

Workshop Report – January 30, 2025

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Executive Summary

A mechanism is desired for bridging the gap between local arts and business that will strengthen the local economy, increase business exposure, foster tourism, and create a sustainable creative sector. By leveraging diverse funding streams, creating cross-sector collaborations, and integrating arts into economic development, Port Moody can position itself as a leading creative hub where arts and business flourish together. The challenge, as identified through the various engagements and surveys, is determining how to move forward in a way to not only launch this initiative but to ensure ongoing success. It was with this in mind that the workshop was convened in January 2025 to include both business and arts input.

As the research shows, there are no operating models in Canada that Port Moody can draw on of a non-profit that speaks to both economic development and the strengthening of the arts. In the USA, there are some models, although most focus on business support for arts organizations (see the research section of this report).

The unique vision for Port Moody, as setting itself apart as the City of the Arts, is broadly shared by participants. Businesses have been drawn here by the 'cool factor' and artists have found a welcoming community. The City Council and the task force input identified that more can be done to strengthen this identity and are looking for a way forward.

The recommendations in this report are based on the input and the number of questions still unanswered. While non-profit organizations can take time to create, the pragmatic work at hand can begin immediately if resourced.

The City of Port Moody government has a decades long history acting as a kick-starter in the community at the initiation stage of ideas and exploring proof of concepts. A few examples include:

- The Port Moody Arts Centre was first opened and operated successfully by Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services for the first few years until the City supported the transfer of funding to a non-profit operating society.
- The Port Moody Film Festival began as a City initiative in partnership with volunteers wanting to cultivate a new audience of film lovers. After a few years, the City facilitated a model for a society to take it on.
- The Port Moody Arts Festival began as a City initiative for the first years and supported the operations and the creation of an operating society to take it on.
- The creation of the Port Moody Foundation was facilitated by the City working with several volunteers.

At the workshop, attendees posed excellent questions to consider setting up a new organization. However, they were more energized around the practical activities they could be involved in to promote arts and business integration. Now is the time once again for the City to kick-start and prove the innovative concept to set it up for success in Port Moody. This requires field work, research and modelling as well as immediately facilitating activities showcasing the benefits of integration.

Background

The recommendation to form an Arts and Business Council was first proposed by the Mayor’s Arts and Business Coalition Task Force (MABCTF) in 2023. Following that recommendation, an Arts and Business Council Project Task Force (ABCPTF) was struck to oversee stakeholder engagement. Stakeholder engagement was conducted by way of group meetings and survey questions. A stakeholder input document was developed in May 2024.

Except for some concerns from within the arts community about the perceptions of duplication of services and a fear of lack of resources, the concept has been met with interest by those consulted – from both business and the arts as well as youth.

In January 2025, a workshop engaged the broad arts and business community to explore the next steps for creating a mutually beneficial organization to bridge the gap between arts and businesses to energize the City of the Arts differentiator.

Research

The research shows very few models of an Arts and Business council at the local level. Even those that share the same name are not necessarily focused on economic development. For example,

The Arts & Business Council of Greater Boston has, for over the past 30 years, provided professional development, legal education, and board service workshops in collaboration with other organizations. They partner with a wide range of institutions such as local non-profits, national foundations, large corporations, educational institutions, and local government. Their mission states that they empower artists and arts organizations by providing legal services, professional development, and business mentorship to strengthen the creative sector. (<https://artsandbusinesscouncil.org>)

The Arts & Business Council of Chicago strengthens non-profit arts organizations by fostering business partnerships, providing management consulting, and developing leadership programs. After nearly four decades, the Arts and Business Council of Chicago has merged with Lawyers for the Creative Arts (LCA) who continue to deliver educational and consulting services tailored to the unique needs of artists and arts administrators. (<https://artsbiz-chicago.org>)

The Arts & Business Council of Miami is a closer reflection of the Port Moody aspiration as it empowers Miami’s creative ecosystem to strengthen economic impact. They curate innovative and tailored programming that leverages investment in the arts to measurably advance the goals of Miami businesses and foundations, ultimately strengthening the economic impact of the creative economy and the vitality of their entire community. (<https://artsbizmiami.org/>)

Key takeaways from the research:

- Diversified Funding Model – Most councils rely on a mix of government funding, corporate sponsorships, membership fees, and revenue from services (e.g., consulting, workshops, or professional training for artists).
- Strong Operating Model – Councils are usually non-profits with a board composed of business leaders, artists, and municipal representatives to ensure strategic alignment.
- Integration into Economic Development – Cities that recognize the arts as an economic driver

- see higher investment in tourism, creative industries, and small business growth.
- Public-Private Partnerships – Strong collaboration between the public sector (government funding) and private businesses (sponsorships and investments) leads to long-term sustainability.

Workshop Report

The facilitated workshop was held on January 30, 2025, at the Old Mill Boathouse. Context and welcome remarks were shared on behalf of Mayor Lahti by Councillor Agtarap. The workshop included representation from business, arts and community organizations. Staff representatives from Finance, Parks, Recreation, Cultural Services, and Economic Development were on hand to support the workshop but did not participate in the discussions. At the closing, CFO Rockwood thanked participants and advised them on the next steps. A copy of the PowerPoint slides is found in Appendix One.

Following introductions and a brief history and context setting about the concept, the facilitator went through four activities with the participants:

- Identifying the benefits when both sectors thrive
- Listing the key actions important to be reflected in the ABC mandate
- Discussing the priorities for the first 100 days
- Considering the operating model

Benefits Listing

Participants worked in groups to identify the benefits to both businesses and the arts when one or the other thrives. They reported back in a plenary session. In the context of the Arts and Business Council, these benefits could form the objectives and key results (OKRs).

Benefits to local businesses when the arts thrive, and the City is a successful creative hub

Businesses can be part of experiences that create a destination
 The City is a draw for consumer foot traffic
 Increased exposure for the businesses
 Increased access to creative talent
 Attracts other related businesses – e.g. brewer's row
 Increased tourism
 Sponsoring the arts brings an intrinsic personal pride for the business and satisfaction (e.g. PCT Stage)
 Opportunities for workspace/shops
 Beautification working with local artists
 Increased traffic related to special events and artistic activities

Local art as a service offering to businesses
 Keeps money local
 Sponsorship of the arts is mutually beneficial as it increases attendance to benefit businesses
 There is a community to create security and longevity for sustaining businesses
 Being viewed as an important part of the community
 Local tourism spurred by the arts
 Community loyalty – people come to the area to spend
 Build a brand for businesses to be part of
 Art can personalize a business
 Creates a gathering place

Benefits to the local arts community when businesses thrive, and the City is a successful creative hub

Businesses supporting the arts through sponsorships and donations
Creates economic diversity
Arts retailers can support local artists
Greater exposure for artists working with local businesses
Arts-focused businesses are drawn to the City
Businesses taking part in the arts (e.g. team building activities)

Businesses as clients hire from the arts (e.g. graphic design, catering, videography, event planning services)
Opportunities for artists to sell in local retailers
Increased collaboration between artists and businesses
Temporary or permanent homes for gallery spaces or performance spaces

Benefits to both sectors

- Develops diversity – thought, voices, backgrounds, experiences
- Opportunities for personal development and participation in a vibrant lifestyle with connection to community
- Access to creative talent
- The ‘Cool Factor’

To conclude this exercise, the group confirmed that achieving these mutual benefits is ambitious but the desire to do so is what had brought them here today. It was also pointed out to the group that this is a leading-edge idea as there are no other similar civic organizations in Canada.

Developing a Mandate – The ABC exists to...

Participants then identified key action words to describe what a core mandate for the ABC would focus on. The ones that resonated the most with participants are starred:

Promote*	Ensure the mandate of arts is included in non-artistic events	artists/organizations/businesses
Connect*	Assist in finding funding	Champion
Advance*	Build cultural opportunities	Advocate
Cultivate*	Build demand	Establish a grand vision for the City of the Arts – make it credible and communicate it
Enable*	Foster creativity	Encourage and support artists to become financially sustainable through education in business
Sustain*	Empower	Enable sustainable growth in perpetuity
Educate *	Engage local connections and services	Manage the needs of the arts community
Illuminate*	Aggregate	Enable artists to create and thrive
Bridging the gap*	Facilitate relationships and resources	Centralize resources
Unify*	Resolve	Promote and communicate our vision everywhere
Include*	Support	Unify both groups to allow growth
Integrate arts and business*	Advise	
Nurture*	Share	
Bolster innovation*	Encourage	
Communicate*	Promote connections between	
Create/Cocreate		
independence/sustainability		
Create opportunities		

Build bridges between stakeholders to provide a community	Develop	Fund
Sustain and develop a centre for all the arts	Cultivate	Bring value
Bridge the gap between economic and cultural prosperity	Guide	Raise public awareness
Listen	Organize community events	Advocate
Inform	Advance	Expose
Connect	Visibility	Bridge the gap
Educate	Promote	Expand
	Collaborate	Develop programs
	Co-ordinate existing resources	Engage with the community
	Expand	Offer pro-development
	Co-create	

The group explored the development of what a mandate statement might focus on in the remaining time available and a summary is proposed in the recommendations section.

The First 100 Days

Following the discussion of what actions ABC would focus on to achieve success, the group discussed the first thing's first approach. At their tables, participants discussed priorities and shared their top two ideas about what ABC should focus on at the beginning. The starred ideas on the list below represent the highest priority identified by the group:

- ❖ Confirm the mandate, the grand vision, and define the primary goal(s) – define success
- ❖ Determine budget, resources and viability with recurring revenue sources
- ❖ Clarify the operating model or the NFP structure, governance and set accountability
- ❖ Open lines of communication to both sectors
- ❖ Create inventories of arts friendly business organizations and arts organizations and artists
- ❖ Assess the gaps – engage all parties for input of current state/ground truth
- ❖ Connect artists with businesses (consider logic maps of who does what and interests)
- ❖ Create a website that includes listings and resources to help artists/arts organizations with business savvy, expert references, listings, venues, education.
- ❖ Research funding possibilities
- ❖ Get to know and create an inventory of, artists, organizations, venues, grants
- ❖ Review the City's event permitting process to ensure that arts and economic development considerations are included (event audit); list the local products and services used.

Other priorities included:

- Raise visibility
- Unify through collaborations – connect art with businesses
- Bring more art into the city
- Identify issues
- Build a team
- Connect, network, find out who is in the community and what it wants

Discussion: How to Organize

The group discussed how to realize the mandate. While no definitive recommendation was made, the input revolved around questions to be considered before moving forward with a new operating society, including:

- How would accountability be monitored?

- What funding would be available and what do we mean by sustainability?
- Would board members need to live and/or work in Port Moody or be representing an organization that was Port Moody based?
- Would ABC include members at large as well as representatives from both sectors to ensure community input?
- Would undertaking a two-step process with an initial advisory group to create the mechanisms for the ongoing organization make sense?

Although the questions above posed by the group were excellent, the attendees showed more energy toward the practical activities they could be involved in to promote arts and business over the work to create a new organization – they want to see this idea happen but don't seem to know where to start.

Conclusion

The idea of an Arts and Business Council for the City sees Port Moody once again forging a new path. As the City of the Arts, City Council wants to lean into this opportunity

As the feedback from the workshop was reviewed and compiled, the following emerged directly from the words and ideas offered by the participants:

Potential Mandate

The Arts and Business Council of Port Moody will exist to promote, connect, and advance the integration of arts and business, cultivating a thriving, innovative, and sustainable creative economy.

This mandate statement can be further defined by the visionary input at the workshop as an organization dedicated to bridging the gap between economic and cultural prosperity, ensuring that artists, businesses, and the broader community unify to build Port Moody as a recognized City of the Arts. Informed by a grand vision that is credible, sustainable, and well-communicated to all, ABC will work to enable, sustain, and educate by illuminating the immense value of arts and culture within the local economy. Through meaningful partnerships, strategic investments, and advocacy, it will empower, engage, and nurture both artistic and business communities, bolstering innovation and fostering long-term sustainability.

Summary of Priorities

Based on the workshop feedback, the ABC would facilitate Port Moody's arts and business communities to co-create, innovate, and prosper—enriching the entire city. The ABC would do well to focus on these seven core functions:

Bridging the Gap & Unifying

- Bridge the gap between businesses and artists, ensuring mutually beneficial relationships.
- Unify both groups to create growth, innovation, and community impact.
- Bridge the gap between economic and cultural prosperity, ensuring that the mandate of the arts is included in non-artistic special events.
- Build bridges between stakeholders to provide a supportive community.

Promoting & Connecting

- Promote the arts as a key economic driver and integral to Port Moody's identity.
- Connect artists, businesses, and community leaders to foster collaboration and shared opportunities.
- Promote connections between arts organizations, entrepreneurs, and commercial sectors.
- Champion Port Moody's creative industries locally, regionally, and beyond.

Advancing & Cultivating

- Advance the financial sustainability of artists and arts organizations by providing business education and funding strategies.
- Cultivate an environment where arts and business collaborations flourish, creating mutual value.
- Develop programs that ensure arts and culture are embedded in Port Moody's long-term economic and civic planning.
- Encourage and support artists to become financially sustainable through education in business.

Enabling & Sustaining

- Enable businesses to leverage the power of the arts for economic and community growth.
- Sustain and develop Port Moody as a center for all the arts, ensuring resources, funding, and opportunities are accessible to all.
- Enable sustainable growth in perpetuity, ensuring both arts and business communities thrive together.

Educating & Illuminating

- Educate businesses on the value of the arts in fostering economic development and social cohesion.
- Illuminate the role of the arts in Port Moody's civic, cultural, and economic progress.
- Inform the public about the significance of the arts through storytelling, research, and strategic communications.
- Raise public awareness of the importance of integrating arts and business.

Building & Developing

- Build demand for artistic experiences and creative services within the business sector.
- Develop cultural opportunities that enhance Port Moody's vibrancy and attract new investment.
- Expand visibility for artists and creative entrepreneurs through partnerships, media, and public engagement.
- Fund initiatives that drive artistic and economic growth.

Empowering & Engaging

- Empower artists with business skills to foster financial independence and sustainability.
- Engage local connections and services, ensuring that arts organizations, small businesses, and investors are working together.
- Aggregate and centralize resources, making them more accessible to both business and creative sectors.
- Encourage and facilitate relationships that lead to cross-sector collaboration and investment in Port Moody's cultural economy.

Recommendations

To ensure any new idea is **set up for success** means engaging with the community to prove the concept by:

- **Facilitating short term wins** - opportunities for businesses and arts groups working together (optimizing events, creating events, promotions etc.) to gain interest and input for this new concept by others.
- **Standing up the right operating model (e.g. a new NFP)** – one that is right for Port Moody that will support and sustain the mandate. Research to date does not show one; volunteers have not emerged...yet.

The following recommendations address the immediate work to be done to begin to realize the benefits of integrating arts and business. While non-profit structures can take time to create, dedication to the work at hand can begin immediately.

As the input shows, the community shares the lean into the opportunity to leverage the City of the Arts slogan for a strong creative economy. However, as a small City with a limited volunteer base, the City is advised to take a more direct form of leadership in the near-term to make this happen. This means investing, in the short term, in human resources to get the immediate lift and prove the concept.

Following the formula from Port Moody's history of leading the way through on the ground services while concurrently building community capacity to take the reins, the key next steps are recommended:

Proving the Concept with Field Work:

Assign accountability and resources (Arts & Business Specialist **contract role**) under the Economic Development Manager with a dotted line to the Cultural Manager to do the following:

- Consult and co-create a term workplan with key stakeholders to be finalized by City Council. See workshop input for first 100 days priorities.
- Explore operating model options with businesses and arts groups input. Evaluate the NFP models for delivery of the mandate. Present the options to Council.
- Achieve early success, launch early initiatives to connect arts and business sectors, fostering mutual growth. Optimize arts and business early collaborations.

Set up for Long Term Success

Except for some concerns from within the arts community about the potential for duplication of services and a fear of lack of resources, the concept of a dedicated organization serving the community has been met with interest by those consulted – from both business and the arts as well as youth. However, the mandate for this initiative does not logically fit with any one organization to take on – even if they have capacity for more work!

Community input is important and as the City has seen, even with the assignment of a focused task force, capacity to participate in meetings and workflow reviews or structural development is very limited. Starting with a professional staff member **on contract** with the Economic Development Department and connected to the Cultural Services Team will mean that operating models can be gathered, evaluated and vetted for success. While, in the meantime, some initiatives can get underway

such as optimizing existing events, networking events, inventories of stakeholders, special event audit for business and arts participation/amplification, and other near-term ideas presented at the workshop. The ultimate model can be developed and proposed following a series of consultations with key players and a robust evaluation for sustainability, including accessing other funding.

The idea of an Arts and Business Council for the City sees Port Moody once again forging a new path. As the City of the Arts, City Council wants to lean into this opportunity. As the input shows, they are joined in that desire by both representatives from the business and arts community.

As a small City with a limited volunteer base, the City is advised to take a more direct form of leadership in the near-term to make this happen. This means investing, for now at least in human resources to leverage community leaders in both economic and cultural development to get short term wins and prove the concept can work over the long term.

Appendix 1 – Workshop Slides



1



2

Workshop Goals

Co-create a draft mandate for the Arts and Business Council (ABC) reflecting the unique role it can play.

Suggest a 'First 100 Days' approach for the ABC leader to strengthen the City of the Arts reputation.

Governance of ABC - Attributes;
Board Roles; City Role

Next Steps

HOW DO LOCAL BUSINESSES BENEFIT WHEN ARTS IN THE COMMUNITY THRIVE?

HOW DO LOCAL ARTS ORGANIZATIONS BENEFIT WHEN LOCAL BUSINESSES THRIVE?



3

Arts & Culture and Economic Development – Visions/Plans



4



Why an Arts and Business Council?

- To strengthen Port Moody's 'City of the Arts' identity.
- To add capacity for the many arts organizations who want to engage the business community.
- To foster inclusivity, diversity, and equitable growth.
- To mobilize (not compete for) resources: attract funding, partnerships, and sponsorships to benefit both arts/business.

5

Benefits of Collaboration

When Arts and Business share a vision

- Shared resources and collective impact.
- Opportunities for cross-sector innovation and skill-sharing.
- Amplified marketing and outreach.
- Advocate for policies for meaningful arts spaces and good design.
- Stronger cultural and economic ecosystem, leverage placemaking.
- Leverage civic funding to secure other levels of funding or increase eligibility.

6

3 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

ABC: Stronger Together

7



- 1. At your own tables
- 2. Then combine groups
- 3. Then come together –

Think in verbs:
collaborate, lead, organize, etc.

Co-Create a Draft Mandate

ABC EXISTS TO...

A mandate states what the organization is meant to do.

8

9 ★

In previous meetings, creative activity ideas were easy to generate.

Now, considering the mandate just discussed, what would you recommend as the priorities *for the ABC* in the first 100 days and what could be challenges.

Suggest a 'First 100 Days' approach for the ABC team to strengthen the City of the Arts reputation.

First Things First (mind the gap!)

10

Discuss how the board of governance could be formed to lead the ABC to achieve their mandate and reflect the shared aspirations of the arts and business community.

Governance Board:
Challenges
Opportunities
Practicalities

11

Next Steps

- Present a draft mandate and governance recommendations to Council and Committee.
- Bundle the First 100 days recommendations into the summary report of this meeting
- Ensure all attendees on the mailing list are kept up to date