



STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2022

AFTER 30, TOWARDS 100: MAKING SPACE MATTER

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Artspace confirms its mandate, mission and value statement as follows:

MANDATE

To improve the efficiency, effectiveness and capacity of Manitoba arts and culture organizations by:

- i) providing facilities, at below market value rates, to house their operations;
- ii) providing shared administrative and management services to support their operations.

MISSION

Artspace creates space for arts and culture to flourish. Through low-cost facilities, and shared administrative services, we play a vital role in supporting the health of Manitoban arts cultural organizations.

VALUE STATEMENT

Artspace embraces collaboration and innovation as it strives to provide stability for Manitoban arts and cultural organizations and practitioners.

These statements are the foundation for any strategic plan. It should also be the prism from which Artspace reviews and measures its activities. Having said that, there is still a need to articulate where efforts should be focused. Thus, a five-year strategic plan was drafted. The plan in question spans 2018 to 2022 along three strategic axes:

- I- Operational Sustainability
- II- Financial Sustainability
- III - Sustainable Engagement

Each strategic axis has a series of desired outcomes, each of which will be associated with action items that are identified and tagged on a timeline. Where the desired outcomes are set objectives, the action items, the timeline and the lead are elements that evolve over time and thus are best set within the concept of a living document. In other words, where the strategic plan is a static document meant to guide the actions of Artspace over the next five years, the action plan is a dynamic document that will be modified through out the years. The annual report will be structured to report activities through these strategic axes.

These axes came to light after understanding the realities of Artspace and where we have evolved to after 30 years of existence, but also by recognizing that we were born of a 100-year project and, because of this, need to act in a sustainable manner. Thus, this strategic plan aims to be responsive, pertinent, contemporary and sustainable. We believe these principles work collaboratively. The desired outcomes are as follows:

- a) To have a full and current building assessment for 100 Arthur Street
- b) To build and implement a capital fund plan
- c) To maintain, replace and restore the 'bones' and 'skin' of the Gault Building
- d) To update policies related to building use
- e) To role ArtSupport Manitoba into the Arts Management program
- f) To grow the ArtsManagement program
- g) To hold an annual fundraising campaign
- h) To establish a rental fee increase policy
- i) To diversity funding sources
- j) To facilitate the creation of additional space, without putting Artspace at financial risk.
- k) To address the needs of a broader and younger clientele
- l) To be relevant to arts organizations and their members
- m) To be a key leader in the arts
- n) To be an active member of the Exchange District

BACKGROUND

THE PROCESS.

Artspace celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2017. The organization was initially created to manage the Gault Building, which was renovated and re-opened in 1986. The organization has always been board run, with tenant members choosing directors amongst themselves.

Today, Artspace Inc is a charitable organization serving about 45 arts organizations throughout Manitoba via support services including its ArtsManagement and ArtSupport Manitoba programs, in addition to the management of the Gault building. It is still governed by a board, which now includes 'community member' directors as well as tenant member directors.

Artspace most recent strategic plan was adopted in 2014 and set priorities to 2017. Aware that the organization continues to grow and evolve, the Board determined it was timely to review and update that plan to ensure its ongoing relevance. The Board sought to develop an inclusive strategic plan that captures its current reality and speaks to the role Artspace can play in support of the arts sector in Manitoba.

To provide an opportunity for input from tenants of the Gault Building, program participants and all board members, a survey was circulated. The survey was intended to gather insight, opinions and perspectives on the organization and where it needs to focus energies over the next five years.

The Board held a planning session in August 2017, facilitated by Étoile Stewart from *First Persons Strategies*. Survey results were presented and discussed. The thoughts and ideas of all participants were eventually distilled to three strategic axes to guide our next five years.

Subsequent to the session, the Executive Director developed an action plan to help the organization achieve those goals. While the Strategic Axes will be constant, the action plan and its outcomes will be reviewed and updated annually as progress is made along each axis.

The current staff of Artspace are an asset to the organization and will be instrumental in the implementation of the strategic plan. The Artspace staff is as follows:

Eric Plamondon, Executive Director
Cheryl Miki, Program Coordinator
Debbie Girard, Accounting Associate
Dylan Jones, Administrative Assistant
Dave Wiebe, Building Superintendent
Lois Hogg, Weekend Maintenance

The Board of Directors are responsible for ensuring that the strategic axes are implemented so that the organization is able to grow and evolve. The members of the Board of Directors are:

Susan Algie (Secretary)
Rose-Anne Harder
Emma Hendrix
Michael Jerch
Paul Lacap
Luella Lee
Linda McFadyen (Vice-President)
Zach Roberts (Treasurer)
Carlene Rummery
Lynne Stefanchuk (President)
John Weins.

THE PLAN.

Survey results indicated consensus that the current 'mandate', 'mission' and value statement of Artspace Inc remains appropriate to guide the activities of Artspace and its staff.

MANDATE

To improve the efficiency, effectiveness and capacity of Manitoba arts and culture organizations by:

- i) providing facilities, at below market value rates, to house their operations;
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MISSION

Artspace creates space for arts and culture to flourish. Through low-cost facilities, and shared administrative services, we play a vital role in supporting the health of Manitoban arts cultural orgs.

VALUE STATEMENT

Artspace embraces collaboration and innovation as it strives to provide stability for Manitoban arts and cultural organizations and practitioners.

The survey identified a number of strengths and vulnerabilities.

That Artspace has survived and even thrived for over three decades should not be undervalued. The capacity of a building to house more than twenty organizations and retain them as tenants is an accomplishment considering funding for the arts has not increased over the past thirty years. This is a shared success that speaks to the tenacity and the adaptability of arts organizations as well as the merits of Artspace itself. This stability has allowed the arts to emerge as a central pillar in the Exchange District. Building tenants boast about the benefits of a controlled rent environment and of being part of an arts community with the easy collaboration that comes with close proximity to each other.

Artspace tenants not only benefit from below market rates but also from shared services and a secure space.

On the other hand, this stability means many of Winnipeg's Benjamin arts organizations have been unable to share in the benefits of the Artspace community.

While Artspace was intended to have an impact on the Exchange District, the organization has always taken its firm footing as a way to look out. In recent years efforts have been made by Artspace to assist arts organizations beyond 100 Arthur Street. Artspace extends its reach through the ArtsManagement program and ArtSupport Manitoba, both of which have over 20 arts organizations as program participants. The programs reach participants within the building and as far away as Flin Flon. The inclusion of organizations outside the building and across the province has put pressure on Artspace to be an advocate for the arts in communities other than the Exchange District and has also allowed Artspace to grow in its understanding of arts organizations throughout Manitoba.

Artspace has a niche expertise in not-for-profit and charitable arts organizations support services. In return, program participants view Artspace staff and contractors as professionals and leaders in the field. Arts organizations in Manitoba go beyond the commonly understood "not-for-profit" and "charity" models to include the concept of "social profit organizations", whose objectives are neither wholly commercial nor charitable. These organizations believe that art can, and should, have both a social and economic impact. The needs and demands of arts organizations are unique and Artspace has developed a growing understanding of these needs and created structures able to efficiently respond to them.

With success comes pressure. Program participants outside the Artspace building attach themselves with ease to the Artspace brand, and become part of the Artspace family. These organizations want to benefit from all support services offered through Artspace. However, current policies do not recognize non-tenants as members and it is not clear how this can be done. **There is a need to review current policies to ensure that Artspace is open, accessible and supportive of the various arts organizations of Manitoba and, through them, the artists involved.**

Housing Artspace in a historical icon such as the Gault Building is both an honour and a responsibility.

With a hundred-year lease, we share a responsibility to physically maintain the building while ensuring it remains a beacon for the arts community. We must use the space to continue to create and present art. But we must also continue to invest in the building so that both its structure and systems are sound today and well into the future. The Gault Building was built in 1900 and last renovated in 1986. Thirty years has passed without major renovations or capital investment. Responsibly, we need a complete assessment of the condition of the building both to ensure we can continue to offer a safe and secure space for arts organizations and to maintain Artspace as a positive example for the Exchange District and its many historic buildings.

Our 30th anniversary celebration, Lost in Artspace, reinforced both the important history and the contemporary relevance of the building. The celebration, which showcased 25 artists over six floors, demonstrated the depth and breadth of Artspace's partnerships. It demonstrated the Gault Building's importance as an arts hub, with two galleries, a dozen visual art studios, writers' studios, darkrooms, blue screens, editing bays, sound studios, and so much more. The event set a precedent, as it was granted, for the first time in Manitoba, a liquor license covering the whole building. But this too is the nature of Artspace; we push boundaries, find new applications for tools as they are made available to us, and make full use of our existing assets. This is the mindset that will inform the strategic axis for the next five years. We want to build on the success of the last 30 years and continue to be relevant for the next 70 .

STRATEGIC AXES

Through the planning process, we identified three strategic axes. There are a number of desired outcomes associated with each strategic axis and activities that help achieve each outcome. The strategic axes are set priorities for Artspace for 2018 to 2022; they are the core of the strategic plan. In contrast, the action plan will be reviewed and revised regularly as knowledge and experience is gained to ensure that we continue to make progress towards our desired outcomes. Progress along these axes will be reported each year in the annual report (which is a public document).

The word sustainable or sustainability is used in all three axes. **Artspace is a 100-year project.** Because the Gault building was given to arts organizations and their members (artists) under a 100-year lease, Artspace has a responsibility to maintain its role in the arts sector. This doesn't mean Artspace can't grow and evolve but that evolution cannot put the core mission of Artspace at risk. Ideally, change and growth will make the organization stronger. Each of the three strategic axes identified are interdependent. Many actions can and should help advance more than one desired outcome.

AXIS I - OPERATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

Under the management of Artspace Inc., the Gault building is a well-maintained historic building in the Exchange District, serving as a hub for the arts sector. However, the building was built in 1900 and last renovated in 1986. For 30 years, it has provided affordable, secure space and shared services for members from the arts sector. It has also housed low/no cost programs to support the broader arts community with the assistance of grants. While rent has covered day-to-day building costs, it has never allowed for the establishment of a sustainable capital repair and replacement reserve. Thirty years later, and with another 70 years left on the lease, that repair and replacement deficit is a looming threat. Operational sustainability is critical and, arguably, our most important strategic axis.

The plan sets out the following outcomes related to the physical structure:

- ✓ a full building assessment identifying and prioritizing immediate, medium or long term capital needs;
- ✓ a clear fund raising plan for the establishment of a capital reserve;
- ✓ continued maintenance of building features; seek opportunities to restore, upgrade or replace, upgrade building systems.

Strategic planning discussions raised **questions about membership and how 'common' assets are used by arts**

organizations and/or artists. With programs like ArtsManagement and ArtSupport Manitoba, Artspace has expanded the number of organizations it serves. This was not foreseen in the original Artspace plan. These questions include:

- who is a member and what are the benefits/responsibilities of membership
- what are the policies that govern the use of the building and its common areas

These questions lead to additional outcomes associated with operational sustainability:

- ✓ Clear, relevant and up-to-date policies for membership and building use.

AXIS II - FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

With its mandate to provide affordable services, Artspace must evaluate how it ensures its financial health into the future. In 2011, Artspace launched the ArtsManagement program with a goal of program self-sufficiency by 2015 and then by 2016. ArtSupport Manitoba was launched as a five-year pilot project in 2013. Both of these programs extend the mandate of Artspace beyond simply providing affordable space. There is a need to evaluate these programs and chart their future. Have the programs achieved their purpose? Is there continued/expanded need? Can they be provided on a cost-recovery basis? Are there opportunities to garner ongoing private and public support for these programs?

Outcomes:

- ✓ a plan for relevant and financial viable programming
- ✓ a plan for future fund raising to support programs

Artspace has never been constrained by the physical footprint of the Gault building.

The building was a necessary asset for housing the arts organizations, and individual artists, whose reach far exceeds the building. Artspace's raison d'être has always been to create a home for the arts, so that artists can positively impact and engage with the broader community. Although Artspace was conceived as a center for the visual and literary arts, it has evolved to into an art house for most artistic mediums. When you include support service programming, Artspace covers almost every arts medium and connects with organizations of various sizes and structures reaching into almost every corner of Manitoba.

Artspace is seen as one of a number of arts leaders, capable of speaking for the sector as a whole.

Because Artspace does not have its own arts programming, it is not biased in what it promotes. As well, Artspace has limited dependence on government financing, allowing the organization to speak more freely about the challenges facing the sector.

Artspace is viewed as a successful model for the provision of secure, affordable space and support services to arts organizations. In response to ongoing demand, Artspace has explored a number of opportunities for expansion. Studies were undertaken on developing the Annex (the adjacent building to the Gault building), on building a media art center in St. Boniface, as well as on redeveloping buildings in the Exchange District as part of a creative cluster strategy. All of these concepts were stalled in the end, not because arts organizations were unwilling to participate, but because the right funding formula (either capital funds or sustainable operating revenue) never materialized. Nonetheless, many emerging and some established arts organizations continue to require and search for space. These organizations would greatly benefit from Artspace growing its footprint, especially considering the 20 years of funding freezes in the arts sector in Manitoba. However, Artspace cannot risk its current operations to respond to this demand.

Desired outcomes for sustainable engagement include:

- ✓ More Artspace without putting the organization at financial risk;
- ✓ Enhanced relevance to a broader and younger clientele (including the benjamin art organizations);
- ✓ Continued relevance to arts organizations and their members;
- ✓ Continued role as a key leader in the arts and as an active Exchange District community member

