



**City of Kingston  
Report to Council  
Report Number 24-128**

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**To:** Mayor and Members of Council  
**From:** Jennifer Campbell, Commissioner, Community Services  
**Resource Staff:** Ruth Noordegraaf, Director, Housing & Social Services  
Danika Lochhead, Acting Director, Arts & Culture Services  
**Date of Meeting:** April 16, 2024  
**Subject:** H'Art Centre Service Level Agreement

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**Council Strategic Plan Alignment:**

Theme: 4. Foster a Caring and Inclusive Community

Goal: 4.1 Enhance community safety and well-being.

**Executive Summary:**

This report is to seek Council's direction to enter into a Service Level Agreement with the H'Art Centre, through the new Community Development & Wellbeing Department, which will also include the City's IIDEA (Indigenization, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility) functions. This agreement supports a community service partnership with the H'Art Centre to provide high quality and relevant services and programs that respond to community needs. This partnership also aligns with the City's [Community Safety and Well-Being Plan](#) (CSWB) that aims to build a resilient community that fosters cooperation, builds capacity, increases connectedness and ensures essential needs are met.

The [H'Art Centre](#) is a registered not-for-profit organization that provides programming for adults with disabilities and those facing barriers, creating opportunities to build skills and connections through arts and culture. The H'Art Centre also functions as a community hub, creating a physical space that is safe and welcoming for its programming participants and their families and support circles, as well as volunteers and audiences. Programming at the H'Art Centre is supported by local community artists, who bring inclusive, mixed ability arts facilitation techniques and knowledge to support artistic creation and production. The H'art Centre is providing a unique service in the Kingston community filling a need that is currently not provided

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by the corporation or any other organization. The Service Level Agreement will outline the key objectives and direction for the H'Art Centre and identify the services to be delivered on behalf of the City that align with City-approved strategies and plans. The agreement will also include \$40,000 in financial support to assist the H'Art Centre in delivering the services outlined within the Service Level Agreement. This funding was included in the approved 2024 operating budget of the Arts & Culture Services department. The funding will be re-stated to the Community Development & Wellbeing department budget, pending approval by Council to enter into the proposed Agreement with H'Art Centre.

**Recommendation:**

**That** Council approve entering into a one-year Service Level Agreement with the H'Art Centre, that can be renewed annually pending Council approval and confirmation of associated budget, for an amount of \$40,000 in 2024, for the services identified between the City of Kingston and the H'Art Centre, ending March 31, 2025; and

**That** the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to execute a Service Level Agreement between the City of Kingston and H'Art Centre that identifies the services to be provided by the H'Art Centre and the associated funding issued by the City of Kingston for those services, in a form satisfactory to the Director of Legal Services.

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**Authorizing Signatures:**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

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**Jennifer Campbell,  
Commissioner, Community  
Services**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

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**Lanie Hurdle, Chief  
Administrative Officer**

**Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:**

Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Growth & Development Services	Not required
Neil Carbone, Commissioner, Corporate Services	Not required
David Fell, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Peter Huigenbos, Commissioner, Major Projects & Strategic Initiatives	Not required
Brad Joyce, Commissioner, Infrastructure, Transportation & Emergency Services	Not required
Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	

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**Options/Discussion:****Background**

The H'Art Centre understands that people with developmental disabilities in the Kingston community have much to offer, and the arts are a valuable vehicle to help create strong connections and well-being. Over the last 20 years, the H'Art Centre has grown from a small organization in a storefront studio to a thriving community hub with a vision to nurture inclusive arts for all abilities and to promote health, community relationships and skills development for adults with disabilities. The H'art Centre is providing a unique service in the Kingston community filling a need that is currently not provided by the corporation or any other organization

The H'Art Centre is currently looking for a new home base location in Kingston and City staff having been assisting them in their review of properties to identify possible options that will enable the centre to continue to deliver its key services and support the community. The City funding proposed through this report will assist H'Art in ensuring sustained community programming as they move through this transition to a new home. It is expected that H'Art will continue to raise funding both through program fees where appropriate, as well as through fundraising campaigns, non-City funded grant applications and sponsorship campaigns as their board see appropriate. An Impact Report for the H'Art Centre is included in this report (Exhibit A) and more information is available through the [H'Art Centre website](#).

The H'Art Centre has received City of Kingston funding for many years, including from various granting programs such as the Community Investment Fund (project funding) and the City of Kingston Arts Fund (operating and project funding). Alongside of these grants, approximately 50% of the H'Art Centre's operational funding comes from fees paid by program participants. Under the terms of the proposed Service Level Agreement, and any future agreement renewals, the H'Art Centre will no longer be eligible to receive any other City of Kingston grants. In place of these variable grant funds, the H'Art Centre will receive \$40,000 in operational funding to assist the Centre in the delivery of services on behalf of the City and as described within the Service Level Agreement.

The recommendation to enter into a Service Level Agreement at this time, to be renewed annually assuming continued Council direction and associated budget approvals, reflects that key services have been identified to be delivered by the H'Art Centre on behalf of the City and in alignment with City strategic plans. A key priority in the City Council Strategic Plan (2023-2026) is to foster a caring and inclusive community where everyone can be safe, healthy, nourished and welcomed. As such, the Community Development & Wellbeing Department will be established in the spring of 2024 to help drive forward this strategic priority. Among other work plan items for this new department is the update to, and implementation of, items in the Community Safety and Well-being Plan and the Age Friendly Plan, both of which benefit from the services to be provided through a Service Level Agreement with the H'Art Centre.

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## Analysis

Through the Agreement, it's anticipated that the H'Art Centre will provide the following services on behalf of the City:

- Provide low or no barrier access to learning, skill-building, and development opportunities for adults with disabilities and their families, to help nurture greater inclusion, community connection and well-being;
- Deliver training and education through the [Mixability Program](#) to community facilitators, working to build capacity of organizations and practitioners in working with adults with disabilities;
- Align programming and services with the City's [Community Safety and Well-being Plan](#), [Age Friendly Plan](#), [Indigenization, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility \(IIDEA\) Work Plan](#), [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#) (2023-2025) and Community Development Framework, where appropriate, and deliver partnership-based programming that supports these priorities and expands access to the H'Art Centre; and
- Report to the City on the impact of services based on a set of measurables to be developed between the City and H'Art, which will likely include number of residents, including families and support networks, impacted through access to programming; number of artists employed and fees paid; diversity of participants and programming offerings; number of programs, workshops and training sessions delivered and number of participants; diversity of partnerships to deliver programming aligned with City priorities; and qualitative data such as statements from program participants, audiences and families.

## Indigenization, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility (IIDEA) Considerations

The Service Level Agreement between the H'Art Centre and the City of Kingston supports the IIDEA work plan mandate that includes engagement with the community around equity, diversity and inclusion through information exchange, knowledge sharing and partnerships.

The Agreement also supports various strategies included in the City's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2023-2025), including the removal of barriers that improve access to creative and arts-based experiences. It's also aligned with strategies in the Plan that were captured for future implementation, such as developing free therapeutic recreation programming and opportunities for those with disabilities and partnering those programs with information sharing for other relevant service programs. While the Plan does not specifically name arts and culture-based programming for adults with disabilities, the proposed Service Level Agreement acknowledges the intersectionality of social issues and the value in providing creative opportunities for people with disabilities to create community bonds and learn and gain new skills.

## Financial Considerations

Funding of \$40,000 to support the one-year Service Level Agreement with the H'Art Centre has been included in the Arts & Culture Services department 2024 operating budget. The funding

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will be re-stated to the Community Development & Wellbeing department budget, pending approval by Council to enter into the Agreement with the H'Art Centre. Future renewals to the Service Level Agreement will be anticipated in the development of future operating budgets, and subject to Council direction and budget approvals.

**Contacts:**

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Danika Lochhead, Acting Director, Arts & Culture Services, 613-546-4291 extension 1277

**Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:**

Vanessa Mensah, Manager, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Office

Alan McLeod, Senior Legal Counsel & Deputy City Solicitor, Legal Services

**Exhibits Attached:**

Exhibit A - H'Art Centre Impact Report



# OUR GOOD STORY

Throughout our 25 years, we've found ways to turn obstacles into opportunities to reflect our values & vision. Here's our timeline!



## LAUNCH

- Professional artist Katherine Porter offers a March Break class at LCVI High School, H'art is established as a not-for-profit charity. The Religious Hospitallers of St. Joseph provide a Montreal Street storefront.

## UNDERSTANDING

### A period to build the program & awareness

- Dozens of exhibits, events, and performances.
- Opportunities to educate people about the creative abilities of people with disabilities.
- Volunteer training develops
- St. Lawrence & Queen's University placements begin.
- Our first theatre production, Martadella's Gift (2003).

## COMMUNITY

### A time for people to show their support

- Inclusive dance program starts
- Endowment fund established
- Foundations, donors, sponsors, & service groups support multiple program & projects
- First book published, followed by four more
- Our push for inclusive post secondary results in Queen's IPSE, 5-year certificate for H'art artists & CICE at St. Lawrence

## INCLUSION

### A phase to break down barriers

- Able Artists starts, bringing artists to Kingston stages
- Build-in performing arts theatre, THE BOX
- Engage 30+ community groups + 3 resident groups
  - Deaf Spirit, Peerless, & The Conservatory
- Outreach to seniors begins
- Media Arts and Assistive Technology pilot

## COLLABORATION

### A period of growth and mixing abilities

- Newton The Musical (2013), Say What You Will (2014), RARE (PeerLess, 2014), Baboo (2015), Secret Life of Natalie (2016), Down Syndrome By the Dozen (2017)
- Outreach to seniors and long-term care homes begins

## SHARING

### A phase for training & spreading expertise

- 2018 Human Rights Arts Festival
- MixAbilities Inclusive Arts Training launches
- Inclusivity Guide online & Virtual H'art Studio
- THE MIX expands to support emerging groups
- Special Olympics Ontario/Art Gallery of Ontario talk
- National Arts Centre webinar
- First national arts exhibit invites 10+ inclusive arts groups from across Canada, Marine Museum partnership

## WHAT'S NEXT?

- National Donnecting Canadians Conference
- First inclusive opera-inspired production, HAPPY!



## Understanding

We value arts that share one's lived experiences and promote understanding.

20,000+  
audience members

1,100+  
placements & volunteers engaged

## Community

Diverse identities, perspectives & practices should be recognized, experienced & valued in our community.

33+

Number of Able Artists, professionals & leaders invited to Kingston to share

35+

Kingston arts groups engaged at the Centre impacting thousands



## Inclusion

We value the right of all people to study, enjoy, produce and experience the arts throughout their lives and as they age.

330+

Seniors in long-term care included through outreach

800+

took part in multigenerational weekend arts mixers

## Collaboration

We value the power of creating together in a collaborative way & learning from one another.

160+

professional artists involved

3

Local resident arts groups serving hundreds

20+

Successful partnership such as 2022's Marine Museum



## Sharing

We value sharing our model & practices locally, nationally, & internationally, including with Special Olympics Ontario/AGO & National Arts Centre

50+

MixAbilities trained artists, educators since 2018

10

Inclusive arts groups from across Canada

300+

Number of International MBA program students

2022 Business Excellence Award

2022 Mayor's Arts Champion Award

2021 Ontario Art Education Association/  
Community Art Educator of the Year



2018 Celebrating Accessibility Award

Recognition in the Senate of Canada

2017 Celebrating Accessibility Nominee

2012 City of Kingston Access Award