

Yarmouth Arts Regional Council

Feasibility Study and Business Plan

Final Report

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Prepared by
novaway planning & communications

In partnership with
Jost Architects Ltd.
and HAL Consulting

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Executive summary

Background

In 2003, a proposal to build a new combined arts and conference centre as part of the Mariners Centre prompted a public meeting to solicit the opinions of people from across the arts, culture and tourism sectors. Amid many mixed opinions, the one point of consensus was that a feasibility study should be conducted before any further plans were made.

In October 2005, The Yarmouth Arts Regional Council engaged Novaway Planning & Communications, in partnership with Jost Architects Ltd. and HAL Consulting, to undertake a feasibility study and business plan for its centre in Yarmouth. The goal of the project was to assess the facility, now 26 years old, and to make recommendations to guide future decisions regarding revitalization or reconstruction.

Novaway and partners have performed the following:

- preliminary assessment of the current facility and site;
- review of identified facility upgrade requirements;
- needs assessment and facility space requirements, in consultation with Th'YARC, its affiliated member groups, and established arts organizations in the community;
- comparative analysis of similar centres in Nova Scotia;
- comparative level-of-effort estimates on the costs of revitalization and reconstruction;
- preliminary assessment of alternate site locations;
- analysis of the market and opportunities for growth;
- projected viability following revitalization or reconstruction;
- interim business (implementation) plan.

The need

Th'YARC is the only dedicated theatre space in Yarmouth. The Mariners Centre is not well suited for intimate theatrical performances or those where in-house acoustics are important. The nearest dedicated theatres are in Shelburne, Digby and at Université Sainte-Anne. For patrons living in Yarmouth, these are not considered local venues. Arts groups have reported shortcomings at these venues. The Rodd Grand Hotel offers dinner theatre during the summer season. Some local high schools and the Nova Scotia Community College Burrige campus have gymnasias with stage areas. Improvements at Yarmouth High School planned for 2008 will not provide the kind of seating, acoustics, rigging, lighting or sound requirements of a proper performance theatre.

The Council supports the arts primarily through its own programs and those of its affiliate groups, as well as some use of the centre by other community groups. All affiliated groups that use the centre were consulted, as well as established non-affiliated community arts organizations. The need for, and usage of, space at Th'YARC manifested in three categories:

the theatre, common areas, and other areas. Theatre-related needs can be accommodated in the existing square footage with some necessary upgrades, reallocation of space, and modest expansion for storage. More space would be desirable but no evidence has been shown of support for the additional capital or operating expenses. Reallocation of spaces would also accommodate needs in common areas such as washrooms. Space usage for activities not related to the theatre demonstrates no support for the centre financially. Consultation with community groups did not reveal any additional need for arts spaces in the facility other than those associated with the theatre.

Informants throughout the community voiced unanimous support for Th'YARC as an important amenity in the quality of life and cultural expression of the personality of the region. It was also agreed that issues of facility development, location, programming and management were the decisions and responsibilities of the Council.

The site

A site evaluation process was conducted in four phases:

- identification of alternatives;
- preliminary screening on the basis of nominal imperatives;
- identification of desirable criteria; and
- weighted ranking of site alternatives based on the degree to which each would accommodate the desirable criteria.

The list of alternatives included all those identified by Th'YARC and suggested by key informants. The evaluation process was applied objectively to all locations, although some identified areas were not site-specific. The Parade Street location was preferred by a wide margin. The other sites followed in order: downtown, Mariners Centre and waterfront location (tied for third), and the south end.

The facility

The existing building, although non-professional in standard, shows no evident signs of failure. It remains in usable condition, and no structural problems or other evidence were discovered to suggest that the building could not be revitalized and, with proper ongoing maintenance, provide a long life of service. An environmental assessment and legal survey will be required for the continued use of the site for either a new or renovated building.

Water problems from roof leakage have been addressed with a new roofing system installed in November 2005, which also included modifications to windows and other openings to reduce water infiltration and to replace deteriorated material. Evident water damage can be repaired as part of the upgrading project and within its budget. Issues of site drainage, parking expansion and backstage access could all be accomplished together with the resurfacing of the property.

Solutions to climate control issues – including winter cold and summer heat, poor ventilation, high utility consumption, and inefficient insulation and weather seals – are reflected in the estimates. New seating and drapes in the theatre are accounted for, as are lighting and sound upgrades, with some allowance for modification to the rigging system. Removal of the columns in the theatre may be unrealistic within a renovation budget and no specific allowance has been made for this. It could, however, be easily incorporated into the design of a new building.

Internal space refurbishing and reallocation would include modernizing the bar facility, appropriate washroom facilities, and the kitchen and laundry areas. These could all be accommodated within existing spaces. Many of the current space usage difficulties could be rectified within the existing space to make the building more functional. Allowance was made for a small additional space to accommodate costume storage and set preparation that is not practical within the existing structure.

A major renovation may require existing facilities to be brought up to current standard, and in fact the Council may choose to do this irrespective of code requirements. The general application of standards on an existing building is not entirely clear in that this may be a balance of due diligence, requirements, and good sense.

Level-of-effort budgets provided for both renovation and new construction have attempted to compare costs in relatively equal terms. For estimate purposes, total areas for the two options are equal. The preliminary assessment concludes that the cost of new construction would be approximately \$5.5 million as compared with \$2.5 million for revitalization.

In general, the preferred vision for the future is a new facility constructed on the Parade Street property.

The market

A review of relevant socio-demographics revealed a broad base of support for the centre. The market basin for Th'YARC incorporates 26,795 residents locally and 62,615 in the tri-county area. Population characteristics indicate a good match with a typical consumer profile. The centre and its productions are well known and familiar to the public, and regularly attended by citizens of the region who regard the centre as an important amenity. Total annual household spending on culture activities and events is estimated at \$2.4 million in Yarmouth, and \$21.3 million per year in the tri-county area.

Currently tourists represent less than one-half of one per cent of theatre patronage at Th'YARC, and yet program revenues at the centre have increased by 22% in 2004 and another 30% in 2005. This would indicate the strong local support for the centre and its programs. Although tourism is declining, an estimated 60,000 tourists entered the province by ferry at Yarmouth in 2005, of whom 12,459 visited the Yarmouth County Tourist Association information booth, actively looking for things to do locally. These tourists represent a key marketing opportunity.

The comparable centres reported their market basins to be roughly similar within their geographic context to that defined for Th'YARC within its own context. Our review has not identified any programming, operational or other issues at Th'YARC that stand in stark contrast with the practices of these other centres that enjoy brisk business and wide participation. Successful operation of the Yarmouth centre, as with all others, will mean finding the best combination of programs that support the mandate and operating revenues that support the building.

The viability

The management of the centre and the leadership of the Council have demonstrated the centre's viability in terms of both program and finances. Since our review of affiliated and other arts organizations has revealed no significant sources of revenue for non-theatre usage of the centre, and in the absence of a comprehensive arts policy that clearly defines cost-recovery responsibility for these groups, the financial viability of the centre is projected on the basis of theatrical revenues. Other artistic disciplines would be accommodated where practical.

The centre is volunteer-supported and professionally-managed. The value of professional leadership has been clearly demonstrated. The ongoing viability of the operation would be more stable when the workload is sustainable over the long term. Salary adjustments and the hiring of an administrative assistant and part-time custodial staff are shown in the forecast budget comparison to be affordable. The forecast budget also demonstrates the improved programming and revenue generating capability of a year-round program.

In 2005, the centre has demonstrated that it can accomplish both goals of generating revenue and accommodating a variety of artistic productions. Activities are actively supported by the community. With more experience, by leveraging from recent successful operations, and with a deliberate program strategy that blends presentation opportunities, Th'YARC can continue to be a vibrant and viable centre.

Identified growth opportunities include:

- aggressive pursuit of the tourist market;
- systematic analysis and program adjustments to blend artistic expression, satisfy the mandate of Th'YARC and its partner groups, and sustain financial viability;
- more opportunities to showcase Acadian, Black and Mi'kmaq cultures, with added tourism benefits;
- development of an arts policy to guide space allocation priorities at the centre and the practical application of the Council's mandate to support the arts in the region;
- access to other funding opportunities to promote artistic development programs as well as a broader supportive role within the arts and culture community.

Funding

There have been strong expressions of support from the Town of Yarmouth and the Municipalities of Argyle and the District of Yarmouth. Local governments have shown no

interest in the ownership or management of the centre. Indications of appreciation for the need and value of a facility development project are strong at the local levels.

The Cultural Spaces program of the federal Department of Canadian Heritage supports the improvement, renovation and construction of arts and heritage facilities, with added opportunities for energy conservation and environmental assessment. Generally, the program offers support up to 33% of eligible project costs for construction, adaptive re-use or renovation.

Although the Culture Division of Nova Scotia Tourism, Culture and Heritage has no formal capital funding program, it is receptive to proposals that demonstrate value. Ongoing involvement and financial support from the province for the operation of Th'YARC are considered a good indication of the department's perception of value. Our unofficial conversations with Culture representatives indicated the department would look very favorably on an appropriate development proposal from Th'YARC.

ACOA indicated support for the centre, with preference for funding proposals where three levels of government are involved at a combined funding partnership no greater than 90%. The balance would be provided by local fundraising.

The South West Shore Development Authority has expressed interest in Th'YARC and would be willing to help find and co-ordinate funding.

Summary

After a full review of the need, market, viability and ongoing sustainability of the centre, it would seem clear that all players are ready for a solid proposal for Th'YARC to proceed with plans for redeveloping the centre. Several key informants have reported the view that timing is opportune for a concrete proposal for redevelopment of Th'YARC and the community would be receptive to a progressive plan for the capital development of the arts centre.

Management has demonstrated a good blend of artistic programming, audience satisfaction and financial responsibility. Adjustments to staff and programming are indicated that could make the centre even stronger, and growth opportunities have been identified for expansion within a year-round operation.

Community need for the centre and the value it offers has been demonstrated at all levels, including municipal representatives, schools, tourist associations, and funding partners. The arts community would like to see growth in Council support for arts activities beyond the centre itself, which could be achieved with a comprehensive policy and extension of its mandate and resources. This could all be possible in a long-term strategic plan.

Funding will depend on leadership and commitment. These have also been indicated by the Council. Initial responses from potential partners and the South West Shore Development Authority have all been very favorable.

Summary of recommendations

- Recommendation 1:** Total space within the current shell is considered nominally adequate to accommodate the programming needs of Th'YARC and the reasonable requirements of other arts organizations.
- Recommendation 2:** A modest addition should be incorporated into the facility development plan for costume storage and set preparation.
- Recommendation 3:** As development plans evolve, the Council should monitor the needs of non-theatre-related arts organizations and adjust its space requirements on this basis as appropriate.
- Recommendation 4:** Scheduling and allocation of space should be guided by a comprehensive policy that would specify not only rates but also priorities and booking preferences.
- Recommendation 5:** If new construction is chosen, facility design plans should consider redevelopment of the space now occupied by the arts studio. A modest increase in square footage and careful choice of floor covering could make this space suitable for dance classes and as extra rehearsal space. The McCarron School alone could bring approximately \$4,000.00 in additional annual revenues. Other uses may be identified. As a separate rehearsal space, this could facilitate a denser schedule of revenue-generating performances in the theatre.
- Recommendation 6:** The current Parade Street property is the preferred site, pending the completion of a legal survey and environmental assessment. If the property is found to be clean or affordably cleanable, and not subject to survey restrictions, this should be the site of the new or revitalized centre.
- Recommendation 7:** If the Parade Street property is found not to be suitable, new construction on another site will be indicated. The downtown area is preferred, and appropriate downtown locations should be identified and short listed. The site evaluation process should be revisited to select a preferred specific downtown location. Th'YARC should then negotiate with the owner on the cost and availability of the property. A plan would also be required for the disposition of the Parade Street property. These factors should then be incorporated into the capital development budget and schedule.
- Recommendation 8:** A legal survey and environmental assessment should be performed on the Parade Street property.

- Recommendation 9:** If the revitalization option is chosen, an engineering inspection of the fly tower should be performed to determine the structure's load-bearing capabilities and to recommend an appropriate upgrade to the rigging system.
- Recommendation 10:** Removal of the columns in the theatre seating area should be included in any plans for new construction. Within a revitalization plan, they could be treated as a separate option subject to affordability.
- Recommendation 11:** A revitalization plan should address building code issues and the application of standards. Development decisions need to be made that incorporate regulations, due diligence and common sense.
- Recommendation 12:** A determination should be made to clarify the level of finish expected for the interior and exterior of the centre. While some assumptions were made during this project, this should be specified as a basis for proceeding with further assessment of design and construction costs.
- Recommendation 13:** If the revitalization option is elected, the Council may choose to address the presence and potential consequences of mold and water damage during the process of upgrading, but should consider performing a detailed facility assessment earlier.
- Recommendation 14:** The local sense of familiarity with the centre, and its recent programming success, should be leveraged to remain a vibrant and valuable resource in Yarmouth and the Tri-County area.
- Recommendation 15:** Events should continue to be produced and scheduled based on the interests of the local community as the primary means of ongoing support.
- Recommendation 16:** Relationships and program opportunities should be developed to draw more participation from residents in outlying regions where disposable income is higher and where the Acadian, Black and Mi'kmaq cultures are strong.
- Recommendation 17:** The theatre schedule should continue to concentrate on productions with a high concentration of local performers, to attract audiences comprised of families, friends and neighbors.

- Recommendation 18:** Th'YARC should work closely with the Yarmouth County Tourist Association and Destination South West Nova to establish a strong position within ongoing tourism strategies as an important destination attraction in the region.
- Recommendation 19:** The centre and its events should be aggressively promoted to stimulate growth in attendance by tourists.
- Recommendation 20:** The salary of the General Manager should be increased to reflect the quality of professional expertise that is expected and required to sustain the centre. A range of \$40,000.00 to \$50,000.00 would be more in line, and is shown in the budget forecast to be affordable.
- Recommendation 21:** Additional staff should be hired to allow the General Manager to focus on planning and management issues, artistic direction, budgeting and revenue commitments, and organizing and staging Th'YARC's major productions. A full-time administrative assistant and a part-time custodian are included in the budget forecast.
- Recommendation 22:** In the near term, until an arts policy clearly defines space and revenue responsibilities differently, the facility should continue to operate with priorities centred on the theatre. Other artistic disciplines should be accommodated where practical.
- Recommendation 23:** In-house productions should be the central core of the yearly program, with preferential advantage in the theatre schedule.
- Recommendation 24:** Split productions and rentals by local non-profit groups should be encouraged and supported as broad opportunities for artistic expression, and for local groups to present their works to a wide audience in a professional theatre.
- Recommendation 25:** Purchased shows and rentals by for-profit groups should be planned carefully. Where the potential financial risks are outweighed by the artistic and cultural values, these events should be encouraged.
- Recommendation 26:** Opportunities should be explored for attracting the quality of touring entertainers that would be financially supported by the local market.
- Recommendation 27:** Once the final 2005 record of expenditures and revenues is completed, the budget projection should be reviewed by the Council's Finance Committee and Treasurer to confirm that its base assumptions are accurate and that its projections are still appropriate.

- Recommendation 28:** The Council should press forward on the momentum of this feasibility study to bring forward a specific proposal with visuals and confirmed costing to begin the process of solidifying funding commitments.
- Recommendation 29:** The centre's operational approach should incorporate:
- making spaces accessible for the programs and activities of local performance arts groups;
 - developing scheduling guidelines that balance profitability and artistic expression;
 - attracting the participation and attendance of Acadian, Black and Mi'kmaq residents from the region;
 - sustaining a deep understanding of the interests of the local community and gathering audience information to develop a program blend that is both popular and financially viable;
 - promoting the centre and its activities to local and tourist markets;
 - making the centre accessible to schools to promote participation and to complement the education curriculum.
- Recommendation 30:** Program planning should take advantage of all available funding opportunities, including those attached as appendices to this report, to help support activities that are artistically relevant but not financially self-sustaining.

1.0 Introduction & Background

In October 2005, The Yarmouth Arts Regional Council engaged Novaway Planning & Communications, in partnership with Jost Architects Ltd. and HAL Consulting, to undertake a feasibility study and business plan for its centre in Yarmouth. The goal of the project was to assess the facility, now 26 years old, and to make recommendations to guide future decisions regarding revitalization or reconstruction.

1.1 Th'YARC

As an organization, Th'YARC is comprised of two main components: the Council and the centre.

The Council is comprised of eight general members, one designated representative from each affiliate group, and a number of other appointees from other cultural organizations. The Council describes itself as a community of artists that exists to support the development and showcasing of regional arts and artists in a wide variety of disciplines, with particular focus on performing and visual arts. It achieves this through activities in the arts centre, outreach activities aimed at education and participation, and liaison with arts organizations. The Council's main resources for accomplishing its objectives are:

- its membership of representatives from affiliated arts organizations and others interested in its mandate;
- its facility which houses activities and generates operating revenues; and
- its staff, which is primarily occupied with the responsibilities of operating the centre efficiently and without deficit.

The centre contains a 327-seat theatre with 3 dressing rooms, green room and a set construction workshop; a costume design workshop and repository; a print room; and an arts studio. Its interior lobby also serves as a display gallery for the arts and crafts work of two of the centre's affiliated organizations. Ancillary and common spaces include an exterior and interior lobby, washrooms, refreshment bar, staff kitchen, and mechanical and electrical rooms. The Council and its staff maintain and program the centre in conjunction with its affiliates to provide opportunities for community expression of and participation in arts and culture. The centre's activities include performances in the theatre and attendant rehearsals; visual arts workshops; various forms of instruction; work by individual artists; youth camps; meetings; and social events.

1.2 Historical perspective

The most recent formal attempt to plan for a new or revitalized facility arose from a proposal to build a new combined arts and conference centre as part of the Mariners Centre. That process involved a public meeting to solicit the opinions of people from across the arts, culture and

tourism sectors.¹ Participants broadly expressed the following expectations for the arts centre component:

- theatre with seating for about 350;
- intimacy, good sightlines, acoustics & flexibility in staging formats
- stage size adequate for dance, drama, musical theatre;
- good lighting, sound, communications, rigging and drapes;
- easy loading & technical access;
- proper production support spaces (set design, construction & storage)
- adequate parking nearby;
- non-dedicated multipurpose areas;
- programmed & operated for wide variety of non-theatrical uses;
- accessible for groups to rent.

Opinions at the public meeting regarding location were mixed:

- preserve visibility, accessibility, parking within walking distance;
- save money by building on the current facility (renovate, upgrade);
- remain at the current location, it is ideal;
- a waterfront downtown location would offer tourist access, an easy walk from the ferry terminal, and access to major hotels and local businesses.

The single issue of consensus was that the planning and development for revitalization or new construction should be preceded by and guided by a feasibility study. No further formal work was done to advance these findings until the current project was contracted. The Mariners Centre requirement for conference facilities has been addressed with expansion currently under construction. Our review of the findings of the 2003 process was therefore limited to those regarding the arts centre component.

1.3 Study purpose and methodology

The scope of the project was to provide:

- preliminary assessment of the current facility and site;
- review of identified facility upgrade requirements;
- needs assessment and facility space requirements;
- comparative analysis of comparable centres in Nova Scotia;
- order-of-magnitude comparative estimates on the costs of revitalization and reconstruction;
- preliminary assessment of alternate site locations identified by the client;
- analysis of the market and opportunities for growth;
- projected viability following revitalization or reconstruction;
- interim business (implementation) plan.

¹ Performing Arts and Convention Centre Interim Report, Sperry & Partners, January 2003

During this study, the consultants assessed the current facility and site, the current and future need for space, and the suitability of the centre to provide for identified needs. All relevant and available background documents and materials were reviewed, including details on programming activities and affiliate organizations, specifications on the current building and site, documents demonstrating their condition and need for repairs and improvements, and the operating budget and financial history of the Council and the centre.

Market information and program details were reviewed, including affiliate group usage, facility occupancy and performance figures, program/attendance patterns, the market area, and demographic trends. The consultants also investigated and analyzed information specific to Yarmouth and the market area through the Yarmouth County Tourist Association; Destination South West Nova; the three municipal governments; Nova Scotia Department of Finance; Nova Scotia Department of Education; Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage; and South West Shore Development Authority.

Established organizations within the local arts community were consulted to identify their need for space, the suitability of the centre to provide such space, and the role of the Council and the centre within the arts community. Visual Arts Nova Scotia and Theatre Nova Scotia also provided information relevant to arts and other centres in the province.

The potential market and operation of Th'YARC was reviewed by comparison with similar operations in Nova Scotia. Comparison information included facility capacities, operating budgets, attendance and usage patterns, clientele demographics, and market basins. Analysis of these findings was used to establish reasonable expectations and operational guidelines for the Yarmouth facility.

A preliminary architectural assessment was prepared to indicate level-of-effort estimates for renovation of the current facility and construction of a new facility. Preliminary estimates were prepared for the purpose of establishing guidelines for the affordability of each option.

Potential site areas other than the Parade Street property were identified as alternatives and a site selection process was conducted with the Council to evaluate the current location as well as other identified site areas for potential new construction.

From the needs assessment, facility and site review, market analysis, and facility recommendations, the viability of the centre was evaluated to project its financial sustainability – including a reasonable projection of expenses and revenues based on the operating model – and the primary factors that would influence its future.

Finally, an implementation plan was prepared to guide the Council in the steps that would be required to manage the process of revitalization or reconstruction.

2.0 Needs assessment

2.1 Community arts organizations

The Council supports the arts primarily through its own programs and those of its affiliate groups. Affiliates each contribute a yearly \$100.00 affiliation fee to the Council and, in return, are granted benefits at the centre including free use of space for unpaid events such as meetings, workshops, rehearsals, social events, etc. The affiliation relationship currently does not require these groups to share in the financial obligations of maintaining the centre, although three of the five participating affiliates do contribute financially through their use and support of the theatre, which is the only space in the centre that generates meaningful revenue.

Space at the centre is allocated for usage according to operating principles that have developed over time, written and unwritten understandings with arts organizations, and priorities guided by the obligation to generate sufficient revenues to sustain the centre financially.

In addition to personal interviews conducted with representatives of all five affiliated groups that use the centre, 14 established non-affiliated arts organizations were invited to participate in the needs assessment process. These were identified by the affiliated groups, Th'YARC staff, the Yarmouth Leisure Services Department, and the consultant's investigations. Seven of these organizations attended the meeting and responded to the written needs assessment survey.

The common denominator among all groups is their interest in the use and availability of the theatre space. No interest was expressed by non-affiliated groups that would indicate the need for arts spaces in the facility other than those associated with the theatre.

Fairies in the Attic Costume Society

This is a costume production and rental group operating within the centre. Its primary source of business is the provision of costumes to groups that stage productions in the theatre. Although costumes are also rented commercially, the Costume Society is a non-profit organization and provides theatrical costumes at a small fraction of their value. This supports the theatre and its ability to generate revenues by enabling performing groups to maintain their production values at minimum expense. The Costume Society also stages fashion shows in the theatre, and these generate revenues for the centre.

Assessment – the current space is cramped but manageable. Better lighting is required. The present storage area is inadequate. The laundry appliances need to be installed and accessible.

Friends of the Yarmouth Light

This organization does not use space at Th'YARC. Affiliation status is maintained only for reciprocal on-site promotion.

Kidzact Association and McCarron School of Dance

Kidzact teaches a variety of dance forms to children. Lessons are conducted at the YMCA, and Th'YARC theatre and arts studio are also used 8-10 hours per week. The Association presents major recitals at the centre, which draw family and friends and generate revenue for the centre. Kidzact donates all net profits each year to a children's charity chosen by its participating dancers. The manager of Kidzact also owns the McCarron School of Dance, which presents recitals through the year in the theatre. This also generates revenue for the centre.

Assessment – use of the theatre for performances works well. Use of the arts studio and theatre stage provides sufficient room for some instruction and practice. As the building gets busier, rehearsal space may not always be as conveniently available. Additional dance instruction could be moved to the centre if there were a room large enough with a slip-resistant floor, and the dance school would pay for use of such space.

Yarmouth Arts Society

As an organization of artists from a variety of visual arts disciplines, the Society uses the arts studio for meetings, workshops, and social gatherings. They also use the interior lobby as a gallery space. There is a standing agreement that the centre handles sales of art from the lobby displays, in return for 10% of proceeds – Society representatives reported that this contribution to centre revenues would typically amount to less than \$100.00 per year. The Society reported its major interest recently has been advocating the establishment of the western branch of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia in Yarmouth. Funding for this project is now in place and the gallery is planned to open in the spring of 2006. The Society reported that other gallery alternatives, such as exhibition space in the new education wing of the Yarmouth County Museum as well as the Waterfront Gallery, have diminished its need to display at Th'YARC. Multiple use of the lobby is considered incompatible with its suitability for exhibiting works of art. A separate and secure gallery within Th'YARC, including a counter to sell refreshments and art supplies, would be attractive although the Society cannot project cost recovery or revenue generation.

Assessment – use of the arts studio suits the need for workshop and meeting space although upgrading the lighting would be beneficial and installation of blackout curtains would enable artists to use this room for electronic presentations. Construction of a locking storage area under the windows in this room would allow artists to secure their work and make this a truly multi-purpose area. Use of the inner lobby for meetings and teas is adequate. Dedication of the walls of the inner lobby for art displays is a subject that should be renegotiated. A dedicated art gallery area is a possible future expansion option.

Yarmouth Craft Guild

The Guild is a loose affiliation of diverse artisans whose meetings to share their crafts are generally conducted in the homes and workshops of members. The Guild currently uses a very small storage space at the centre, occasional meeting space, and maintains a display cabinet in the inner lobby to showcase the work of its members. Representatives reported that the Guild maintains its affiliation status primarily to support the Council and the centre.

Assessment – use of meeting space where available currently serves the purpose. The storage closet is inadequate. The lobby display cabinet is suitable, as their main exhibitions take place elsewhere.

Yarmouth Drama Society

The Society normally stages one or two productions a year. These are split productions that generate revenues for the centre, keep the theatre active, and help to maintain a broad theatrical presence in the community. It was reported that productions are limited by the size of the theatre stage. A separate rehearsal area would be desirable although current use of the stage, arts studio and lobby for this purpose is manageable.

Assessment – as the theatre gets busier, finding adequate on-site rehearsal space is a growing challenge. Set construction backstage is a safety issue, and there is insufficient room for set storage. The Society would like to have a room large enough to accommodate off-stage rehearsals which, although it would not provide additional revenue, may facilitate more productions in the theatre.

Th'YARC

As the primary producer of major stage events, Th'YARC has concerns similar to those already mentioned. In addition, the centre staff identified the need for storage for miscellaneous items that collect in the green room, dressing rooms and other convenient but inappropriate places. The kitchen could be expanded to serve as a warm-up area for events where refreshments are brought in and require reheating.

The facility is staffed full-time by a paid General Manager, who also serves as Artistic Director, events co-ordinator, maintenance manager, and administrator for the centre as well as the Council. Other part-time and seasonal paid staff include lighting and sound technical support, and a student assistant when grant money is available. The Council reported that autonomous operation of the centre is an issue of significant importance.

Theatre South West

This group performs twice a year and often produces dinner theatre, so they need a permanent on-site catering kitchen. Currently they use the Knights of Columbus Hall and Golf Course, where they must construct their own stage and provide tables, chairs, setup and breakdown. They indicated that they would be interested in using Th'YARC theatre if the space were adequate and their needs were accommodated, that they would be willing to pay "fair rent", and that they might donate event proceeds.

440 Productions Association

Rehearsal and performance spaces vary from Legion Halls (with no stage area) to full stages with lighting and sound, including Th'YARC. Rehearsals up to 24 hours per month for five months per year are currently accommodated elsewhere in free spaces. The group would be interested in using the full stage or dedicated rehearsal space at Th'YARC up to five days per year at no cost.

Boathouse Productions

Productions vary from one act presentations to full plays, and are produced one or two times a year. Various spaces are used, including church halls, service club buildings and Th'YARC, and performances are adapted to the space. Current rehearsal spaces are free of charge, and performance space costs are negotiated as rentals, or revenues are split with the venue. The group would be willing to pay rental fees, and agrees that operating costs should be reflected in

these fees. They would be interested in using Th'YARC if their performance dates can be accommodated.

Musique Royale

Current venues include churches and historic sites, and are reported to be adequate and available at no cost. There is no interest in using Th'YARC if any costs were involved.

AHA Productions

This musical theatre group has rented theatre space at Th'YARC in the past and would predictably wish to do so in the future approximately once every two years. Separate rehearsal space, production office space, and booking availability would be desired assets.

Playarmouth

Under the umbrella of the Yarmouth Development Corporation, Playarmouth sponsors many local events including Canada Day, Seafest, Shark Scramble, Yarmouth Waterfront Festival, Yarmouth Cup Ocean Race and, new for 2006, a Lobster Festival and a Sou'Western International Bike Rally. They currently use the parking lot and wharf behind the Killam Brothers building on Water Street, free of charge, for concerts, dance groups, outdoor theatre and children's activities. All events are free to the public and open-air, which makes them susceptible to weather cancellation. Playarmouth does not have the funds to rent, nor does it currently charge any proceeds that it could donate. However, they did report an interest in theatre space on the waterfront, and a willingness to institute a small public admission fee to help pay for a modest rental charge.

2.2 Other performance venues

Th'YARC is the only dedicated theatre space in Yarmouth. The Mariners Centre is a double-pad arena, in which one rink can accommodate up to 2,500 people on standard arena seats plus folding seats that can be placed over the ice surface once insulated. In this capacity, the Mariners Centre serves as a rental venue for large shows three to four times a year. Promoters book the space for professional acts and assume all risks – Mariners Centre staff simply rent out and maintain the space. It is well suited for events where the 2,500 seat capacity can keep ticket costs under \$40.00. It is not well suited for intimate theatrical performances or those where in-house acoustics are important.

The nearest dedicated theatres are in Shelburne, Digby and at Université Sainte-Anne. For patrons living in Yarmouth, these are far enough away not to be considered local venues. Arts groups have reported shortcomings to these venues when compared even with Th'YARC in its current condition. The Rodd Grand Hotel offers dinner theatre during the summer season, and there is no cooperative relationship between the Hotel and Th'YARC. Some local high schools and the Nova Scotia Community College Burrige campus have gymnasias with stage areas.

The Tri-County Regional School Board has developed a 3-year \$3M master plan for Yarmouth High School, situated very close to Th'YARC:

- 2006 – mechanical & electrical upgrades, replace gym floor, washroom improvements;
- 2007 – classroom additions;
- 2008 – retrofit of gymnasium stage.

The school's master plan will not affect the gymnasium until 2008 and, in fact, this plan may be interrupted or delayed if priorities change: for example, there is rising interest in the construction of a new high school. Plans beyond the 2006 upgrades are considered flexible.

The 2008 planned retrofit would separate the existing stage from the rest of the gymnasium by a folding partition in order to create a drama classroom. The stage is currently used in the spring for graduation ceremonies, and as storage space the rest of the year. There are no plans to expand or enhance the stage itself, nor to add lighting or sound equipment. While community enhancement of school property is a possibility, and has worked well elsewhere, there have been no indications of this to date, and it would not likely come into play until at least 2007.

The plan for Yarmouth High School does not conflict or compete with plans for Th'YARC. The stage retrofit will not provide the kind of seating, acoustics, rigging, lighting or sound requirements of a dedicated theatre. It may, however, improve the school space to a level where community performance groups would want to use it for rehearsals.

2.3 Review of comparable centres

As part of the collection of information and business indicators to establish the feasibility of the centre, comparable centres in Nova Scotia were consulted. The list of candidates was compiled through suggestions from Th'YARC staff, investigation by the consultants, and collaboration with Theatre Nova Scotia and Visual Arts Nova Scotia:

- Astor Theatre, Liverpool
- Chester Playhouse, Chester
- Decoste Centre, Pictou
- Kings Theatre, Annapolis Royal
- Osprey Arts Centre, Shelburne
- Savoy Theatre, Glace Bay

Most centres accommodate use by other groups such as service clubs, charities, etc. They reported that these other users do not share in the fixed costs of facility operation. None of the centres provides dedicated space for non-theatre usage such as art rooms or galleries, although they do accept art displays on a scheduled exhibition basis.

The details of the comparable centres are included in Appendix II of this report. Table 1 illustrates the overall allocation of space at these centres.

Table 1
Facility features at comparable centres

Facility features	Astor	Chester	Decoste	Kings	Osprey	Savoy
Seating capacity	385	176	430	220	170	760
Operating season	Year-round	Mar.-Dec.	mid Feb.-Dec.	Year-round	Year-round	Year-round
Separate rehearsal area	No	No	No	No	No	No
Dressing rooms	1	2	2	2	1	6
Green room	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Designated set design area	No	Yes	No	No	Very small	No
Designated set const. area	No	Yes	No	No	Very small	No
Designated set storage area	No	No	Very small	Very small	Very small	Very small

2.4 Expressions of community support

The Town of Yarmouth represented by the Mayor, the CAO and the Director of Planning, expressed support for Th'YARC and the development of the facility. It was indicated that an upgraded or replaced centre would contribute to the local economy as part of a larger effort to promote Yarmouth as a tourist destination. Also, it was agreed that the facility development, location, programming and management were the decisions and responsibilities of the Council. The Town is reluctant to weigh heavily in these decisions, as it has no interest in ongoing management or financial responsibility in the centre.

The Municipality of Yarmouth, represented by the Warden and the CAO, indicated that the arts, and specifically Th'YARC, is an important element to the wellbeing of the community, and that municipal council would support Th'YARC as it moves forward. The centre is seen as a valuable amenity in a well-rounded community that helps to attract and retain people in the region. Several advantages were cited for remaining on the current property, including the local familiarity of the centre, exceptional acoustics, the historical and cultural value of a centre that represents the artistic heart of the community, its accessibility to patrons (including tourists and citizens of the tri-county area), and its contribution toward Yarmouth as a tourist destination.

The Municipality's Leisure Services Director reported that the department has little involvement in direct arts programming, and defined its role in this area as facilitating support and resources. Also it is focused on youth, with few resources to provide opportunities for adults. The department recognizes the need for activities suited to an aging population, and the position of Th'YARC as a longstanding cultural mainstay and major outlet for adults in the area. The Director reported that the centre could also be used for municipal ceremonies, and was particularly well suited for combining these with entertainment.

The Warden of the Municipality of Argyle expressed support for Th'YARC as a regional amenity of value to all citizens in the outlying rural area. The Municipality would contribute toward the development of the centre, as it has to other amenities in the town, so that residents will continue to enjoy an enhanced quality of life.

Community inputs collected in 2003 indicated broad support for a centre in Yarmouth. Opinions expressed at the public meeting showed recurring priorities that were considered mandatory or important:

- inclusive planning process that reflects the community's needs;
- a multi-purpose and multi-disciplinary facility; and
- involvement of the arts community in centre management.

The Nova Scotia Department of Education recognizes the value of arts and its long-term public value and has, over the last four years, added 11 new arts courses as it continues to increase its emphasis on arts as compulsory units in the public school curriculum. These school courses include arts, drama and music. The department's arts consultant reported the importance of partnerships between schools and local facilities such as galleries, higher-level art schools, and centres such as Th'YARC, where students can participate in and see productions and displays. Recent research has established, for example, a causal link between participation in the arts and academic achievement shown by improved math scores. Another recognized advantage for young people aged 12 to 22 is that the arts offer opportunities at this impressionable age to direct energies creatively and positively.

Schools would like their own performance spaces but there is currently no government funding support for the viability of such dedicated spaces. Access to proper presentation facilities would help educators with opportunities to enrich arts programs. The department provides curriculum documents to teachers to outline programs and suggest professional development opportunities: these documents include lists of local resources such as theatres and arts centres. The Tri-County Regional Board of Education sees Th'YARC as a valuable community asset that expands school resources with access to a dedicated performance space.

ACOA recognizes the history and community involvement behind Th'YARC, and its contribution to cultural life in the area. The Agency would like to see this artistic value continue. ACOA favors organizations that are aligned and integrated, and those that can demonstrate local support and demand.

The South West Shore Development Authority, whose mandate is to promote conditions for economic growth, reported that Th'YARC represents an important cultural component in the fabric of the community, helps support a growing region, and has the support of the three municipal councils. Indicators that Th'YARC should demonstrate in order to justify government funding include the local appetite for and willingness to support the project, a unified plan for the development and operation of the centre, and a solid proposal put to funding partners in the very near future before two other upcoming cultural projects are given priority. For projects that serve the economy of the region and the interests of municipal units, the Authority would assist in co-ordinating applications for government funding, accessing local private funding, and finding financial resources to conduct a fundraising capacity study. Its CEO expressed confidence in the ability to raise the money at government levels once local support is committed.

2.5 Discussion

Storage space in the costume attic is inadequate even for current needs. Set construction and storage is an issue not only of tight quarters but also of inappropriate access.

Comparable facilities reported that they are managing with spaces that are, for the most part, similar to or less than those currently available at Th'YARC. This would not preclude adding such spaces as part of an expansion program, or including extra space in a newly constructed facility. Our review demonstrates, however, that while such spaces may be desirable, there are no reliable indications that their addition would result in concomitant increases in operating revenues.

Ultimately, space decisions such as these will be made within the context of the mandate of the Council and the centre, and as part of a focused facility planning process. If extra space is desired, it would be reasonable to consider whether the addition is necessary to fulfill the organization's mandate, and whether the added capital and operating costs are affordable.

The square footage of the current building provides manageable space for all identified programming needs. Allowance in the facility section of this report is made for a small additional space to accommodate costume storage and set preparation that is not practical within the shell of the existing structure. The project at hand used the benchmark of current space with these minor necessary additions for the purpose of comparing the cost and feasibility of revitalization with similar square footage of new construction.

- Recommendation 1:** Total space within the current shell is considered nominally adequate to accommodate the programming needs of Th'YARC and the reasonable requirements of other arts organizations.
- Recommendation 2:** A modest addition should be incorporated into the facility development plan for costume storage and set preparation.
- Recommendation 3:** As development plans evolve, the Council should monitor the needs of non-theatre-related arts organizations and adjust its space requirements on this basis as appropriate.
- Recommendation 4:** Scheduling and allocation of space should be guided by a comprehensive policy that would specify not only rates but also priorities and booking preferences.

Recommendation 5: If new construction is chosen, facility design plans should consider redevelopment of the space now occupied by the arts studio. A modest increase in square footage and careful choice of floor covering could make this space suitable for dance classes and as extra rehearsal space. The McCarron School alone could bring approximately \$4,000.00 in additional annual revenues. Other uses may be identified. As a separate rehearsal space, this could facilitate a denser schedule of revenue-generating performances in the theatre.

3.0 Site evaluation

While many diverging opinions emerged regarding location, and five general site areas were suggested, the site evaluation criteria were chosen based on strong indicators of value and viability to the centre. The community informants consulted in this project revealed no compelling business-case arguments in favor of any site in particular, nor of the objective need to relocate from the current Parade Street property.

The public meeting in 2003 found no definitive advantages to a change of site. In fact, many expressions of preference pointed to remaining on the current site as long as it suits revitalization or reconstruction, and pending an environmental assessment.

3.1 Methodology

In order to provide a complete and objective review, a site evaluation process was conducted in four phases.

First, alternatives were identified in five general location areas:

- Parade Street – the current site, including the undeveloped space on the north side;
- the Mariners Centre – an extension to the arena facility;
- somewhere on the waterfront, preferably near the ferry terminal;
- in the south end, as part of the development effort within this part of town;
- downtown, on or very near Main Street, in the midst of shops and restaurants.

Second, a preliminary screening process established that alternate sites would be potentially acceptable only if they meet the following imperatives:

- availability;
- adequate size of property for building and minimum parking requirements;
- on-site municipal services (water, power, etc.);
- no zoning or development restrictions;
- environment & surroundings are safe (no hazards) and inoffensive (noise, odors, etc.);
- allows for autonomous operation of the centre.

Third, a series of evaluation criteria was developed that was felt to represent the “most desirable” attributes of any potential site:

- accessibility – easy to find and get to, especially tourists, visitors, residents of outlying areas, and groups that may wish to come to Yarmouth by bus;
- pedestrian traffic – frequency of walk-in visitors (which helps to keep the centre prevalent in the community) and absence of pedestrian barriers such as railways and major highways;
- visibility – a strong presence and top-of-mind community image that would encourage people to recognize the centre and think of it when contemplating activities;

- vehicular traffic – at least one boundary on a major artery to provide direct access, surrounding roadways are not congested, and provide good traffic flow especially when a full theatre exits within a short time period;
- physical surroundings – adjacent to “appropriate” properties (eg. residential and low-traffic commercial);
- aesthetic surroundings – an environment conducive to the arts experience, absence of ambient noise etc.;
- benefit to local economy – compatible location could encourage visitors to do other shopping;
- close to schools or other potential users;
- land availability and cost – somewhat speculative;
- ample parking on-site or nearby;
- weather conditions – particular differences according to season that may discourage visitors;
- complementary services – neighboring services such as restaurants and other cultural facilities that add value to the performance evening experience.

These criteria were discussed to ensure they were discrete and deserved separate mention in the list of attributes. They were then weighted individually by the Council as very important (3), fairly important (2), not very important (1), or not at all important (0) in the choice of a location. Weight values assigned by individual Council members were averaged.

Fourth, each location area was then ranked on the degree to which it would accommodate each of these desirable criteria. Rank values were assigned as follows: high (3), medium (2), low (1) and not at all (0). Rank scores assigned by individual Council members were averaged.

Overall scores were then calculated by multiplying the averaged weights and rank values for each site area. The site with the highest overall score was identified as the preferred site.

3.2 Site identification

A preliminary assessment of five site areas was prepared to summarize their advantages and disadvantages as follows.

Downtown Yarmouth – This area is centred on the downtown core surrounding Main Street, and bounded by Grand Street on the north, Albert Street on the south, Main Street on the west, and William and Willow Streets on the east. The major advantage to this area is the reciprocal relationship the centre would have with the business community. It would be highly visible, with more potential for walk-in pedestrian traffic than any other proposed location. Its proximity to other established heritage properties offers the potential for Th'YARC to be part of a downtown cultural “artscape”. This location would also be close enough to schools that students could walk to the centre. While accessible, this area has limited capacity to handle the vehicular traffic of a full theatre at exit time. The likelihood of finding an affordable property with ample on-site parking was thought to be low. Seasonal weather conditions downtown can be a detriment for older patrons.

Mariners Centre – The site of the Mariners Centre on Starrs Road is a large property owned jointly by the Town of Yarmouth and the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth. It is a twin-pad arena complex with ancillary spaces to accommodate meetings, trade shows, conferences, etc. Relocation of ThYARC to this site, as part of a proposed arts/convention centre expansion, was a major topic of the 2003 public meeting. This site is very accessible by vehicle, particularly by bus for out-of-town visiting groups, and there would be plenty of room for parking. Located on a major thoroughfare, it is convenient to both highways, and to traffic using Starrs Road as a main access to the town. Traffic flow would be an advantage in the evenings, and a disadvantage during the daytime. The Mariners Centre is very visible, well-known, and its roadside marquee helps to maintain a top-of-mind community presence. At the same time, an arts centre could be dwarfed by the size and operation of such a sports centre. The site is distant from the downtown and residential areas of Yarmouth, and is not accessible by foot, so it would see no walk-in pedestrian traffic. It is also inaccessible by foot to school students.

Parade Street (current location) – The current centre is located on Parade Street, a property of approximately 1½ - 2 acres owned by the Council. It is a known and familiar community landmark to residents of Yarmouth and the surrounding municipalities. The site has heritage value since it represents a 26-year history of dedication and support. Fronting on Parade Street, a major non-commercial artery providing good traffic flow, it is easily accessible to vehicular traffic without being on a congested thoroughfare. It is surrounded largely by residential properties, and is within a three minute walk of three schools, all of which use the centre. There is no interference through noise or land usage from its physical surroundings. Although it has limited pedestrian traffic and no complementary services nearby, the site offers ample space for parking and potential expansion.

South end – This area is defined as properties south of Albert St., between William Street and Main Street. It currently offers few advantages, although it is the focus of development attention. Visibility would be poor, with limited accessibility and no pedestrian walk-in traffic. Vehicular traffic in this area could be problematic. Its physical surroundings are largely industrial and not conducive to an arts centre. Affordability of land is unknown, but it is expected that sufficient land for a centre and ample parking would be expensive.

Waterfront – The waterfront area, often mentioned as a desirable future location, was considered to include all areas west of Main Street. The intent, however, was that the property would be as close as possible to the water and yet not near any industrial properties. The most attractive waterfront option would be located close to the ferry terminal. The primary advantages of such a property would be the surrounding aesthetic and potential visibility to arriving tourists and, as such, could be a good fit with the waterfront development strategy. It would be accessible, although it would be further for out-of-town visitors, and traffic problems would be expected during ferry times and for vehicles turning north onto Main Street. A site in this area would be equally close to schools as the Parade Street property, and it would be more accessible to the Boys and Girls Club and Parents Place. Disadvantages would include the ambient noise and other potentially distracting features of a commercial waterfront. Pedestrian traffic would be low, and seasonal weather conditions would be a detriment.

3.3 Site recommendation

Resulting from an objective process of weighted criteria, the five potential site areas ranked as follows, from highest to lowest:

- Parade Street;
- downtown;
- Mariners Centre;
- waterfront;
- south end.

The Parade Street location was preferred by a rather wide margin. Mariners Centre and waterfront locations scored so closely, they should be considered tied for third place.

The Parade Street location was ranked high in accessibility, vehicular traffic, proximity to schools and other users, space for ample parking, and the cost and availability of land. These were some of the highest-weighted variables.

The downtown area preferences included the incidence of pedestrian traffic, visibility, potential contribution to the local economy, and complementary neighboring services.

The Mariners Centre ranked high in accessibility and visibility, space for ample parking, vehicular traffic, and availability of land.

The waterfront option was seen to be good for visibility, its aesthetic surroundings, contribution to the local economy, and complementary neighboring services.

The south end was thought to have few benefits, which might include accessibility to vehicular traffic, and particular weather characteristics.

Recommendation 6: The current Parade Street property is the preferred site, pending the completion of a legal survey and environmental assessment. If the property is found to be clean or affordably cleanable, and not subject to survey restrictions, this should be the site of the new or revitalized centre.

Recommendation 7: If the Parade Street property is found not to be suitable, new construction on another site will be indicated. The downtown area is preferred, and appropriate downtown locations should be identified and short listed. The site evaluation process should be revisited to select a preferred specific downtown location. Th'YARC should then negotiate with the owner on the cost and availability of the property. A plan would also be required for the disposition of the Parade Street property. These factors should then be incorporated into the capital development budget and schedule.

4.0 Facility

4.1 Initial review and scope of work

The architectural review was conducted to provide a level-of-effort overview of the relative costs of revitalization and new construction. Accordingly, it was based on visual inspections and no removal or testing of materials was performed as a part of the work. Background information used for the preparation of the report included the following:

- information supplied verbally and in writing by the client;
- various drawings (incomplete) which appear to have been prepared at the time of construction with subsequent modifications;
- copies of energy consumption records and financial statements, generally including information for 2005, 2004, and 2003;
- copies of deeds for two parcels of land: one for the purchase of the original property on Parade Street dated November 1974 and a second for the purchase of the north lot between the back of Th'YARC property and the town property. No survey has been completed.

Contact was made to review municipal planning requirements. A preliminary inventory of the existing building was compared with the 1995 National Building Code. Building related issues were discussed throughout this project with representatives of the Th'YARC to expose concerns related to operations, space, and identified problems. Two walk-through inspections were conducted, limited to those areas normally visible. A digitized floor plan was created to indicate "as-found" building layout. Building sections were based on what appeared to be original design drawings. An approximate site plan was prepared based on surveys, assessment data, and other information.

4.2 Preliminary wishlist

The following list of concerns and desirable upgrades was provided by Th'YARC during our facility review.

Top priorities:

- repairs to the roof and windows to reduce leakage;
- upgrades or additions to climate controls for comfort and usability year-round; and
- replacement of theatre seating.

Theatre:

- new computerized lighting and sound equipment;
- removal of columns;
- new stage curtains.

Multi-use:

- expanded parking facilities;
- modernized bar facilities;
- expanded ladies' bathroom.

Possible expansion:

- dance studio;
- rehearsal stage;
- set storage;
- kitchen facilities for catering and dinner theatre;
- art gallery.

Functional use of space was identified in the needs assessment and in ongoing conversations with Th'YARC. In matters of possible expansion, the issue of balance between desirability and affordability is dealt with in Section 2. On this basis the potential for any addition to the existing space was considered only from the perspective of providing the most economical solution to existing operational and space difficulties.

4.3 Assessment of existing property

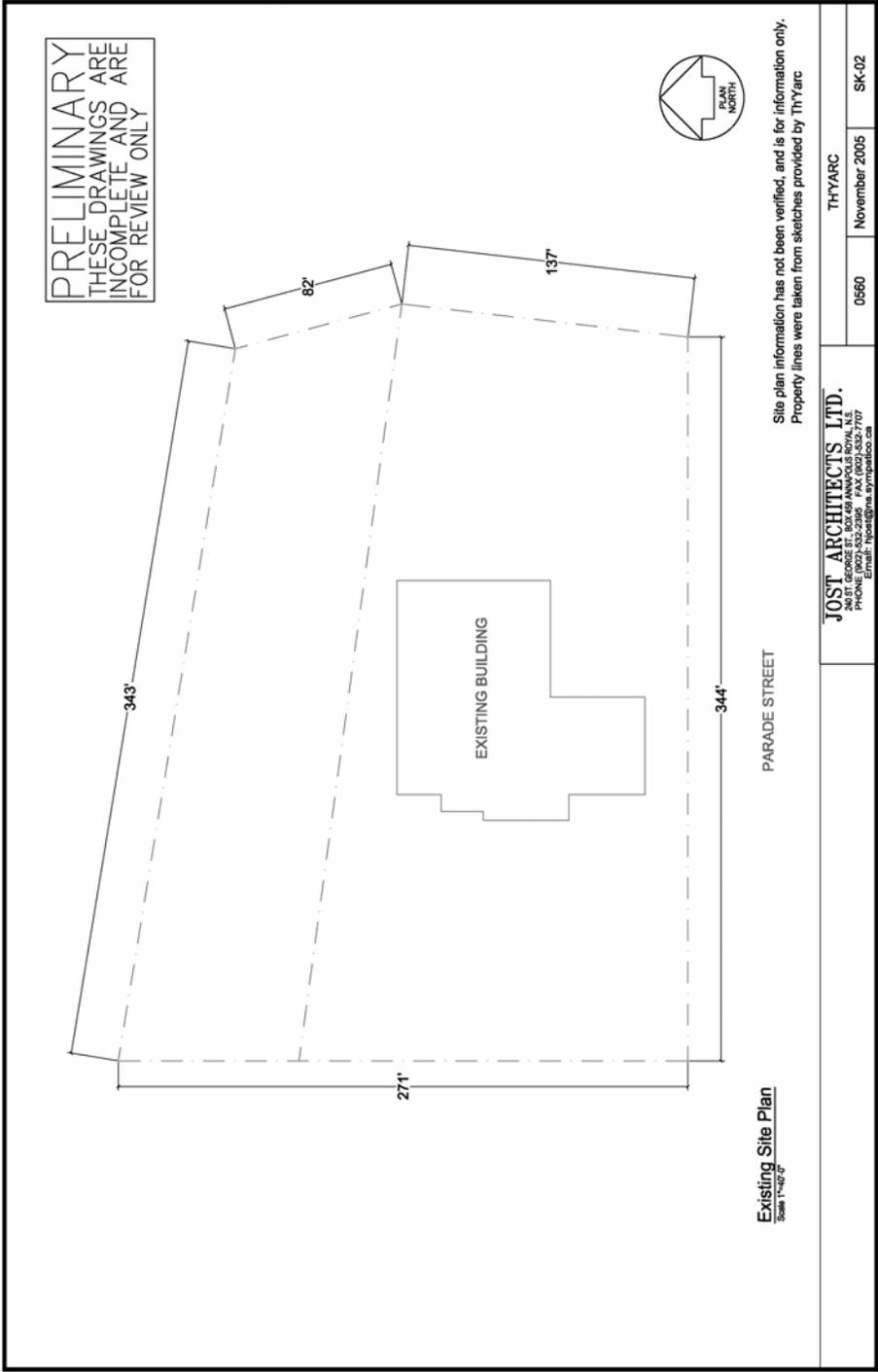
The current centre is located on a piece of property formerly used as an automotive business. It is uncertain whether the old subterranean storage tank has been removed. It is also uncertain whether other remnants may lie under the surface of the north portion of the property, which once served as a landfill site. While the boundaries of the property are understood informally, current survey information is incomplete. All these factors point to the need for a legal survey and an environmental assessment to be performed on this property before any serious plans can be made for building and site improvements.

The existing centre is a wood framed building. Much of the work was completed by volunteers and is non-professional in standard although to date we have identified no failures or signs of failure. The building has been in continuous use for 26 years with no major renovation since its original construction. It remains in usable condition and continues to operate and serve the needs of its occupants, although modifications would be warranted for both program and operation. Our brief tours of the building revealed no major surface signs for concern.

There have been recurrent problems with leakage associated with the various roof pitches and protrusions. During the preparation of this report, and independent of this project, a new two-ply modified bitumen roofing system was installed with some modifications made to windows and other openings to reduce water infiltration and replace deteriorated material.

The building lies at grade and, in some areas, below grade. The surrounding property, including the undeveloped north portion and the parking areas, generally slope toward the building. This has caused water infiltration over time and interception ditches have been located to assist with drainage. Discussions with the Town of Yarmouth have not concluded the availability of storm sewers on Parade Street.

Illustration 2
Approximate site plan



There are some visible signs of water damage from recurrent leaks (eg. the lobby and the arts studio). No attempt was made to ascertain the extent of damage or the presence of mold as part of this report. The surface damage visible should be relatively easy to repair as a part of a major upgrading, and the potential of mold could be addressed at the time when walls would be opened up and the extent of damage can be better determined.

Issues of climate control limit the theatre operation during winter months and allow heat build up during summer operations. The building is electrically heated using baseboard resistant heaters. This choice of heating system, although flexible, has a high operating cost and the building is not effectively insulated in all areas or fully weather tight. Force flow fan ventilation circulates air in the theatre and, while we did not test or assess the system, it is reported by operating staff to be of limited effect.

Present theatre seating is a combination of old reclaimed seats that are too narrow, and wooden bench seats that are too firm. Overall, seating is uncomfortable and subject to many complaints. The theatre curtains are old and need replacement. The lighting and sound system is inadequate for the scope of presentations, and much of this equipment is old and becoming increasingly less functional. It would be desirable, though not necessary, to remove the posts inside the theatre, as these restrict viewing from certain seats.

Acoustics in the theatre are said to be among the best in the country. Users find the fly tower structurally excellent although hemp-and-sandbag rigging is difficult to operate and not as safe as newer counterweight equipment. The facility has a warm 'cozy' personality that patrons appreciate, and presents a family atmosphere that encourages participation.

Set construction and storage in the back-stage space causes problems when performers come into contact with construction materials. Storage in the costume design area is cramped and inadequate. The overall lack of storage space also infringes on the green room and dressing rooms.

The location of the green room requires that, to get to the stage, performers must go either through the lobby or outdoors. This is a poor location. The green room also serves as meeting space when required, and appears to collect items for which there is no specific storage area.

Other internal space issues that were expressed include insufficient public washroom facilities, the desire for a larger kitchen, functional laundry appliances, additional room for off-stage rehearsals and dance, and an art gallery or showcase area.

4.4 Specific facility issues

Roof and windows

As mentioned, Th'YARC has independently addressed the immediacy of this problem with the installation of new roofing materials and modifications to the windows in question.

Climate control

An efficient system would include controls to provide for varied use of spaces both by numbers of occupants and by timing. Such a control system would shut down systems in unused areas, and precondition spaces as required prior to occupancy. Th'YARC would need to review this with a qualified consultant to determine the most effective way to satisfy these requirements. Our cost estimates provide for a new system.

Seating

New seating throughout the theatre is included in the estimates.

Lighting, sound and rigging

The lighting and sound recommendations reported in III are comprehensive. Rigging was identified as an issue that remains somewhat unresolved. An engineering inspection of the fly tower structures that support the rigging would be an important preliminary step to upgrading to a counterweight system. The lighting and sound budget could be phased with system components, and some of this money diverted to upgrades to rigging as they are found to be appropriate.

Removal of theatre columns

It appears from our site investigations and from the original drawings that columns now in the seating area are located at the former exterior wall of the car dealership. The most effective solution would be removal and replacement of the entire roof structure. This expense would be difficult to justify as part of a revitalization project, and no specific allowance has been budgeted.

New stage curtains

These have been included in the estimates.

Drainage, parking and backstage access

Site drainage, parking expansion and backstage access were considered together. When the property is resurfaced to slope away from the building, parking can be affordably expanded and the backstage access area can be paved. The existing lot accommodates approximately 60 cars which exceeds current zoning requirements. While the property line is not defined by legal survey, there appears to be space for significant expansion of parking. Estimates include costs for re-grading and resurfacing, expanded parking, and paved access to the stage service area.

Modernized bar facilities

Our estimates provide for a major renovation of all current functional spaces. This would include modernizing the bar facility.

Washrooms

A review of the national building code suggests that Th'YARC is deficient in the number of washrooms, and further that these washrooms do not meet current standards for barrier-free access. Our estimates include provision to replace existing washrooms with new facilities that are appropriate both in number and in standard.

Expansion

Expansion has been included in the revitalization estimate only for costume storage and for set preparation. This would be accomplished by an addition or stand alone expansion to the existing structure. For comparison purposes, similar square footage for these areas is also included in the estimate for new construction.

Building code

Our discussions with Th'YARC indicate there are no outstanding issues from "authorities having jurisdiction" such as the Office of the Fire Marshal, Building Inspector, or insurance inspectors. A major renovation may require existing facilities to be brought up to current standard. On this basis we reviewed the 1995 National Building Code for general compliance. The prime issues identified in the preliminary review were as follows:

- number of washrooms
- barrier-free access to all public spaces within the building;
- the requirement for sprinklers throughout the building;
- a number of fire separations and ratings which may not currently exist or may be deficient.

Renovation or new construction should address these issues as part of the normal building development. The general application of standards on an existing building is somewhat less clear in that this may be a balance of due diligence, regulatory requirements, and good sense. A major renovation program would generally eliminate any "grandfather" status for existing noncompliance. Under both the 1995 National Building Code and the 2005 Building Code, compliance could be achieved by negotiation and alternative. The new 2005 code however removes many of the prescriptive requirements of previous codes.

Recommendation 8: A legal survey and environmental assessment should be performed on the Parade Street property.

Recommendation 9: If the revitalization option is chosen, an engineering inspection of the fly tower should be performed to determine the structure's load-bearing capabilities and to recommend an appropriate upgrade to the rigging system.

Recommendation 10: Removal of the columns in the theatre seating area should be included in any plans for new construction. Within a revitalization plan, they could be treated as a separate option subject to affordability.

Recommendation 11: A revitalization plan should address building code issues and the application of standards. Development decisions need to be made that incorporate regulations, due diligence and common sense.

4.5 Comparison of revitalization and reconstruction

During interviews with key informants, many opinions were expressed about the direction the centre should take. Though most were not supported by compelling evidence, all opinions were captured and taken into account in the architectural assessment and site review. For example, the opinion that the current building is tired and has outlived its usefulness was considered during inspection of the centre, but no evidence was found that the existing building could not be renovated and revitalized to look fresh and provide a useful life of service.

The advantages and disadvantages for both revitalization and new construction were considered by the Council and are listed as follows, in no particular order:

Revitalize

- keep the superior acoustics and fly tower;
- cheaper than new construction;
- preserve historical value, as a monument to the artistic community that built it;
- hidden mold, if discovered, can be addressed within revitalization budget;
- desired fit and finish unspecified;
- degree of revitalization may trigger need for code conformance & additional costs;
- quaint, intimate, cozy environment;
- familiarity to patrons, and to their habits of attendance.

Rebuild

- could be redesigned with spaces located where desired, eliminating traffic flow issues;
- modern fit and finish, modern conveniences;
- possible to increase spaces marginally – eg larger stage, larger bar;
- possible to rebuild with no disruption at the current building during construction;
- entire building would conform to current code with no unforeseen expenses;
- could be designed for future expansion;
- adding more space during reconstruction would cost less than expansion;
- climate controls & ventilation system built in, not cobbled on;
- fresh start to ownership and space allocation issues;
- all spaces could be designed on one floor.

In considering the best development direction for the building, the Council should also consider whether a new facility may do more to capture the imagination and inspiration of the local community. Some informants indicated that new construction would be a stronger signal that the centre is moving forward, indicating vision and progress. This will be a consideration during the assessment phase of capital development.

Notwithstanding the very considerable heritage and legacy issues connected with the current building, the Council determined that, if proper capital funding can be acquired, the preference would be for new construction. Of particular concern with respect to funding is that certain features such as theatre acoustics might be compromised away in favor of economy. It was considered extremely important that these fundamentals would be assured in the design of a new building.

Recommendation 12: A determination should be made to clarify the level of finish expected for the interior and exterior of the centre. While some assumptions were made during this project, this should be specified as a basis for proceeding with further assessment of design and construction costs.

Recommendation 13: If the revitalization option is elected, the Council may choose to address the presence and potential consequences of mold and water damage during the process of upgrading, but should consider performing a detailed facility assessment earlier.

4.6 Comparison of probable costs

All estimates of cost are preliminary assessments of the level-of-effort for revitalization and new construction of space as defined earlier. Estimates are described in 2005 dollars, and are based on a number of assumptions and limitations described within this report. When final space and funding decisions are made, a detailed facility concept can be developed with specific costs.

Level-of-effort estimates have attempted to compare costs in relatively equal terms. Total areas for renovated space and total new space are considered equal. It is our belief that many of the current space usage difficulties could be resolved within the shell of the existing building to make the centre more functional. New construction of similar area would eliminate usage conflicts by designing spaces on the basis of priorities rather than reallocating space on the basis of what is practical to alter.

Revitalization

In broad terms, the cost to revitalize the current property would be in the range of \$2,500,000.00 including the upgrades and renovations described above, as well as HST.

Refurbishment and issues of concern have been addressed as described in Section 4.4. Costs would also include the reallocation of spaces to improve functionality. Allowances are provided for building code issues, new washrooms, and general refurbishment of internal and external surfaces.

A line item is included for environmental clean-up, for the purpose of capturing the requirement in the financial summary. This cost cannot be realistically predicted until the findings of an assessment are known. Other site improvement costs would include drainage, resurfacing and parking expansion.

While our inspection was not extensive, we have found no structural problems or other evident reasons why the building could not be revitalized and, with proper ongoing maintenance, provide a long life of service. A detailed physical assessment should support the general preliminary findings of this report, although it may find unseen difficulties which could upset the practicality of renovation.

New construction

Our estimate for new construction would be in the range of \$5,500,000.00 inclusive of HST, and is based on using the Parade Street property.

The estimate includes demolition of the existing building, which would be required for new construction on any site. We believe the overall scope of construction at an alternate site would be in the same cost range, although challenges and unforeseen costs may arise that cannot be predicted until a specific site is identified.

A line item is included for environmental clean-up, for the purpose of capturing the requirement in the financial summary. This cost cannot be realistically predicted until the findings of an assessment are known. Site development estimates include improvements to the Parade Street property. If an alternate site were chosen some site work would be involved, although the scope of work cannot be predicted until a specific site is identified.

Impact on operations

Our initial assessment indicates that it would be possible to construct a new building of similar size on the north part of the existing property. This could be done without disruption to operations at the current centre.

Renovation of the existing building could be phased to schedule theatre renovations during the winter shut-down. This would mean that the theatre schedule would not need to change for that calendar year and would be functional year-round thereafter. Such phasing may somewhat complicate construction and costing.

4.7 Intermediate issues

It is assumed that Th'YARC will continue to perform ongoing maintenance to the existing facility until revitalization or new construction is completed. This would include a regular monitoring of surface drainage and remedial action as required. The current ventilation system could be assessed in greater detail, and adjustments may be possible to make the interior environment more comfortable. Weather seals could be improved throughout the building, including exterior doors and the open vent in the fly tower. The electrical service room does not currently meet requirements (for example, no fire separation is provided), although Th'YARC has not indicated any outstanding issues with authorities in jurisdiction.

5.0 Market assessment

5.1 Local & outlying community

The current populations of the Town of Yarmouth, the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth and the Municipality of Argyle are 7,630, 10,480 and 8,685 respectively.² The centre serves a total population of 26,795 locally, and 62,615 in the tri-county area. Key informants from the three local municipal units indicated that the centre and its productions are well known and familiar to the public. They reported that citizens of the outlying areas attend presentations at the centre, and are active participants in productions at Th'YARC. No mention was made by key informants of any barriers to participation such as distance, season, production schedule, ticket prices, etc. – in fact they all regarded the centre as an important amenity that is actively enjoyed by residents of the local and outlying community.

5.2 Relevant socio-demographics

Characteristics of a 'typical' arts consumer are associated with age, gender, education and household income. Notwithstanding the limitations of such generalized characterization, there is some value in understanding how closely the community aligns with the typical profile.

Consistent with national trends, women in Atlantic Canada (28.7%) attend performing arts events in higher proportions than men (24.9%). Attendance rates increase steadily as household income increases, although attendance in Atlantic Canada is below the national average in every income range. Generally, fewer Atlantic residents with children at home attend performances than those without. Performing arts attendance rates in Atlantic Canada decrease with age, dropping most significantly between those in the age category under 30 years and those in the category 30-44 years. Attendance also tends to increase with higher levels of education. Other statistics indicate that those who attend performing arts are three times as likely to participate in other arts and cultural activities, one-and-a-half times as likely to volunteer in their communities, and nearly twice as likely to be active participants in sports.³

It should be pointed out that these attendance figures represent a broad population base and do not account for variances in region, venue and performance programs. For example, a local centre that caters to family participation, as Th'YARC does, would be likely to show greater than average participation among all socio-demographic categories.

² Canada/Nova Scotia Business Service Centre, December 2005

³ Performing Arts Attendance in Canada and the Provinces, January 2003, Canada Council for the Arts, Heritage Canada, and Hill Strategies Research Inc.

Statistics for Yarmouth and the tri-county area show that the local population is evenly split by gender, and matches the provincial profile according to household makeup. Local residents tend to be somewhat older than the provincial average, with fewer numbers in the 25-44 age category, and slightly greater numbers in the age range 55 to 84 years. Digby County demonstrates a somewhat older population.

Overall, the household incomes of local residents are only slightly lower than the provincial average, with greater numbers in the categories under \$19,000 and fewer in the higher income ranges. Within the Town, average income is more than \$11,000.00 below the provincial norm. The other demographic regions within the centre's market basin show incomes more closely aligned with the provincial average.

Residents of the tri-county region tend to have less education than Nova Scotians in general. Several percentage points separate the region from the provincial averages for those with high school and university training.

Table 2
2005 projections based on 2001 census

		Nova Scotia	Town of Yarmouth	Municipality of Yarmouth	Municipality of Argyle	Yarmouth County	Shelburne County	Digby County
Population	total	908,005	7,630	10,480	8,685	26,840	16,220	19,555
	households	360,020	3,264	4,050	3,315	10,635	6,515	8,075
	per household	2.5	2.3	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.4
Gender	male	48%	45%	49%	50%	48%	50%	49%
	female	52%	55%	51%	50%	52%	50%	51%
Age	0-4	5%	6%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
	5-19	20%	20%	20%	19%	20%	20%	17%
	20-24	6%	7%	5%	6%	5%	5%	5%
	25-34	13%	12%	12%	12%	12%	13%	12%
	35-44	17%	15%	16%	16%	16%	17%	16%
	45-54	15%	13%	16%	16%	15%	15%	15%
	55-64	10%	9%	11%	10%	10%	10%	12%
	65-74	7%	9%	7%	7%	8%	8%	9%
	55-84	5%	7%	5%	7%	6%	5%	7%
	85 & over	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
	dominant range	5-19	5-19	5-19	5-19	5-19	5-19	5-19
	mean age	38.0	39.5	38.7	39.5	39.1	38.7	41.4
	median age	38.7	38.9	39.7	40.1	39.5	39.4	42.3
Household Income	under \$10,000	8%	12%	6%	6%	8%	7%	8%
	\$10,000-19,000	16%	28%	17%	15%	20%	28%	19%
	\$20,000-29,000	14%	18%	14%	14%	15%	15%	19%
	\$30,000-39,000	13%	11%	15%	12%	13%	13%	16%
	\$40,000-49,000	12%	7%	13%	13%	11%	13%	13%
	\$50,000-59,000	10%	7%	10%	11%	9%	9%	8%
	\$60,000-69,000	8%	5%	8%	8%	7%	8%	5%
	\$70,000-79,000	6%	4%	6%	6%	5%	4%	4%
	\$80,000-89,000	4%	2%	4%	5%	4%	3%	3%
	\$90,000-99,000	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	1%
	\$100,000 & over	8%	5%	6%	7%	6%	6%	3%
	dominant range	\$10-20k	\$10-20k	\$10-20k	\$10-20k	\$10-20k	\$10-20k	\$10-20k
	mean income	\$48,457	\$37,350	\$45,278	\$48,110	\$43,656	\$45,002	\$37,980
median income	\$39,935	\$25,698	\$38,833	\$42,765	\$35,818	\$37,638	\$32,643	
Education	no high school	9%	19%	13%	21%	17%	18%	19%
	some high school	22%	25%	25%	22%	24%	29%	28%
	high school diploma	10%	8%	8%	7%	8%	14%	10%
	trade certificate	15%	12%	18%	19%	17%	13%	16%
	other non-university	20%	21%	22%	21%	21%	19%	14%
	some university	8%	6%	5%	4%	5%	4%	5%
	bachelor's or higher	15%	10%	9%	5%	8%	5%	8%

Source: Canada/Nova Scotia Business Service Centre, December 2005

According to the findings of the Culture Statistics Program, households spend approximately 2% of their annual budgets on culture activities and events.⁴ Applying this 2% to the average household income and number of households in the Yarmouth area, one could conclude that the culture market in the Town of Yarmouth alone represents \$2.4 million per year. For the entire tri-county area, the total would be \$21.3 million per year.

⁴ Profile of Culture Activities in Nova Scotia, Statistics Canada Culture Statistics Program, December 2003

Table 3
Household expenditures on culture, Canada

Personal taxes	21%
Shelter	20%
Transportation	12%
Food	11%
Unaccounted misc.	23%
Household operation	7%
Clothing	4%
Culture events & activities	2%

The Profile also reports that municipalities in Nova Scotia have increased their contributions to culture activities by 41% between 1992 and 2002, demonstrating significantly stronger increases in spending compared to federal and provincial levels of government.⁵

Recommendation 14: The local sense of familiarity with the centre, and its recent programming success, should be leveraged to remain a vibrant and valuable resource in Yarmouth and the Tri-County area.

Recommendation 15: Events should continue to be produced and scheduled based on the interests of the local community as the primary means of ongoing support.

Recommendation 16: Relationships and program opportunities should be developed to draw more participation from residents in outlying regions where disposable income is higher and where the Acadian, Black and Mi'kmaq cultures are strong.

Recommendation 17: The theatre schedule should continue to concentrate on productions with a high concentration of local performers, to attract audiences comprised of families, friends and neighbors.

⁵ Profile of Culture Activities in Nova Scotia, Statistics Canada Culture Statistics Program, December 2003

5.3 Tourism

Tourism in Yarmouth has been in decline for many years, showing a decrease of approximately 20% from 2003-2004, and again from 2004-2005. These decreases are attributed to a number of factors, mostly related to poor transportation and the perceived lack of local destination attractions.

Attendance figures from the centre for these two years show that tourists represent less than one-half of one per cent of theatre patronage. And yet, during the same period, program revenues at the centre have increased by 22% in 2004 and another 30% in 2005. This would indicate the strong local support for the centre and its programs.

An important factor in the 2005 tourism decline was the cancellation of the Scotia Prince ferry operating between Yarmouth and Portland prior to the 2005 sailing season. For the 2006 tourism season, the Bay Ferries CAT will sail from both Bar Harbor and Portland, each three days per week.

Initiatives to improve tourism include the promotion of partnership opportunities, an effort encouraged by Nova Scotia Tourism, Culture and Heritage; the Tourism Partnership Council; and the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia. Co-operative planning and integrated marketing initiatives are underway through Destination South West Nova, serving the three regional tourist associations of Yarmouth County, Evangeline Trail, and South Shore. They are working together to create a critical mass of destination products, to promote the region as an integrated destination, and to provide itinerary marketing packages to give tourists more reason to extend their stay in the region. Culture is a proven tourist attraction, and promotion of the local Acadian, Black and Mi'kmaq cultures could make a strong contribution through development, marketing, and opportunities for display during the tourist season.

Tourism informants consulted during this project agreed that, while tourism is declining, there is still a steady stream of visitors. In 2005, an estimated 60,000 tourists entered the province by ferry at Yarmouth, of which 12,459 visited the Yarmouth County Tourist Association information booth. These visitors were looking for things to do locally, and represent a key marketing opportunity to enhance centre attendance with tourist traffic.

A prosperous and vital arts centre would contribute toward promoting Yarmouth as a destination attraction. It would also be evident that centres such as Th'YARC generate attention not from simply being available but rather from the entertainment and cultural value of their activities. With the right programming and marketing, the centre could make a meaningful contribution toward Yarmouth as a tourist destination. Since performances tend to take place during the evenings, they could motivate tourists to extend their intended stay, which would contribute revenues to local businesses.

Recommendation 18: Th'YARC should work closely with the Yarmouth County Tourist Association and Destination South West Nova to establish a strong position within ongoing tourism strategies as an important destination attraction in the region.

Recommendation 19: The centre and its events should be aggressively promoted to stimulate growth in attendance by tourists.

5.4 Review of comparable centres

The comparable centres reported their market basins to be roughly similar within their geographic context to that defined for Th'YARC within its own context.

Activities and revenues at these centres vary widely. For example, revenues range from \$38,000.00 to \$700,000.00 per year. Our review has not identified any programming or other issues at Th'YARC that stand in stark contrast with the practices of these other centres that enjoy brisk business and wide participation. Successful operation of the Yarmouth centre, as with all others, will mean finding the best combination of programs that support the mandate and operating revenues that support the building. Each centre must find a mixture that sustains its own unique circumstances.

A full summary of comparable centres is included as Appendix II of this report.

6.0 Viability

6.1 Programming and revenue management

The management of the centre and the leadership of the Council during 2005 have demonstrated a remarkable determination and ability to generate both activity and revenue. Projected year-end budget figures show an operating surplus of \$73,074.00 for this fiscal period.

It is clear that virtually all operating revenues have been generated by the theatre. These revenues cover not only theatre-related program expenses but also all of the centre's occupancy and administrative costs. Usage of the centre by groups for non-theatre related purposes contributed little toward the recovery of occupancy and administration expenses.

Since our review of affiliated and other arts organizations has revealed no significant sources of revenue for non-theatre usage of the centre, and in the absence of a comprehensive arts policy that clearly defines cost-recovery responsibility for these groups, the financial viability of the centre is projected on the basis of theatrical revenues.

Management's success in 2005 is attributed largely to the General Manager, who also serves as artistic director, events co-ordinator, maintenance manager, and administrator for the centre as well as the Council. This person currently works 60-75 hours a week, including evenings and weekends for scheduled performances. Workload includes the production of major theatrical events that are the centre's largest and most reliable source of revenues. This arrangement has been a key factor in the centre's recent financial success.

The centre is volunteer-supported in the sense that many responsibilities are organized and staffed by volunteers recruited and administered by the centre and the Council. This is entirely appropriate for a community operation of this type. At the same time, the centre is professionally-managed by a full-time person who has met the challenge of making the facility active and financially sustainable. As such, the value and affordability of professional leadership has been clearly demonstrated. However, the viability of the operation would be more stable when the workload is more sustainable over the long term.

Table 4
Operating budget comparison 2003-2005

		2005 (projected)	2004	2003
Expenses				
Program	Fundraising	300.00	55.64	
	Artist fees	12,123.00	12,337.50	17,828.00
	Technical & SOCAN	3,200.00	2,439.65	
	YARC production costs	20,000.00	11,483.38	
	Split production costs	11,100.00		
	Advertising	7,500.00	6,612.63	
	Hospitality	59.00	348.88	
	Accommodations	927.00	349.37	1,269.00
	Other			
		55,209.00	33,627.05	19,097.00
Administration	Equipment & supplies	6,385.00	810.09	261.00
	Advertising & promotion	4,100.00	2,822.91	8,186.00
	Wages & benefits	33,200.00	39,088.47	31,943.00
	Office supplies	2,250.00	4,384.54	3,523.00
	Telephone, fax, photocopier	4,870.00		
	Bar	5,300.00	2,949.66	3,361.00
	Bank & credit card charges	2,625.00	1,793.91	2,055.00
	Memberships & dues	949.00	3,035.69	2,118.00
	Conferences & workshops	327.00	300.58	560.00
	Contractual fees	14,377.00		
	Other	650.00	7.21	
		75,033.00	55,193.06	52,007.00
Occupancy	Utilities	13,280.00	13,390.89	10,012.00
	Repairs & maintenance	43,075.00	11,945.81	8,779.00
	Insurance	6,756.00	6,315.04	5,400.00
	Amortization		5,976.68	6,143.00
		63,111.00	37,628.42	30,334.00
Total Expenses		193,353.00	126,448.53	101,438.00
Revenues				
Earned	Ticket sales - YARC productions	84,000.00	33,919.59	25,716.00
	Ticket sales - split productions	17,500.00	4,704.30	
	Ticket sales - purchased shows	14,300.00	12,655.00	
	Theatre rentals	4,040.00	2,750.00	10,294.00
	Performance fees - on the road		1,750.00	
	Rental fees - non-affiliate		475.00	
	Box office charges	581.00	664.89	
	Building improvement surcharges	9,600.00	6,186.00	7,466.00
	Sponsorships	7,330.00	6,635.00	10,051.00
	Advertising	1,442.00	1,015.28	
	Gift certificates	(180.00)	675.00	300.00
	Print shop	94.00	53.45	
	Workshops	450.00	350.00	
	Bar sales	11,750.00	6,389.35	7,064.00
	Commissions	93.00	460.10	
	Memberships	1,650.00	1,160.00	3,588.00
	Associate fees	500.00	500.00	
	50/50 proceeds	3,650.00	0.00	
	Ticket printing		55.00	
	Fees - technical & SOCAN	1,176.00	1,322.68	
	Interest & other	383.00	698.05	219.00
	Fundraising	1,700.00	4,173.20	6,335.00
		160,059.00	86,591.89	71,033.00
Contributed	Donations - private	325.00	2,400.00	1,674.00
	Donations - corporate	733.00	1,134.55	
	Donations - affiliates	0.00	400.00	1,210.00
		1,058.00	3,934.55	2,884.00
Government	Shortfall grants	0.00	516.72	
	Province - organizations grant	0.00	0.00	
	Province - facilities grant	25,000.00	26,236.00	
	Yarmouth Town grant	5,500.00	4,000.00	31,130.00
	Employment subsidy grant	1,820.00	0.00	
	Provincial capital grant (roof)	45,000.00	0.00	
	Municipal capital grant (roof)	24,000.00		
	Other grants	3,990.00	0.00	
		105,310.00	30,752.72	31,130.00
Total Revenues		266,427.00	121,279.16	105,047.00
Net		73,074.00	(5,169.37)	3,609.00

- Recommendation 20:** The salary of the General Manager should be increased to reflect the quality of professional expertise that is expected and required to sustain the centre. A range of \$40,000.00 to \$50,000.00 would be more in line, and is shown in the budget forecast to be affordable.
- Recommendation 21:** Additional staff should be hired to allow the General Manager to focus on planning and management issues, artistic direction, budgeting and revenue commitments, and organizing and staging Th'YARC's major productions. A full-time administrative assistant and a part-time custodian are included in the budget forecast.
- Recommendation 22:** In the near term, until an arts policy clearly defines space and revenue responsibilities differently, the facility should continue to operate with priorities centred on the theatre. Other artistic disciplines should be accommodated where practical.

Our analysis of 2005 theatre events is shown in summary in Table 5. A total of 107 performance days were reported, with an average revenue contribution of \$806.93 per performance. This has resulted in total projected theatre revenues of \$86,341.00.

Table 5
Theatre event reconciliation summary 2003-2005

		Event	Type	Profit (Loss)	# Perf days	Total Attendance	Average Attendance
Mar	4-5	Vagina Monologues	comedy	\$1,042.48	2	318	159
	28	George Fox	music	(\$150.96)	1	211	211
	1-29	Drawing Workshop	art instruction	\$155.00	10	10	1
	25	Forever Changed	religious	\$413.00	1	213	213
Apr	2	Varied Visions Playfest II	comedies	\$654.73	1	71	71
	13	Vinyl Café	comedy	\$1,005.48	1	341	341
	14-24	Wizard of Oz		\$29,448.11	7	2158	308
May	7	Thomas Baxter Thought Control	Magic	(\$766.66)	1	49	49
	17	Hollywood Styles	Fashion	\$504.11	1	101	101
	17	Yarmouth Orchestra	Music	\$269.00	1	120	120
	20	Alan Hatfield	psychic	\$4,360.40	1	329	329
	28	McCarron School of Dance	recital	\$438.00	1	350	350
Jun	26-27	Time to Remember	drama	\$469.00	2	219	110
	30	We're Here But a Short Time	drama	(\$640.58)	1	37	37
Jul	4-15	Imagination Vacation	theatre camp	\$320.00	10	10	1
	13	Seafest Pageant	pageant	\$506.14	1	253	253
	14-24	Grease	musical	\$25,357.08	8	2138	267
	24	Adult High Graduation	ceremony	\$175.00	1	205	205
Aug	10	Reveille-Mulgrave Road	comedy	(\$1,112.00)	1	38	38
	11-20	Crimes of the Heart	drama	\$1,678.08	6	512	85
	28	Broadway Direct	music	\$340.00	1	28	28
Sep	11	Glamor & Glitz	fashion show	\$187.07	1	105	105
	22	The Arrogant Worms	comedy	(\$1,393.73)	1	102	102
	27-28	What's Around the Corner	drama	\$2,286.01	4	567	142
Oct	13-22	Whose Under Where	comedy	\$18,209.55	6	1418	236
	28-29	Kidzact	dance	\$835.00	2	370	185
Nov	1	Guy Davis	music	(\$976.69)	1	80	80
	12	Sons of Maxwell (proj)	music	(\$1,393.73)	1	102	102
	13	Le Chateau (proj)	fashion	\$504.11	1	101	101
	24-Dec 3	Cinderella & the Wolfman (proj)	panto	\$2,100.00	7	650	93
Dec	10	Beary Merry Christmas (proj)	family	\$489.00	1	189	189
Other		Cabaret evenings		\$100.00	12		
		Lunchtime theatres		\$479.00	10		
		Register.Com		\$450.00	1		
Totals				\$86,341.00	107	11,395	106

Theatre events were examined in two category analyses as follows.

a. By type – There have been four main types of presentation in the theatre: in-house productions, split productions, purchased presentations, and rentals. In-house productions are organized by the centre's manager and all proceeds accrue to Th'YARC. Split productions are presented jointly by the centre and an affiliated group, who share the net proceeds. Purchased presentations are financed by the centre at a flat fee, and proceeds accrue to the centre. Rental presentations are financed by the promoter or entertainer, and the centre collects a fee for the use of the theatre. There have been other theatre uses, such as workshops and rentals by special arrangement, which do not play a major revenue role.

During 2005, nearly \$78,000.00 was generated by major in-house productions. This contrasts sharply against revenues in all other categories. Split productions, while not lucrative (average \$225.59 per performance), are important opportunities for affiliated groups such as the Drama Society, Kidzact and Fairies in the Attic to present their work. Like split productions, rentals do not bring major revenues to the centre, but they are important presentation opportunities for local organizations. Purchased shows tend to lose money: only the Alan Hatfield performance was profitable (net \$4,360.40) while the other six purchased presentations lost money (\$5,793.77 in total).

Table 6
Comparison of theatre presentations by type

	Events	Performances	Profit (loss)	Average
In-house	7	33	\$77,987.05	\$2,363.24
Split	4	11	\$2,481.49	\$225.59
Purchased	7	7	(\$1,433.37)	(\$204.77)
Rentals	8	10	\$3,652.62	\$365.26

b. By attendance – Theatre events were also examined by attendance. While it seems obvious that larger audiences would produce better revenues, there is an important point to be made here regarding ongoing programming. Our analysis grouped events according to attendance by small (0-120), medium (121-240) and large (241-350) audiences. It was demonstrated that nearly half (43.9%) of the theatre's performance time is occupied by productions that attract small audiences and yield average net revenues of only \$19.10 per performance. The calculation of net revenues does not include occupancy or administration costs.

Table 7
Comparison of theatre presentations by attendance

Attendance	Net	# perf days	Avge/perf
0-120	\$897.71	47	\$19.10
121-240	\$23,299.08	18	\$1,294.39
240-350	\$61,115.21	19	\$3,216.59
Other	\$1,029.00	23	\$44.74
Overall	\$86,341.00	107	\$806.93

With a new or revitalized facility that can sustain operations year-round, at least one additional major production can be scheduled. Also, January through March are prime months for touring entertainers and the centre would have better choices available for rentals and purchased shows that could be more productive financially.

- Recommendation 23:** In-house productions should be the central core of the yearly program, with preferential advantage in the theatre schedule.
- Recommendation 24:** Split productions and rentals by local non-profit groups should be encouraged and supported as broad opportunities for artistic expression, and for local groups to present their works to a wide audience in a professional theatre.
- Recommendation 25:** Purchased shows and rentals by for-profit groups should be planned carefully. Where the potential financial risks are outweighed by the artistic and cultural values, these events should be encouraged.
- Recommendation 26:** Opportunities should be explored for attracting the quality of touring entertainers that would be financially supported by the local market.

A simple forecast budget for operations after the revitalization or construction of a new centre is projected as shown in Table 8. Several line items specific to the 2005 fiscal year have been removed since they would not be pertinent to the operation of the new centre. Therefore, some discrepancies will be noticed in the total and net figures between Table 8 and Table 4.

Table 8
New forecast budget comparison

Expenses	Program		Forecast (projected)	2005 (projected)
	Fundraising		360.00	300.00
	Artist fees		20,609.10	12,123.00
	Technical & SOCAN		7,680.00	3,200.00
	YARC production costs		23,333.33	20,000.00
	Split production costs		11,100.00	11,100.00
	Advertising		8,750.00	7,500.00
	Hospitality		68.83	59.00
	Accommodations		1,081.50	927.00
			72,982.76	55,209.00
	Administration	Equipment & supplies	7,662.00	6,385.00
		Advertising & promotion	4,920.00	4,100.00
		Wages & benefits	79,080.00	33,200.00
		Office supplies	2,250.00	2,250.00
		Telephone, fax, photocopier	4,870.00	4,870.00
		Bar	6,360.00	5,300.00
		Bank & credit card charges	3,150.00	2,625.00
		Memberships & dues	949.00	949.00
		Conferences & workshops	327.00	327.00
		Other	650.00	650.00
			110,218.00	60,656.00
	Occupancy	Utilities	17,529.60	13,280.00
		Repairs & maintenance (BIF)	12,525.00	
		Insurance	7,000.00	6,756.00
			37,054.60	20,036.00
		Total Expenses	220,255.36	135,901.00
Revenues	Earned	Ticket sales - YARC productions	106,516.00	84,000.00
		Ticket sales - split productions	17,500.00	17,500.00
		Ticket sales - purchased shows	36,102.00	14,300.00
		Theatre rentals	5,409.74	4,040.00
		Box office charges	697.20	581.00
		Building improvement surcharges	12,525.00	9,600.00
		Sponsorships	8,796.00	7,330.00
		Advertising	1,730.40	1,442.00
		Gift certificates	(180.00)	(180.00)
		Print shop	94.00	94.00
		Workshops	450.00	450.00
		Bar sales	14,100.00	11,750.00
		Commissions	111.60	93.00
		Memberships	1,980.00	1,650.00
		Associate fees	500.00	500.00
		50/50 proceeds	4,380.00	3,650.00
		Fees - technical & SOCAN	1,411.20	1,176.00
		Interest & other	459.60	383.00
		Fundraising	2,040.00	1,700.00
			214,622.74	160,059.00
	Contributed	Donations - private	325.00	325.00
		Donations - corporate	733.00	733.00
		Donations - affiliates	0.00	0.00
			1,058.00	1,058.00
	Government	Province - facilities grant	25,000.00	25,000.00
		Yarmouth Town grant	5,500.00	5,500.00
		Employment subsidy grant	1,820.00	1,820.00
		Other grants	3,990.00	3,990.00
			36,310.00	36,310.00
		Total Revenues	251,990.74	197,427.00
Net			31,735.38	61,526.00

The forecast budget is a summary estimate, projected from the centre's 2005 budget figures supplied by Th'YARC and based on the following assumptions:

- the General Manager's salary would be increased to a range of \$40,000.00-50,000.00 to reflect the quality of leadership expected; \$40,000.00 is included in the forecast budget, and this would be expected to increase through the range over a 3-5 year period;
- Council would hire a full-time administrative assistant at a starting salary of \$20,000.00 to attend to day-to-day administration and to support the General Manager;
- the General Manager would focus on planning and management issues, budgeting and revenue commitments, and organizing and staging Th'YARC's major productions;
- one custodial person would work 3 days per week – \$9,600.00 per year is provided;
- all occupancy costs reflect a 12-month operation; utility costs would be expected to increase due to increased load and this has been approximated;
- year-round operation would provide for one additional major in-house production at an estimated net of \$22,516.13 (7 performances at the established average of \$3,216.59);
- better planning and availability of purchased shows could add 5 profitable shows (at the average of \$4,360.40 each) and reduce losers from 5 shows to 2 (at the average of -\$880.00 each), a requirement of only 2 extra shows in the year;
- three additional rentals would be expected, at the average of \$456.58 each;
- no changes are included for split productions or workshops;
- improved climate controls would mean no winter down time due to cold, and no summer slowdown due to heat; revenue-producing theatre usage is projected to increase from 107 to 129 days per year, which could increase again when a 12-month operation sustains year-round momentum;
- building improvement surcharge revenues are diverted directly to a fund for repairs and maintenance;
- the very low contributed revenues category has been left unchanged although we would expect a sharp increase to be planned and budgeted following the public fundraising phase;
- all other budgetary items are projected to reflect a year-round operation;
- all estimates are expressed in 2005 dollars.

The forecast budget shows an operating surplus of \$31,735.38. The added staff expenses are afforded by revenues generated by a year-round program, and would provide for ongoing viability and improved programming capability. In 2005, the centre has demonstrated that it can accomplish both goals of generating revenue and accommodating a variety of artistic productions. With more experience, by leveraging from recent successful operations, and with a deliberate program strategy that blends presentation opportunities, Th'YARC can continue to be a vibrant and viable centre.

Recommendation 27: Once the final 2005 record of expenditures and revenues is completed, the budget projection should be reviewed by the Council's Finance Committee and Treasurer to confirm that its base assumptions are accurate and that its projections are still appropriate.

6.2 Potential funding partners

The practicality of revitalization or new construction will depend on funding commitments from levels of government as well as from local private and public fundraising. The implementation plan in Section 7.0 demonstrates how funding commitments fit into the overall capital development project.

Each funding program includes three primary components: eligibility requirements, funding capacity, and assessment. Applications that suit the eligibility guidelines and fall within the financial scope of any funding program are still subject to assessment, which generally is an appraisal of need, value and sustainability. Often, more applications are received than can be funded, and even valuable projects that agencies would like to support do not always receive financial assistance.

The assessment phase of government consideration is generally characterized as an evaluation of the merits of the project. Agencies would consider gains, risks, impacts of lost opportunities, unique community circumstances, and so on. They would need to be persuaded of the value, and this can be leveraged by a demonstration of leadership, passion, and championship (or "brokerage").

While the funding commitment of government agencies cannot be guaranteed – or even reliably predicted – their guidelines are reviewed here in brief, and supported with detail in Appendix IV of this report.

As noted earlier, there have been strong expressions of support from the Town of Yarmouth and the Municipalities of Argyle and the District of Yarmouth, with no indication from any local government of interest in the ownership or management of the centre. Appreciation for the need and value of such a project is shown to be strong at the local level. If funding is approved by municipal councils, one could expect a phasing requirement to be attached.

The guidelines of the Cultural Spaces program of the federal Department of Canadian Heritage indicate support for the improvement, renovation and construction of arts and heritage facilities, with added opportunities for energy conservation and environmental assessment. These could all be built into a proposal to the federal government. Generally, the program offers support up to 33% of eligible project costs for construction, adaptive re-use or renovation, and up to 50% of eligible project costs for specialized equipment purchases or feasibility studies.

Funding opportunities through the Culture Division of Nova Scotia Tourism, Culture and Heritage do not formally include capital projects such as the revitalization or construction of Th'YARC. Informally, however, the department is receptive to proposals that demonstrate value, and would attempt to find and justify financial support. Ongoing involvement and financial support from the province for the operation of Th'YARC are considered a good indication of the department's perception of value. Our unofficial conversations with Culture representatives indicate the department would look very favorably on an appropriate development proposal from Th'YARC.

ACOA's Innovative Communities Fund, which could support either capital revitalization or reconstruction, has four main criteria:

- community support – a broad base of investment and involvement;
- impact – yearly schedule, capacity, and market area;
- involvement of other community organizations – such as schools and arts groups;
- financial and organizational stability – sustainable operation and revenues.

ACOA indicated preference for funding proposals where three levels of government are involved at a combined funding partnership no greater than 90%, and local fundraising would account for the balance no less than 10%.

The South West Shore Development Authority has expressed interest in Th'YARC and the willingness to help find and co-ordinate funding. Th'YARC would need to make a formal proposal to the Authority demonstrating that their support would serve the interests of government and be beneficial to the regional economy.

Several key informants have reported the view that timing is opportune for a concrete proposal for redevelopment of Th'YARC. A number of local infrastructure projects in the works for some time have recently been completed or committed, and it was thought that the community would be receptive to a progressive plan to fund the capital development of the arts centre.

Recommendation 28: The Council should press forward on the momentum of this feasibility study to bring forward a specific proposal with visuals and confirmed costing to begin the process of solidifying funding commitments.

6.3 Community arts organizations

Arts organizations indicated very limited financial resources to contribute toward the operating costs of the centre. A comprehensive policy would specify the financial obligations of arts user groups. Such a policy would have to consider both usage and capacity to contribute, as not all groups can afford an equilateral user-pay requirement. However, the centre has demonstrated that its operation can be viably supported by revenues from the theatre.

Both the Council and the community arts organizations have reported that the Council could be more proactive in supporting the arts than its current resources allow. Additional initiatives could include:

- developing an arts policy that would guide the relationships among arts organizations;
- providing a vision and leadership for arts and culture in all disciplines;
- helping with information, advice and access to funding resources;
- advocating for emerging artists and disciplines;
- assisting groups with organizational and planning issues.

The staff reorganization and policy development that are recommended could make resources available to expand the scope of the Council.

6.4 Schools

Local schools and the provincial Department of Education are putting increased emphasis on arts in the public school curriculum. With no dedicated performance venues on school properties, there is a growing need for partnerships between schools and local facilities such as Th'YARC for students to participate in and see finished productions. There are three schools within easy walking distance of Th'YARC, all of which are participating in some way at the centre. This is advantageous for the schools, and it brings activity and interest to the centre for students to present their own productions. There is no other performance venue within Yarmouth that could satisfy this demand.

6.5 Growth opportunities

As noted earlier, tourism is a key area of growth potential. The centre concentrates its current programming effort on patrons from the local and outlying areas because of the intimate relationship Th'YARC has with its surrounding community. Promotion of these programs can also be targeted at the substantial tourist traffic to increase attendance and revenues.

While centre staff survey patrons periodically, a more systematic approach to understanding interests would help to clarify the kinds of presentations most likely to attract audiences. This could be used in conjunction with performance reconciliation reports and the ongoing subjective awareness of preferences to provide a deeper, more consolidated assessment of the market. This would help to find the ideal blend of artistic expression that satisfies the mandate of Th'YARC and its partner groups, along with the financial viability necessary to sustain the centre.

The 2005 theatre schedule shows that the Acadian, Black and Mi'kmaq cultures are not well exposed at the centre. Residents in the outlying areas, in particular the Municipality of Argyle, could be encouraged to celebrate their heritage at Th'YARC. This would involve them in activities and productions, as well as draw more residents to attend presentations in the theatre.

As the one dedicated theatre performance space in the area, Th'YARC is faced with scheduling challenges, particularly as it becomes busier. As part of the organization's dedication to financial sustainability, in-house productions have been a priority because they are most profitable. There is also an ongoing commitment to assisting groups that are affiliated with the Council to satisfy their presentation goals.

While its mandate includes supporting all performing and visual arts, the centre's operating realities are centred on the theatre. Disciplines other than those providing or supporting revenues through the theatre have not been able to contribute toward the cost of operating the centre. Scheduling priorities may not be able to accommodate all interests of non-affiliated arts organizations who would like to use the centre but whose productions may not bring net proceeds. An arts policy would clarify the privileges and financial responsibilities of all user groups, prioritize usage of the theatre, and guide how Th'YARC supports the arts in the region.

6.6 Facility management & operation

Successful facility management has been supported by a dedicated full-time General Manager. As shown in the forecast budget, revenues would sustain the added personnel to allow the GM to focus on priorities and maintain a reasonable workload.

Key informants have suggested that the centre could be more accessible to other organizations in the community and a year-round operation would help to achieve that.

Forecasts of financial viability are based on operating the centre from revenues generated by the theatre. Provision of space and opportunities for non-theatre arts could be addressed within the recommended policy development.

A review of funding guidelines revealed opportunities that the centre is not currently using to support programs, for example those that would promote artistic development. These opportunities could help the Council assume a broader supportive role within the arts and culture community.

Th'YARC is reinvesting operating surpluses into the centre to sustain a viable operation. In the short term, light & sound equipment can be upgraded by developing a system that is portable to the new centre. Also, a reserve account could be established with operating surplus money to be used against potential shortfalls until the new centre is developed.

Recommendation 29: The centre's operational approach should incorporate:

- making spaces accessible for the programs and activities of local performance arts groups;
- developing scheduling guidelines that balance profitability and artistic expression;
- attracting the participation and attendance of Acadian, Black and Mi'kmaq residents from the region;
- sustaining a deep understanding of the interests of the local community and gathering audience information to develop a program blend that is both popular and financially viable;
- promoting the centre and its activities to local and tourist markets;
- making the centre accessible to schools to promote participation and to complement the education curriculum.

Recommendation 30: Program planning should take advantage of all available funding opportunities, including those attached as appendices to this report, to help support activities that are artistically relevant but not financially self-sustaining.

6.7 Summary

After a full review of the need, market, viability and ongoing sustainability of the centre, it would seem clear that all players are ready for a solid proposal for Th'YARC to proceed with plans for redeveloping the centre.

Management has demonstrated a good blend of artistic programming, audience satisfaction and financial responsibility. Adjustments to staff and programming are indicated that could make the centre even stronger, and growth opportunities have been identified for expansion within a year-round operation.

Community need for the centre and the value it offers has been demonstrated at all levels, including municipal representatives, schools, tourist associations, and funding partners. The arts community would like to see growth in Council support for arts activities beyond the centre itself, which could be achieved with a comprehensive policy and extension of its mandate and resources. This could all be possible in a long-term strategic plan.

Funding for this capital project is difficult to quantify, and will depend on leadership and commitment. These have also been indicated by the Council. Initial responses from potential partners and the South West Shore Development Authority have all been very favorable.

7.0 Interim business implementation plan

The business of operating the centre has been demonstrated to be solvent. In our review of needs, programming and attendance patterns, market assessment, and appraisal of viability, we have discovered no evidence why this solvency should not continue. In fact, new growth opportunities have been identified. Allowing for ongoing financial stability, following is a review of the steps that would be indicated as the development plans for the centre unfold.

This report should be shared immediately with all potential funding partners as well as the South West Shore Development Authority. Their preliminary assessment should be requested to verify the eligibility of the project, as well as their willingness and capacity to provide financial and other support. Funding from federal and provincial levels of government normally hinge on the extent of local commitment, and municipal councils may choose to stage their contributions over a number of years. Early commitment will therefore be important.

The first on-site items to be undertaken are a legal survey to define the existing property, and an environmental assessment to determine if it can be developed. If the site is clean or affordably cleanable, Th'YARC will have its choice, and its stated preference has been to remain at the Parade Street location. If the site is contaminated, or would be too costly to remediate, Th'YARC would need to rebuild on another site. We anticipate the survey and phase one environmental assessment to take about one month. The assessment may indicate further action which would not be possible at this point to predict or to schedule, although a preliminary speculation of three months has been added to the timeline below.

If relocation is required, the preferred location would be downtown, although this is one of the alternate site areas which was judged in general terms without reference to a specific site. The Council would need to investigate specific locations, revisit the site evaluation process to determine the best specific location, and secure the preferred new property. Identification, selection and acquisition of a new site could take up to six months or more.

A capital fundraising assessment would need to be conducted in order to establish the capacity of the Council and the community to finance the local share of development costs. A consultant would be hired to determine capacity to raise the private contribution portion of the capital required. We would expect this study to take three to four months.

On the basis of site costs (remediation for the current site, or acquisition and development for a new site) and fundraising capacity, the Council will be able to project a capital development budget. Influencing factors include space, the level of revitalization or new construction that is affordable, and the formula of fundraising and grants. At this stage, the Council should be able to work from our preliminary estimates. If time has elapsed and the figures need to be re-evaluated, a month should be sufficient here.

Meanwhile, an arts policy should be developed to answer the concerns expressed in this report, and to guide the establishment of operating principles for the Council and the centre. By clearly defining the specifics of the Council's role in support of the arts, such a policy will help in

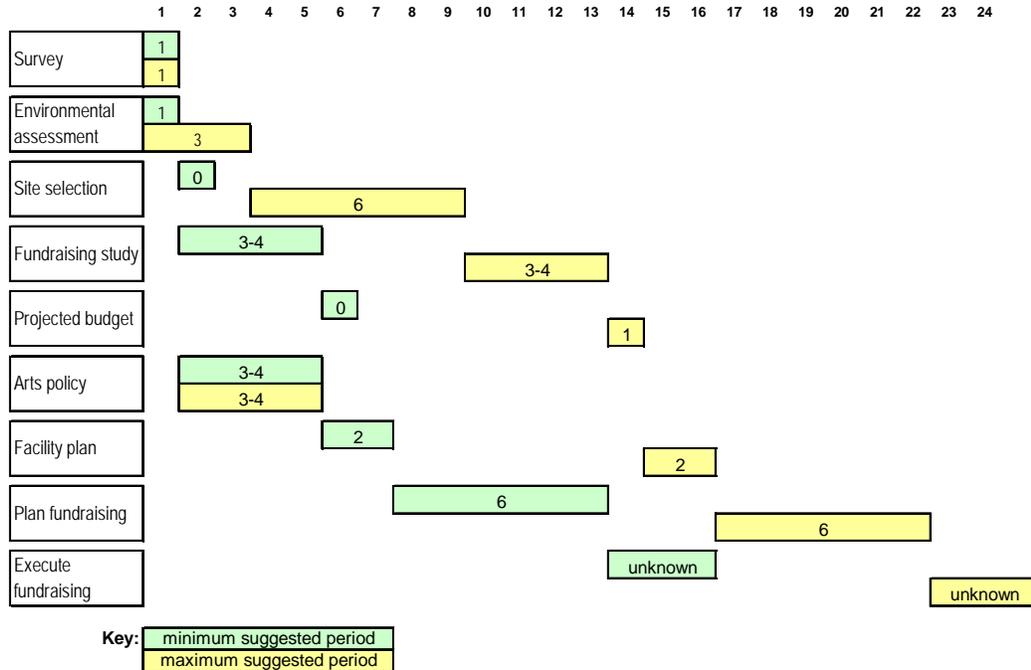
decisions whether any additional “desirable” space will be incorporated into the facility development plan. This policy would also be very helpful to funding partners who will look for integrated direction in their assessment of the proposed capital project. This should take three to four months to complete.

Working with an architect, the Council would then have a preliminary facility design prepared. This would provide a clear definition of the scope of work, the envisioned result, types of materials, electrical and mechanical systems, etc. as well as a more detailed costing review. Funding partners, arts organizations and the public should be consulted at the beginning of this stage and again once a preliminary concept has been developed. Two to three months should be allowed for this stage.

With a facility concept, visual plans and financial targets in place, the Council would develop a local fundraising plan and recruit the resources necessary to lead and manage this project. A formal proposal would be submitted to the South West Shore Development Authority for support to engage all potential funding partners in the development plan. A tactical fundraising program could take up to six months to fully develop. While it would not be possible at this point to predict the amount of time the actual fundraising program would require, the findings of the fundraising capacity study will help the Council to establish reasonable targets.

Based on these estimates, we have prepared the following timeline which the Council can use as a planning tool and revise as required in progress. Since ranges are used to estimate the time required at each phase, and some steps are sequential, planning can appear more complex than necessary. For example, environmental assessment could take 1-3 months depending on what is found, and then final site selection could take from zero months (if the current site is clean and chosen) to 6 months (if relocation is necessary or chosen). This means that the time required for these two steps alone could range from 1 to 9 months. Therefore, we show two timelines below, one for the minimum range and one for the maximum range suggested at each stage. The implementation plan up to the point of beginning execution of the fundraising program is estimated to require between 13 and 22 months.

Table 9
Implementation timeline



During the course of fundraising, we expect Th'YARC would conduct a proactive communications program to provide ongoing information to all primary parties – and the community in particular – about the vision, the plan, the partners, and the progress. This communication program would continue throughout the remainder of the process until revitalization or new construction is complete, and then would carry forward through opening ceremonies and into an ongoing communication/promotion program that would be part of the centre's marketing plan.

Once local funds have been raised and funding partners are committed, the Council would re-engage the architect to prepare a detailed design and working drawings for the revitalization or new construction work to begin. Three to four months should be allowed here.

Finally, the project would be tendered, the contract awarded, and the construction work would take place. We would anticipate this final stage would take approximately 12 months, although allowance would be made here for the phasing of work as may be appropriate, for example, in revitalization with minimal disruption to facility operation.

Throughout this development process, it is expected that Th'YARC will continue to operate from the current centre at a similar level of activity and profitability, and that operating surpluses would be reinvested into contingency and equipment.

Appendix I Study participants

Key Informants

Frank Anderson, CEO, South West Shore Development Authority
Jim Barnes, Visitor Services & Research, Nova Scotia Tourism, Culture and Heritage
Bob Benson, Past President, Yarmouth County Tourist Association
Briony Carros, Executive Director, Visual Arts Nova Scotia
Robin Creelman, Production Director, Neptune Theatre
Charles Crosby, Mayor, Town of Yarmouth
Stéphane Cyr, Assistant Area Account Manager, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency
Aldric d'Entremont, Warden, Municipality of Argyle
Eric Favaro, Arts Education Consultant, Nova Scotia Department of Education
Doug Fawthrop, Destination South West Nova
Frank Grant, Director, Yarmouth Department of Leisure Services
Jeffrey Gushue, CAO, Town of Yarmouth
Arthur MacDonald, Director of Planning, Town of Yarmouth
Marcel McKeough, Nova Scotia Tourism, Culture and Heritage
Angie Moorehouse, General Manager, Yarmouth County Tourist Association
Ken Moses, CAO, Municipality of the District of Yarmouth
Bob Osadchy, General Manager, Marketing & Sales, Mariners Centre
Chris Shore, Executive Director, Theatre Nova Scotia
Bryan Smith, Warden, Municipality of the District of Yarmouth
Steve Stoddart, Property Services Co-ordinator, Tri-County Regional School Board
Dave Warner, Development Officer, South West Shore Development Authority

Affiliated Groups

Fairies in the Attic Costume Society

Marie Zwicker
Kathy Spates

Kidzact & McCarron School of Dance

Deanna McCarron

Yarmouth Arts Society

Dan Earle
Virginia Stoddard

Yarmouth Craft Guild

Michael Morris
Gwen Hewey-Parsons
Marian White

Yarmouth Drama Society

Harold Grandy
Ginnie Gobien
Carol Jarvis
Tony Dorrian
Kathy Jarvis

Non-affiliated Community Arts Groups

Arts organization	Contact	Invited	Attended	Responded
440 Productions	George Egan	✓	✓	✓
AHA Productions	Wendy Siddall	✓	✓	✓
Boathouse Productions	Alex Pressburger	✓	✓	✓
High School Drama Club	Lorne Cooke	✓		
La Troupe du Jour	George Clairmont	✓		
Les Araignees du boui boui	Norman Godin	✓		
Maple Grove Players & Youth Theatre	Mark Thornton	✓		
McKenzie School of Dance	Michelle Mackenzie	✓		
Musique Royale	Joan Semple	✓	✓	✓
Playarmouth	Heather McClelland	✓	✓	✓
Theatre South West	Gwenda Wheelans	✓	✓	✓
Yarmouth Ballet School		✓		
Yarmouth Music Society	Joan Semple	✓	✓	✓
Yarmouth Orchestra	Gordon Rothwell	✓		

Comparable centres

Chris Ball, Astor Theatre, Liverpool
Erick Bickerdike, GM, Chester Playhouse, Chester
Donald Ferguson, Savoy Theatre, Glace Bay
Susan Hoover, Artistic Director and GM, Osprey Arts Centre, Shelburne
Geoff Keymer, Kings Theatre, Annapolis Royal
John Meir, Decoste Centre, Pictou

Funding sources

Peter Guildford, Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture
Mern O'Brien, Regional Director, Heritage Canada Cultural Spaces Program
Mike Comeau, ACOA, Cultural Development Opportunities.

Appendix II Review of comparable centres in Nova Scotia

Astor Theatre

Liverpool's Astor Theatre seats 385 and operates year-round, serving a mostly local clientele in Lunenburg, Shelburne and Queens counties. Tourists make up a very small portion of its audiences. It operates as a venue for film and live entertainment and allows its lobby to be used for hanging local artists' work. A local drama group rents the space at a special rate and donates all profits to the Theatre for the upgrade of technical equipment. Other productions pay a higher daily rental rate. The Astor does not produce in-house productions. Total expenses are \$100,000.00, including programming and marketing, administration and building maintenance. The Astor rents the facility for \$1.00 from the Municipality, which takes care of all exterior maintenance as well as heating and plumbing costs. Total revenues from memberships, live entertainment, memberships and fund raising are \$69,000.00. Its film operation nets another \$25,000.00 per year. The Astor receives a yearly operating grant from the province and generally nothing from the federal government.

Decoste Centre

The Decoste Centre in Antigonish includes a 430-seat theatre that operates from mid-February until New Year's Eve, serving a primarily Pictou County audience outside of tourist season. Fully 75% of its audience between mid-June and mid-September, however, is from away. The Decoste Centre is very flexible, hosting live entertainment, Rotary and Lion's Club conventions, weddings, craft fairs and Chamber of Commerce meetings. An artists' co-op uses the foyer in the summer. Decoste offers special rental rates for non-profit organizations. The Theatre does not produce in-house productions. Total yearly expenses vary between \$75,000.00 and \$125,000.00 with no fixed amount for programming. Marketing expenses range between \$15,000.00 and \$20,000.00, administration around \$82,500.00 and building maintenance around \$10,000.00. On the revenue side, ticket sales are equal to performance fees. Four major fundraisers per year generate \$100,000.00. Unique among the six theatres in this comparison, the Municipality tops up any shortfall the centre may have. The theatre receives an operating grant from the Province of about \$20,000.00. This varies from year to year. Federal grants are sought on a project-by-project basis. Recently a \$700,000.00 theatre overhaul was 65% funded by ACOA.

Chester Theatre

Chester's 176 seat theatre operates from March to Christmas, serving a local clientele drawn from within a 30 km radius, with the bulk of the theatre's audience traveling 10 km or less. Remarkably few tourists attend performances. The Chester Theatre is affiliated with a Summer Theatre School and receives support for it from at least one foundation. Chester Theatre

presents up to three yearly in-house productions. The Chester Drama Group produces a serious summer play and a Christmas offering, usually a musical, with profits earmarked for technical equipment maintenance and upgrades. The theatre's rental rate is minimal, sufficient to cover basic expenses. It is an all-volunteer theatre, with no paid employees, except for summer students funded by the province and/or HRDC. Operating expenses are \$205,000.00, with revenues of \$201,000.00. In 2004, program costs were \$80,000.00, advertising and marketing were \$20,000.00, and the Summer Theatre School cost \$15,000.00. A capital campaign for building maintenance generated \$75,000.00 and there is a building maintenance levy of \$1.00 on every ticket sold. Chester Theatre owns its facility. The Municipality contributed \$600.00 last year, waived \$1,500.00 in municipal service charges as well as \$3,000.00-4,000.00 in taxes. The Provincial operating grant is around \$25,000.00. Federal funding amounts to HRDC hire-a-student funding.

Savoy Theatre

The Savoy Theatre in Glace Bay seats 760 and operates year-round as a live entertainment venue serving Industrial Cape Breton. Tourists make up just 20% of its audiences, even during high season. The theatre's Red Curtain Company presents in-house productions, with the Savoy receiving all profits after expenses. Non-profit groups receive a discount on the regular daily rate of \$950.00. Expenses include: programming \$400,000.00; marketing \$150,000.00; administration \$250,000.00 and building maintenance \$65,000.00. Box office revenues in 2004 were \$600,000.00, representing a downturn of \$150,000.00. Fundraising was budget for \$150,000.00 for 2005: as of early November, the Savoy had raised \$100,000.00. It presents four major fundraising events yearly. The Municipality provides an outright grant of \$75,000.00 yearly; the Provincial operating grant is \$20,000.00. Federal funding is sought continuously.

Osprey Theatre

Shelburne's 170-seat Osprey Theatre operates year-round, primarily serving Shelburne County, with the area between Lockeport and Barrington as its focus. During tourist season, programming is increased dramatically to exploit visitor volumes, though Osprey serves primarily a local market. Osprey offers a summer in-lobby art gallery and presents as many as 30 productions ranging from music and dance to theatre, all from the local area. However it does not produce them in-house. Three local theatre groups work out of the theatre. Rentals are offered on an either flat rate of \$250.00 weekend nights, \$200.00 weeknights or on a percentage of box office basis. Osprey attracts meetings, weddings, and conferences. Expenses in 2005 were anticipated at \$24,000.00, with revenues at \$38,000.00. Event marketing for 2005 was budgeted at \$5,000.00. Fundraising activities included a proposal to Heritage Canada for \$20,000.00 to upgrade lighting. There were no administrative costs; HRDC provided 2 grants totaling \$4,256.00. Building maintenance was \$7,395.00, which was covered by grants. Income from ticket sales was \$38,457.00. Other income, from government, amounted to \$5,600.00 provincially and \$20,000.00 federally.

King's Theatre

Annapolis Royals 220 seat King's Theatre operates year-round, serving a local clientele within Annapolis and Digby counties. In a widely recognized tourist area, visitors comprise around 20% of the theatre's audience. King's hosts a summer art gallery in its lobby and receives a percentage of the sales of local artists' work displayed there. The theatre does not produce in-house productions. In the off-season, the theatre offers a variety of Hollywood movies, and hosts King's Film Society, an opportunity for the community to see the best of foreign cinema. The Annapolis District Drama Society has a loose affiliation with the theatre and gives profits from its yearly productions to King's. Daily rental rates range between \$250.00 and \$750.00. Total yearly expenses are in the \$150,000.00 range, with programming and marketing at \$40,000.00, and administration costs at \$50,000.00. Building maintenance is \$3,500.00, but the theatre is rented from the Town of Annapolis for \$1 a year and the Town pays for everything except day-to-day expenses. Revenues nearly equaled expenses. The theatre receives \$2,000.00 from the Municipality, and the King's Foundation contributes \$500.00. The provincial operating grant was \$18,500.00, and a provincial employment grant was \$1,800.00. HRDC provided a hire-a-student grant of \$1,800.00, and Heritage Canada grant matched a gift to the Theatre of about \$20,000.00.

Appendix III Theatrical Equipment Site Survey Recommendations

Community theatre is usually a poster child for classic over-achieving not-for-profit volunteer organizations. Very often a small group of committed people take ownership of a vision and find a way to bring it to fruition with whatever tools they can cobble together. These tools, most often, do not measure up equitably to even the most basic toolbox required by for-profit enterprises. The state of the theatrical equipment at Th'YARC is no exception. It is, as is so often the case, truly amazing that they have undertaken projects of such scope and scale considering the lack of technical theatre tools at their disposal.

The seating capacity and size of the stage appear to be well suited to the size of the community. The building electrical service appears to be sufficient to satisfy the long-term needs of Th'YARC. It would now do the community a service to provide the facility with infrastructure theatre equipment so that the theatre would be used more often, by more people at a greater level of profitability.

Infrastructure elements should be properly inspected to ensure that systems meet code requirements. Specifically, engineers should review electrical and structural systems including all load related items. Examples of these items are: a) electrical inspection of power distribution for audio and lighting systems, b) electrical examination of audio signal and communication distribution, c) electrical and structural inspection of onstage overhead lighting positions.

Recommendation Regarding Electrical or Building Issues – Audio Power and Signal

- 100amps of dedicated power for an audio system – this should be sufficient total power for the theatre;
- grounded separately from other systems in the building – this should dramatically reduce the possibility of amplifying unwanted electrical disturbances;
- distribute 15amp 120volt power to speaker positions – this will allow for the purchase of self-powered speakers but eliminate the need for a dedicated, environmentally controlled amplifier rack room resulting in financial savings;
- signal connections from the sound booth to each speaker position – this will eliminate the perpetual running of cables from a mixer to wherever the speakers happen to be located.

Recommendation Regarding Electrical or Building Issues - Communication

- communication (i.e. headsets and paging stations) require conduit from the booth (up to 3 positions) to the stage (up to 4 positions) and to the front of house (1 position);
- back stage paging should be run from the booth to the dressing room area.

Recommendation Regarding Electrical or Building Issues - Electrical Power and Distribution

- 200amps of power for a theatrical lighting system – this should be sufficient total power for the theatre;
- grounded separately from audio (see above) and in such a way that other machinery will not create disturbing electrical harmonics (eg. air conditioning systems have been known to cause lighting control boards to fail during performances);
- 48 to 96 2.4kw dimmers will need power in a dimmer room with environmental controls to preserve warranties;
- 24 to 48 channels of distribution will need to be extended to front of house positions and 24 to 48 channels of distribution will need to be extended to on stage positions.

Recommendation Regarding Electrical or Building Issues – On Stage Lighting Positions

- on stage lighting positions (3 to 4) should be safe and easy to operate by relatively unskilled personnel (e.g. winch system) – the current hemp and sandbag retrofit system is neither;
- each on stage “flying” lighting position should be rated for 500 to 1000 pounds of dynamic load.

The following equipment costs are recommended based on personal observations, including experience working at Th' Yarc, and conversations with several volunteers who currently work in the space.

Recommendation Regarding Theatrical Equipment – Audio and Communication

- public address system - \$45,000 – speakers and processors that will meet the expectations of professional touring groups/bands;
- audio control - \$15,000 – once again, a control console and processing equipment that will meet the expectations of professional touring groups/bands;
- on stage monitoring - \$15,000 – predominantly, if not exclusively, for professional touring groups/bands;
- audio distribution - \$25,000 – predominantly for professional touring groups/bands (½ if for local productions);
- back stage headset communication - \$6,000.

Recommendation Regarding Theatrical Equipment – Lighting

- lights - \$25,000 – 48 conventional fixtures will probably be the maximum required for 5-10 years;
- dimmers - \$25,000 – 48 x 2.4kw channels of dimming will match the number of fixtures recommended;
- control console - \$6,000 – will match the dimmers and fixtures, not require a great deal of training to produce adequate operators, and would allow the flexibility for a very good operator to be creative;
- electrical distribution (after conduit installation) - \$22,000 – plugging strips and wall boxes to plug the instruments into.

The above recommendations will allow Th'YARC up to 20 years of productive use at a professional level with proper care. Professional companies will be pleased with the equipment and it will make it desirable for such companies to return. The community will have a space that is well enough equipped that community groups may renew their interest in using Th'YARC.

Appendix IV Review of potential funding sources

Identifying and accessing funding will be a very important part of the action steps that will follow this feasibility study. While this is beyond the scope of the current project, in an effort to provide Th'YARC with a comprehensive planning document we have prepared this review of established funding partners. The information contained here was compiled through published materials, personal conversations with representatives of the identified agencies, and from the experiences of the comparable organizations we interviewed.

It should be pointed out that funding guidelines are often set out as general principles. They are not guarantees, nor are they always absolute limits. An organization's success in accessing funding – and the actual financial commitment of governments – will depend on a variety of factors including the current level of competition, the ability to demonstrate such things as need and viability, tangible evidence of local financial support, and so on. The information shown below should be considered within this context.

1. Nova Scotia Tourism, Heritage and Culture

No capital assistance for new buildings or the renovation/rehabilitation of existing buildings is available from the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture.

The province awards financial assistance in the form of operating grants for Nova Scotia's theatres and art centres. Assessed yearly, provincial theatres receive funding to directly support day-to-day operating expenses. Currently, theatres have the option of applying on a year-to-year basis, or accepting a fixed three-year, 3% annual increase operating grant. All theatres are eligible for the operating grant, which can range up to \$26,000 per year, depending upon assessment.

Nova Scotia's Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture offers three grant programs available to assist with operating costs.

1a. Cultural Activities Program

The purpose of the Cultural Activities Program is to help build communities through community arts and cultural activities. "Communities" can include geographic locales, as well as communities of interest such as those involved in visual arts, music or crafts.

1a.1 Program goals

Community cultural development

The division aims to support opportunities for people to participate in cultural activities that contribute to the social, economic, educational and spiritual life of a community. The Culture Division's goals in the area of community cultural development are to:

- develop new and strengthen existing relationships among groups and organizations engaged in cultural activities;
- encourage more cultural activities that explore and/or celebrate a community's or a cultural sub-sector's identity;
- encourage more participation in and access to cultural activities;
- encourage the development of Nova Scotia's cultural diversity;
- support activity that contributes to the long-term development of the cultural sector.

Artistic development

The division recognizes, supports, and celebrates the diversity of artistic expression within the cultural community, which includes fine crafts, literary, visual, media, and performing arts. The Culture Division's goals in the area of artistic development are to:

- support people at all levels of artistic involvement;
- support artistic expression and the pursuit of excellence and innovation;
- promote learning in the arts for people of all ages through education and participation;
- develop new audiences for the arts and maintain existing audiences.

1a.2 Activities assisted

The Cultural Activities Program offers assistance to activities that develop or enhance the production or appreciation of community arts and cultural activities. Specifically, support is offered to:

- *performing arts festivals or competitions* – amateur festivals and competitions in which Nova Scotians share their work and/or have it assessed by adjudicators or amateurs;
- *community cultural events* – arts and/or heritage activities and events that bring people together around issues of cultural identity and planning. Priority will be given to activities that build relationships within communities, particularly between arts and non-arts based organizations;
- *cultural workshops* – hands-on learning and skills development in community arts, crafts, and heritage;
- *community cultural projects* – activities that promote and display community arts and/or heritage and explore or celebrate a community's or a cultural sub-sector's identity.

1a.3 Eligibility and funding

An eligible applicant is a community organization or agency. Activities that are eligible for support under the division's Project Assistance to Organizations and Small Groups Program are not eligible under the Cultural Activities Program.

The department's contribution will not exceed 50 per cent of eligible costs and normally will not exceed a maximum of \$5,000. As well, the combination of provincial and federal funding for the project should not exceed 75 per cent of project costs.

Capital building development costs and equipment purchase costs will not be considered eligible. Fundraising events are not eligible for support. An applicant normally will receive funding for the same activity for no more than two consecutive years.

1b. Grants to Organizations and Small Groups

There are three project programs for grants to organizations and small groups. Applicants may make one application to each program at each deadline.

1b.1 Program goals

- *production/presentation* – to assist with the production of a specific work or program for presentation to the public. Amount available: 50% of total project costs up to a maximum of \$15,000.
- *commissioning* – to assist groups and organizations to commission new work. Amount available: 100% of cost of commission up to a maximum of \$3,000.
- *professional development* – to assist professional arts organizations to strengthen the artistic or administrative capacity of the organization and/or the artistic communities with which they work. Amount Available: 50% of the costs of the project up to a maximum of \$3,000.

Applicants must be able to show they have been working together for at least one year prior to applying. Applicants are not required to be formally registered or incorporated organizations.

1b.2 Activities assisted

Organizations eligible to apply for project grants include; professional arts organizations (eg. theatre companies, music groups, dance troupes, public art galleries, and artist run spaces.) Arts organizations which present the work of professional artists or make it possible for professional artists to produce and present work are also eligible (eg. local arts councils and community theatres.) Organizations that do not have an arts focus, but would like to undertake

a project that engages the services of professional artists or professional arts organizations or groups, may also be eligible to apply (e.g. band councils, municipal councils and heritage organizations). It is advisable to contact the Program Officer well in advance of the application deadline date to determine eligibility.

1b.3 Eligibility and funding

This program can accept applications which involve the creation, production, presentation, and professional development of professional work in all artistic disciplines. At present, applications to assist sound recording projects, publishing, production crafts or commercial film production are NOT eligible.

Grants in this program are as high as \$15,000, but it is realistic to expect no more than \$10,000, and only if matched by a 33% to 50% contribution by the theatre.

1c. Industry Growth Program

Nova Scotia's culture sector is recognized as fast growing with potential to diversify the economy and stimulate job creation by attracting local, national and international interest with significant potential for growth. This program is designed to encourage growth that will translate into opportunities for individuals, businesses and communities throughout the province.

1c.1 Program goals

Cultural Industry Growth

The division recognizes that creativity is an important part of cultural identity and it is expressed in many ways. In fact, much of the culture acquired by people today comes from our cultural industry. This industry includes people involved in design, film and video, new media, production crafts, publishing, and sound recording or any business involved in the manufacture of products that express ideas or values, provide entertainment, or have a functional or decorative use. The division recognizes that a focused and successful effort to grow these industries can only be achieved through partnerships. The division, therefore, will partner with cultural industries in Nova Scotia to:

- enhance out-of-province sales of Nova Scotia's cultural products;
- enhance market readiness of cultural producers;
- improve technical and export capabilities of a product, skill or facility;
- expand market opportunities, earned revenues and earned revenue potential.

Community Cultural Development

The division aims to support opportunities for people to participate in and build the social, economic, educational and spiritual life of their community. The Culture Division's goals in the area of community cultural development are to:

- develop new and strengthen existing relationships among groups and organizations engaged in cultural activities;
- encourage more cultural activities that explore and/or celebrate a community's or a cultural sub-sector's identity;
- encourage more participation in and access to cultural activities;
- encourage the development of Nova Scotia's cultural diversity;
- support activity which contributes to the long-term development of the cultural sector.

Artistic Development

Government recognizes, supports, and celebrates the creative work of artists and the diversity of artistic expression within the cultural community, which includes fine crafts, literary, visual, media, and performing arts.

1c.2 Activities assisted

This program offers support for specific projects related to export development. Examples of supported activities include: participation in sector-related trade shows and showcases; marketing initiatives to attract new out-of-province clients; touring with the intent to sell product in new markets; bringing sector-recognized buyers to Nova Scotia. The purchase of capital equipment and the development of product are not considered eligible under the program.

1c.3 Eligibility and funding

This program is cost shareable at a rate of up to 75%, with a maximum provincial involvement of \$10,000.00.

2. Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

ACOA could support Th'YARC through its Innovative Communities Fund (ICF).

2a.1 Program goals

The Fund invests in strategic projects that build sustainable economic growth for Atlantic Canada's communities. Working in partnership with communities and stakeholders, ICF focuses on investments that:

- develop competitive, productive, strategic industry sectors;
- strengthen community infrastructure in rural communities; and
- enhance a community's capacity to overcome economic development challenges and take advantage of their strengths, assets and opportunities presented.

2a.2 Activities assisted

Identified priorities for ICF funding include projects that:

- are compatible with the overall objectives of the ICF and clearly demonstrate linkages and partnerships within the community;
- are beneficial to the economic development of a community;
- are consistent with economic development plans that address the challenges and opportunities of a community;
- lead to sustainable and viable economic activity;
- are incremental in nature;
- are of a fixed duration; and
- demonstrate adequate managerial, financial and technical capability to conduct the proposed activity.

1c.3 Eligibility and funding

Eligible recipients include non-commercial/not-for-profit organizations such as local development associations, municipalities and their agencies, business or technology institutes, industry/sector associations, economic development associations, local co-operatives, universities and educational institutions. The program is funded with \$175 million over five years. Assistance is non-repayable. The amount provided to each individual project will be determined by an assessment of the level of funding necessary to allow the project to proceed.

Pictou's Decoste Centre's recent \$700,000 renovation was 65% funded through a similar program, although comparable centres suggested it would be more common for such projects go forward on a 40-50% ACOA participation basis.

ACOA's Account Manager indicated that the agency prefers funding proposals where three levels of government are involved at a combined funding partnership no greater than 90%, and local fundraising would account for at least 10%. In-kind contributions are important, but cannot be used to leverage cash from the ICF. With the Federal election underway, ACOA is able to review applications, but no decisions can be made before February, 2006.

Funding for a project manager is on a 50/50 basis. Through the Innovative Communities Fund, successful projects can expect a 50% rebate on GST expenditures.

Generally, ACOA would like to see a concept paper first. If accepted, a full proposal would then be required.

3. Heritage Canada – Cultural Spaces

Cultural Spaces Canada seeks to improve physical conditions for artistic creativity and innovation. It is also designed to increase access for Canadians to performing arts, visual arts, media arts, and to museum collections and heritage displays. The Program supports the improvement, renovation and construction of arts and heritage facilities, and the acquisition of specialized equipment as well as conducting feasibility studies.

3a.1 Program goals

The Cultural Spaces Canada Program (CSC) contributes to improved physical conditions for artistic creativity and innovation. It is designed to increase and improve access for Canadians to performing arts, visual arts, media arts, and to museum collections, heritage displays and exhibitions. CSC supports the improvement, renovation and construction of arts and heritage facilities, and the acquisition of specialized equipment as well as conducting feasibility studies for cultural infrastructure projects.

The program will result in the:

- increased number of cultural facilities and improved infrastructures;
- improved quality and standards of cultural facilities and infrastructures;
- enhanced effectiveness of the operations of funded organizations.

3a.2 Activities assisted

- feasibility studies related to CSC program objectives, such as those that examine approaches for the development of new facilities or the renovation of existing ones;
- fees and professional honoraria related to the project and to CSC program reporting requirements (including audit fees);
- professional costs related to architectural or engineering designs, heritage studies, risk assessments, technical studies, and environmental assessments;
- costs related to the acquisition of a property;
- various fees related to property transfers;
- costs related to building, adaptive re-use or renovating a building, including materials, demolition, excavation, labour, etc. and related fixed capital costs;
- costs related to "green" construction and environmentally sound building practices;
- specialized equipment purchases as well as their installation costs and initial training related to their operation. For arts facilities, eligible types of specialized equipment include any piece of specialized technical equipment that is not permanently installed in the space and is specifically related to the artistic purpose of the facility. Examples for creation, production and/or presentation purposes include: sound systems, lighting equipment, stage curtains, staging or rigging equipment, multi-media equipment, and portable dance floors.

For heritage institutions, a separate list of eligible project costs is available from Heritage Canada.

3a.3 Eligibility and funding

Generally, the program offers support of up to 33% of eligible project costs for construction, adaptive re-use or renovation, and of up to 50% of eligible project costs for specialized equipment purchases or feasibility studies. Funding is focused primarily on up-grading existing theatre infrastructure rather than building new, or renovating, physical plants. As with other funding programs, this program offers a dollar for dollar matching fund opportunity.

Under exceptional circumstances, the program may consider increased levels of support towards eligible project costs. Exceptional circumstances are determined by the Department of Canadian Heritage and may include projects occurring in rural or remote areas or in underserved populations (such as Aboriginal, youth, official language minority and culturally diverse communities) where the need is clearly demonstrated and justified.

Non-profit arts and heritage organizations incorporated under Part II of the Canada Business Corporations Act or under corresponding provincial or territorial legislation are eligible. Applicants must have a clear artistic or heritage focus as part of their vision or mandate that is reflected in their by-laws and/or other governance documents.

Provincial/territorial governments, municipal or regional governments, and their agencies, as well as First Nations and Inuit equivalent governments, are also eligible. Federal organizations and Federal crown corporations are not eligible for funding.

Applications are prioritized and assessed according to the following criteria:

- *Availability of spaces* – impact of the project on the number and/or capacity of available spaces for artistic creation or presentation, or for the exhibition and preservation of heritage collections at the local, regional and/or national level
- *Quality of spaces* – impact of the project on the modernization, security and safety of spaces for artistic creation or presentation; for the exhibition and preservation of heritage collections; for audience comfort and accessibility to artistic creation or presentation; for the exhibition and preservation of heritage collections; or for the benefit to other arts and heritage organizations at the local, regional and/or national level
- *Financial feasibility of the project and future impact on the organization* – expected impact on the level of satisfaction for artists, staff and other users (rental organizations, volunteers, etc.) toward working spaces for artistic creation or presentation, or for the exhibition and preservation of heritage collections; confirmation of other sources of revenues and the financial health of your organization; sound organizational management; expected level of self-generated revenues after project completion; and deficit free operations after project completion.
- *Access to and participation in arts and heritage experiences* – impact of the project on the capacity to reach new audiences or to enhance or diversify programming; impact of

the project on underserved disciplines, communities and groups; links to the expected results of the CSC program; ability to measure the expected results of the project.

Processing an application may take up to six months to complete. While an application may be assessed as meeting the CSC program objectives, funding is highly competitive and there is no guarantee of support.

Other Cultural Spaces funding of interest to Th'YARC is offered in two programs as follows.

3b. Arts Presentation Canada

3b.1 Program objective

Arts Presentation Canada gives Canadians direct access to diverse, quality artistic experiences through financial assistance to arts presenters or the organizations that support them. The outcome will be that Canadian communities of all backgrounds will have the opportunity to participate in and benefit from the broadest possible range of artistic experiences.

3b.2 Activities assisted

Launched May 2nd 2001, Arts Presentation Canada has thus far financially contributed to more than 1000 events or season presenters of live professional performances and other similar activities in more than 224 cities or communities.

The Program has two components:

- the Programming Support Component for existing presenter organizations, arts festivals, presenter networks and service organizations;
- the Development Component to support the emergence or professional development of presenters and presenter networks for under-served communities or artistic practices. (Please contact your regional office for further details on the Development Component).

3b.3 Eligibility and funding

Canadian, non-profit organizations incorporated under Part II of the *Canada Corporations Act* (or under corresponding provincial or territorial legislation) that present, in a professional manner, artistic experiences originating from more than one province or territory or, that strengthen networking activities of Canadian performing arts presenters. Presenters that are provincial/territorial, municipal institutions or First Nation Tribal or Band Council / Inuit Organizations will also be considered. For activities that will start after April 1st, 2007, the application deadlines are April 30 and September 30, 2006.

3c. Canadian Arts and Heritage Sustainability Program *Capacity Building Component for Heritage Organizations*

3c.1 Program goals

Funding is available to support organizations wishing to enhance and improve:

- governance structure;
- management practices;
- financial self-sufficiency;
- development of new or diversified audiences.

Applicants are requested to focus their projects on one key capacity building area per application. Projects may include the planning or implementation stages. Applications must clearly demonstrate that the project is a new activity or a new approach to an ongoing activity that creates additional organizational capacity. In other words, the project will transform the way the organization operates.

3c.2 Activities assisted

- examine and change/improve your organization's governance structure or practices;
- re-assess organizational strengths and weaknesses as a first step towards improving organizational capacity;
- develop a new business plan or strategic plan;
- review and develop new management policies and procedures in core management areas, i.e. financial services, human resources (including succession planning);
- marketing, communications, outreach or audience development;
- seek new collaborations and partnerships for the development of organizational efficiencies or new models of organizational structure;
- examine new ways to broaden markets or networking potential;
- develop new revenue generating strategies;
- re-examine the organization's position within the community and develop strategies to improve accessibility and reach new and diversified audiences.

3c.3 Eligibility and funding

Funds under this program are available as either a grant or a contribution, depending on the amount requested and a risk assessment. Approved projects normally receive up to a maximum of 50% of eligible project costs. Funding priorities under this program include organizations which are rural or remotely situated. Funding support from public sources (all levels of government) cannot exceed 90% of all project revenues. The review process may take up to six months to be completed. Projects under review must not be not currently benefiting

financially from a Stabilization Project; and must not have a substantial accumulated deficit greater than 25% of their latest annual operating revenue. The organization must employ the equivalent of one full time professional staff.

3d. New funding

On November 23, 2005, the Minister of Canadian Heritage announced an investment of \$342 million over the next three years to increase funding for arts organizations throughout Canada, especially major centres of excellence such as the National Ballet of Canada, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, the Canadian Opera Company and the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton.

This announcement doubled the Council's funding so that it will reach \$300 million by 2008. The new funding will allow the best arts organizations in all regions of Canada to attain new standards of creative excellence and innovation. The increased funding for artists' tours and shows, both in Canada and abroad, will enable people from Canada and elsewhere to share the richness of Canada's cultural excellence -- in all its diversity.

Funding for this initiative was provided for in the February 2005 federal budget. Implementation details, and potential impact on community organizations such as Th'YARC, will not be known before the upcoming federal election.

Appendix V
Architectural assessment report

Th'YARC

Yarmouth, Nova Scotia

Prepared for

Novaway Planning & Communications

December 2005

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A. INTRODUCTION

This report is prepared in conjunction with Novaway Planning & Communications as a part of a feasibility study and business plan for the Yarmouth Arts Regional Council. The existing arts centre known as Th'YARC is located on Parade Street in Yarmouth. The following report is based on information provided by the council including;

- Various drawings of the existing facility (not complete),
- Various proposed alterations,
- Annual operating cost 2004 - 2005,
- Some committee reports,
- A list of concerns offered by the council in terms of operations, programs concerns, and a generalized wish list (Oct 4th, 2005).

This report is intended to be read in conjunction with Novaway Planning feasibility study and business plan and is intended to provide the Yarmouth Arts Regional Council with a generalized assessment of their building and sites. It is intended to assist them in obtaining level-of-effort budgets and commentary to allow Th'YARC to move forward.

This report is based on visual inspections only. No removals or testing were performed as a part of the work.

B. DISCLAIMER

This report prepared by Jost Architects Ltd. is solely for the account of Novaway Planning and the Yarmouth Arts Regional Council. The material reflects our best judgment in light of the information available and observations made prior to the time of preparation. Any use which a third party makes of this report or any reliance on or decisions to be based upon it are solely the responsibility of such third parties. Jost Architects Ltd. accepts no responsibility for damages, if any, suffered by any third party as a result of decisions made or actions based upon this report.

C. BACKGROUND

Background information used for the preparation of the report includes the following:

1. Notes from meeting October 4th, 2005 (Th'YARC representatives)
2. Various drawings (incomplete) which appear to have been prepared at the time of construction with some subsequent modifications. Markers on prints
3. Copies of energy consumption records and financial statements these generally include information for 2005, 2004, and 2003.

4. Copies of deeds for two parcels of land. One for the purchase of the original property on Parade Street dated November 1974 and a second deed for the purchase of the second lot between the back (north) of Th'YARC property and the town property. Note no survey has been completed.

D. WORK COMPLETED

1. Review of the background information.
2. Preliminary contact and review with the Town of Yarmouth Planning Department and Town of Yarmouth Planning Department requirements.
3. Preliminary review of the existing building in terms of the 1995 National Building Code.
4. Discussions with representatives of Th'YARC regarding building related issues with regards to operations, space, or identified problems.
5. Walk through inspections (2) limited to those areas normally visible.
6. Preparation of digitized "as-found" floor plans indicating building layout by plan.
7. Preparation of digitized site plan (approximate) based on surveys, assessment data, and other information.
8. Preparation of digitized building sections based on what appear to be original design drawings.

E. ASSESSMENT

The existing Th'YARC on Parade Street is a wood framed building. It was constructed and renovated from a former service station and car dealership. Anecdotal records indicate that the majority of the construction was completed using volunteer labour. The building has been in continuous use for 26 years and has received no major renovation since its original construction. Originally built with weathered board siding, asphalt shingle roof, and painted drywall interior walls, the building is reported to have functioned well with the following exceptions. There have been recurrent leakage problems associated with the various roof pitches and protrusions and issues of environmental control including the ability to operate effectively during winter months or to reduce heat build up during summer operations.

During the preparation of this report a new two-ply modified bitumen roofing system was being installed over the original building configuration with some modifications made to windows and other openings to try to reduce water infiltration and replace deteriorated material. This installation was commissioned by the council and not a part of our scope of work. The building is electrically heated using baseboard resistant heaters or force flow fan units. This choice of heating system although flexible has a high operating cost and the building is not

effectively insulated in all areas or fully weather tight. The building has not been operated for January, February, and March for many years. There is a ventilation system in the theatre portion. We did not test or assess the system however, the reports from the operating staff are that its operation is of limited effect.

Our brief tours of the building revealed no major surface signs for concern. It is clear that the building was built by amateurs and much of the work is not of professional caliber. It seems very clear that the building was built on a restricted budget and no doubt many of the decisions and resulting work were made to minimize cost. This being said, the building remains in usable condition and continues to operate and serve the needs of its occupants although modifications would be warranted for both program and operation.

Concern was expressed on a number of occasions throughout the preparation of the report about potential environmental issues particularly as associated with its former use in the car service business. At one time both car servicing and fuel sales occurred on the site with the potential of hydrocarbon contamination from associated products and services. The issue of mold contamination from recurrent leaks has also been raised. There are some areas visible (particularly in the lobby and in the second floor art room) where water damage has occurred. No attempt was made to ascertain the extent of damage or the presence of mold as a part of this report. The surface damage visible however should be relatively easy to repair as a part of a major up-grading. The potential of mold could be addressed at the time when walls would be opened up and the extent of damage can be better determined.

Should no renovation program be undertaken, remedial action associated with the water damage and potential contamination, will have to be addressed as a separate item.

Facility Revitalization Wish list

The following list was provided by Th'YARC with the priorities set as

(a) General

1. Roof & windows,
2. Climate control,
3. Seating.

(b) Wish list Theatre

1. Climate control
2. New seating
3. New computerized lighting and sound equipment
4. Removal of columns
5. New stage curtains

- (c) **Multi-use**
 - 1. Expanded parking facilities
 - 2. Modernized bar facilities
 - 3. Expanded ladies bathroom
 - 4. Climate control for the entire building

- (d) **Other possible expansion**
 - 1. Dance studio
 - 2. Rehearsal stage
 - 3. Set storage
 - 4. Kitchen facilities for catering and dinner theatre
 - 5. Arts gallery

As a part of the Novaway Planning research it appears that although there maybe interest within the arts community for enhanced or additional spaces the necessary funds to support these spaces will not be forthcoming. On this basis the potential for any addition to the existing Th'YARC was considered only from the perspective of providing the most economic solution to existing operational and space difficulties. The following notes review the issues raised by Th'YARC with some general commentary.

F. RECOMMENDATIONS

Roof & Windows: (A-1) Monitor new installation carefully ensure manufacturers warranties are in place (if applicable). Do thorough review with contractor prior to 1 year expiration of construction warranty.

Climate Control: (A-2,B-1,C-4) The existing building is serviced only by resistance electric space heating and a ventilation system serving the lobby and theatre. In the past two years (2004-2005) Th'YARC has consumed approximately \$10,000.00 to \$12,000.00 of electricity in a year. It is important that the council set its requirements prior to embarking on a system change. This should identify their proposed season of operation and in particular should reference possible use in the winter months and the requirement for air conditioning in the summer. These two decisions will set the standard at the maximums in developing a new climate control system better suited to Th'YARC's needs and to current standards. One item of paramount concern should be the installation and proper operation of a control system which will allow for the varied uses of the various spaces both by numbers of occupancies and by timing. Such a control system would shut down systems in unused areas or precondition spaces as required prior to occupancy using preset times or remote operation. The clear task here for Th'YARC is to set the standards and to review with a qualified consultant to determine the most effective way to satisfy these requirements. Level-of-effort budgets have included the installation of a complete new system.

Seating: (A-3,B-2) The existing seating is a mixture of benches constructed 26 years ago with limited padding and theatre seats acquired from renovation of another theatre. These newer seats are narrow and poorly padded. Allowance for new seating is included in the budgets.

New Computerized Lighting and Sound Equipment: (B-3) This has been assessed by a consultant to Novaway Planning with the proposal for replacement system and the cost of this are included in the level-of-effort budgets.

Removal of Columns: (B-4) The theatre currently sits 327 patrons. It appears from our site investigations and from the original drawings that two columns now in the seating area are located at the site of the former exterior wall of the car dealership. It appears that at some point during the design and/or construction the theatre was enlarged and this was the solution to allow for the extra seating. In general these columns could be removed but the most likely economic solution would be the removal of the roof framing and roofing and the installation of a complete new roof structure. This possibility should be carefully weighted at the time of any major renovation program. No specific allowance has been budgeted.

New Stage Curtains: (B-5) These have been included in the level-of-effort budgeting.

Expanded Parking Facilities: (C-1) The existing site appears to have had water problems from Th'YARC's construction. Interception ditches are located on all sides of the building. However, some areas of the existing floor are set below the surrounding grade and in general the site slopes in toward the building sloping north to south so that there have been occasions of flooding. The existing parking lot accommodates approximately 60 cars which is more than would be required under the current zoning requirements. Our discussions with the Town of Yarmouth have not concluded the availability of storm sewers on Parade Street. In the level-of-effort budgets allowance has been included for re-grading and re-surfacing to provide both renovated parking space and better access to the building.

Modernized Bar Facility: (C-2) In both the renovation budgets and new construction budgets allowance have been made to provide Th'YARC with new or newly renovated spaces for all existing functional areas.

Expanded Ladies Bathroom: (C-3) A review of the 1995 National Building Code indicates that Th'YARC is currently deficient in the number of washrooms (male & female) and further these washrooms do not meet current standards for barrier-free access. Level-of-effort budgets have included provision to replace existing washrooms with newly constructed both in number and standard.

Other Possible Expansion: (D) In the level-of-effort budgeting expansion has been included for costume storage and for set preparation. This would be

accomplished by an addition or stand alone building to the existing Th'YARC. For comparison purposes these areas are included in the level-of-effort budgets for the new construction.

Building Code: Th'YARC representatives indicate there are no outstanding issues from "authorities having jurisdiction" such as the Office of the Fire Marshal, Building Inspector, or Insurance inspections for Th'YARC. A major renovation may require existing facilities to be brought up to current standard. On this basis we reviewed the 1995 National Building Code for general compliance. The prime issues in the preliminary review were as follows:

1. Number of washrooms.
2. Barrier-free access to all public spaces within the building.
3. The requirement for sprinklers throughout the building.
4. A number of fire separations and ratings which may not currently exist or maybe deficient.

Any program for Th'YARC for a new or renovated building must address these issues as a part of the normal building development. The general application of standards on an existing building is somewhat less clear in that this may be a balance of due diligence, requirements, and good sense. A major renovation program would generally eliminate any "grandfather" status for existing noncompliance. Both under the 1995 National Building Code and the 2005 Building Code compliance could be achieved by negotiation and alternative. The 2005 edition however removes many of the prescriptive requirements of previous codes.

G. SUMMARY

Th'YARC in its current form is 26 years old without a major maintenance program or revitalization. Much of the original work was completed by volunteers and is non professional in standard. To date we have identified no failures or signs of failure. The case for Th'YARC for the "Council" is to establish their requirements and standards and to proceed in that direction. Level-of-effort budgets provided for both renovated and new construction have attempted to address the cost in terms of professionally constructed spaces on a comparable size and level of finish. The standard included in the renovation budgets is for professionally completed spaces and finishes. Budgets could be reduced by a reduction of standard or elimination of some of the program and operational requirements previously indicated.

For budget purposes total areas for renovated space and total new space are equal. It is our belief that many of the planning and space difficulties could be modified within the bounds of the existing building to give a more functional building. The construction of a new building of similar area should allow the council to construct a facility which eliminates the existing conflicts and puts the emphasis

in those areas of greatest important at the time of design. Total space could be reallocated on the basis of current priorities rather than what is practical to alter.

The budget provided for new construction is based on the use of the existing site. Therefore the building construction cost (which uses the same square footage construction cost as the Sperry Report of January 2003) includes the cost of demolition of the existing building and the development of new site work. This cost exclusive of demolition would be common to any new site. Caution must be exercised as each site may have special requirements.

The common elements on the existing site are parking and the possibility of environmental clean up. The allowance for environmental clean up is added only to establish a financial link item. Projected costs must be based on an environmental assessment.

Our initial assessment indicates that it would be possible to construct a new building similar in size to the existing on the north part of the existing property without interfering with the existing building. This possibility would allow the Council to construct a new building while operating the existing and thus losing no operational time.

If the existing building were to be renovated it could be phased to provide a minimum of impact on the occupants on a phased basis. This somewhat complicates construction and costing, however it can be done if phased as a part of the planning process. A phasing program could be matched with the existing operational season with a three month shut down during the winter. This is the time that the theatre might be renovated effectively not changing the operating schedule for calendar year yet allow the building to be completely renovated.

H. CONCLUSION

The existing building is in need of refurbishment. No disqualifiers have been identified to exclude this possibility. The building would require a detailed physical assessment and the site requires environmental assessment and survey. A detailed building assessment should support the general and preliminary assessment provided by this report however it could conclude there are unseen difficulties which are not practical to resolve. An environmental assessment will be required for the continued use of the site for either a new or renovated building. The preliminary assessment concludes that it will cost approximately double to construct new over a renovated structure. Decisions on renovation, new construction, and locale maybe dictated by funding agencies.

Jost Architects Ltd.

Harry V. Jost, B.Arch, MRAIC

Opinion of Probable Cost #1

Project Th'YARC Construct New on Existing Site		Date December 12, 2005		
Location Yarmouth		Gross Building Area SF 14,050		
Job Number 0560		Submission Stage Concept		
Construction Element and Sub-Division	Element Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Environmental Clean-up		LS	\$	50,000.00
Demolition of Existing Building		LS	\$	50,000.00
Building Cost	14050	SF	\$ 250.00	\$ 3,512,500.00
Site Development		LS	\$	150,000.00
			SUB-TOTAL	\$ 3,762,500.00
Contingency			15%	\$ 564,375.00
			SUB-TOTAL	\$ 4,326,875.00
Soft Costs			10%	\$ 432,687.50
			SUB-TOTAL	\$ 4,759,562.50
HST			15%	\$ 713,934.38
OPINION OF PROBABLE COST				\$ 5,473,496.88

Jost Architects Ltd.

Harry V. Jost, B.Arch, MRAIC

Opinion of Probable Cost #2

Project Th'YARC Renovation of Existing		Date December 12, 2005		
Location Yarmouth		Gross Building Area SF 12,800		
Job Number 0560		Submission Stage Concept		
Construction Element and Sub-Division	Element Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Environmental Clean-up	Guestimate		\$	50,000.00
Mobilization			\$	115,000.00
Demolition			\$	20,000.00
Site Development (drainage, parking)		LS	\$	75,000.00
Seating	327	EA	\$ 250.00	\$ 81,750.00
Theatre Curtain		LS	\$	15,000.00
Washrooms (2 New Public)		LS	\$	50,000.00
General Building Revisions (Exterior)	464	LF	\$ 107.76	\$ 50,000.00
General Building Revisions (Interior)	12800	SF	\$ 35.00	\$ 448,000.00
Mechanical / Electrical (includes climate control)	12800	SF	\$ 25.00	\$ 320,000.00
Lighting and Sound System (Th'Yarc Theatrical Equipment Sight Survey Recommendations prepared by Robin Creelman)	1	LS	\$	200,000.00
Building Code Issues (Barrier Free Access, Sprinklers, Fire Ratings)	12800		\$ 5.00	\$ 64,000.00
<u>New Construction</u>				
Set Construction / Storage Area	750.0	SF	\$ 50.00	\$ 37,500.00
Costume Storage	500.0	SF	\$ 50.00	\$ 25,000.00
			SUB-TOTAL	\$ 1,551,250.00
G.C. O/H&P			10%	\$ 155,125.00
			SUB-TOTAL	\$ 1,706,375.00
Contingency			15%	\$ 255,956.25
			SUB-TOTAL	\$ 1,962,331.25
Soft Costs			10%	\$ 196,233.13
			SUB-TOTAL	\$ 2,158,564.38
HST			15%	\$ 323,784.66
OPINION OF PROBABLE COST				\$ 2,482,349.03