in the future. In the 2006-2007 calendar year, the school was used for more than 100 days and evenings by outside groups. The school’s facility is required more and more for in-house student projects. If the Sheridan did not exist where would these groups be going?” Alison Witty, Program Leader Arts, Sudbury Secondary School.

Next Steps

In preparation for the next report to Council in October, the Performing Arts Advisory Panel will engage a consultant to assist with a development plan for the performing arts centre that will include site identification, project scope and conceptual design. There will be further opportunity for public input during the development of this plan.

Conclusion - The Timing is Now

Sudbury has a reputation for innovation.

The planning for Science North began in 1979 by the Sudbury Regional Development

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Corporation during a time when there was a severe downturn in the mining industry. It began as a dream that would ignite a thriving tourism industry. With strong municipal leadership, and innovative public and private sector partnerships, Science North opened in 1984. It has greatly surpassed all of the community's expectations becoming a world-recognized science attraction. Several phases of expansion and new attractions, including the recent addition and current expansion of Dynamic Earth, have successfully anchored a vibrant tourism trade for Sudbury.

The creation of SNOLAB is a testament to the strength of the particle astrophysics community in Canada and, in particular, to the success of the Sudbury Neutrino Observatory experiment that brings together some of the world's top researchers to Sudbury. The proposed Living with Lakes Centre's innovative, high performance green building design will be a world class building and a legacy for Sudbury's world renown reputation for being responsible and innovative in its land and water reclamation efforts. The timing to create a new legacy that supports and builds arts and entertainment in our community is now. We have the strong support of our Mayor and Council to move this forward and build a creative city.

The panel is looking to Council to share its vision and ideas for this important project and is asking what it wants our community to be like in the next hundred years.

Attachments:

Site Tour Summary Sheet

Strategic Planning Assessment - Novita Consulting