



Corporation of the City of Mississauga

Living Arts Centre & Meadowvale Theatre

Draft Report & Recommendations

January 2011

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Introduction

AMS Planning & Research was engaged by the Corporation of the City of Mississauga to analyze and make recommendations on the future role and identity of the Living Arts Centre and Meadowvale Theatre within the context of the new Culture Master Plan, adopted by Council in June 2009. In a complex structure and dynamic environment AMS developed a process designed to:

- conduct a rigorous and independent assessment of current practices, programs, and operating realities of the Living Arts Centre and Meadowvale Theatre;
- investigate and learn from high performing comparable institutions, including appropriate municipal arts venues located in the region;
- understand the impact of the Living Arts Centre on the physical environment and citizenry of Mississauga and develop recommendations for enhancement;
- create partnerships and synergies that support efficient delivery of services and spur accomplishment of the goals of the Culture Master Plan, including efficiencies that may result from a closer relationship with the Meadowvale Theatre;

- engage key stakeholders and the citizenry in a transparent, effective process that allows for participation and leads to consensus; and
- drive to informed recommendations regarding program mix, facility utilization, governance and financial planning that support a sustainable business model.

Methodology

AMS launched its study by conducting a thorough review of background materials. One-on-one and small group meetings were conducted with more than forty key stakeholders in the community. An independent financial and operational analysis provided a deeper understanding of the various lines of business as well as recent trends. An analysis of the market area characteristics as well as a study of existing patron lists from LAC and Meadowvale Theatre provided a snapshot of the approximate population of “cultural participators” in the trade area, audience characteristics in terms of demographics, lifestyles, and family lifecycle and where additional “audiences of opportunity” might be found most efficiently¹.

Using all of these inputs, AMS developed an objective and comprehensive understanding of the current conditions of the Living Arts Centre and Meadowvale Theatre.

¹ AMS was supported in this task by the City of Mississauga and Environics.

Subsequent research added depth and comparative data to our inquiry. A web-based community survey was conducted to develop a deeper understanding of community engagement and support for existing arts and cultural programming as well as opportunities for new program development to fill perceived gaps. In addition, awareness of and perceptions regarding the community benefits of the Living Arts Centre and Meadowvale Theatre were tested, as well as entertainment preferences, level of satisfaction with available programs, and obstacles to attendance.

Case studies were developed of four comparable institutions: Centre in the Square, in Kitchener, Ontario; Hamilton Place, in Hamilton, Ontario; California Center for the Arts, in Escondido, California; and Mesa Arts Center in Mesa, Arizona. Programming, finances, staffing, partnerships, facility utilization and market positioning were all analyzed to provide learnings and context. Additionally, a governance study was conducted which included best practices and trends in governance of municipally owned arts centres as well as an investigation of governance practices at seven Canadian arts centres.

Through a board self-assessment instrument members of the board of directors of the Living Arts Center and the Meadowvale Theatre Advisory Board were asked to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their governing structure;

the challenges facing the organization and the key board characteristics required to meet those challenges; and the relative presence of those characteristics within the board at this time.

This report draws on the findings from this work² to make preliminary recommendations concerning programming, community partnerships, operations, facility utilization and governance for the Living Arts Centre and Meadowvale Theatre.

Acknowledgements

It was a significant priority of the Culture Division of the City of Mississauga that this study take place in an environment of inclusion and transparency, while maintaining an “arms-length” independence, objectivity and analysis. It has been a pleasure to engage with the many individuals who gave us their time, observations and insights. Significant discourse and participation by the staff and Boards of both the Living Arts Centre and Meadowvale Theatre enriched our understanding of the current operations of those facilities. The elected officials and staff of the City provided background and context within which to test our ideas. Various arts leaders and artists took valuable hours out of their day to meet with us, send follow up thoughts and e-mails and otherwise provide

² Various interim reports and work product from the tasks as described are available in the Culture Division office.

important input on their artistic goals and environment in which they work.

Throughout our consulting assignment we have had the opportunity to work with the committed leadership and staff of the Culture Division of the City of Mississauga. A study of this magnitude requires intense organization, communication, flexibility and humor. We thank especially Susan Burt, Director, and Bonnie Dowhaniuk, Project Manager, for ensuring our success with those attributes and more.

Background

A Mayor's Task Force Report on the Arts in December 2005 included many recommendations which were subsequently adopted by the City: including the creation of an umbrella agency focused on the arts, which would then adopt a comprehensive vision and strategy for support of the arts (Culture Division, established in 2007, Culture Master Plan, adopted in 2009); increased financial support for the arts, with a peer review grant-making process for allocations out of the city agency rather than the Arts Council (per capita funding for the arts has increased from \$1.33 to \$3.00, with grant-making subsumed under the Culture Division in 2008); and the creation of an arts endowment out of the proceeds from the Mayor's Gala (through transferring funds to Mississauga Community Foundation, 2006).

A final recommendation of the report was to transfer accountability for the Living Arts Centre from its existing governance body into the new City agency. This recommendation was not adopted at the time; rather, through the creation of the Division and the subsequent Cultural Master Plan process, a further recommendation was made to "commission an independent study to review the Living Arts Centre and make recommendations about its future role within the context of the Culture Master Plan."

AMS was engaged in the Spring of 2010 to undertake this effort.

The study has been positioned not only to address the Living Arts Centre's current operation and service to the community but also to consider the context of several initiatives and priorities of the City, including the city's investment in Mississauga Celebration Square directly across the street from LAC; the establishment of a new campus for Sheridan College north of the LAC; and the potential creation of an arts and entertainment district for downtown Mississauga. Other factors to be considered from the City's Strategic Plan and Downtown Master Plan are: increased residential development in Downtown; the desire to recruit and retain the creative class of workers in the 25- to 40- year old cohort; a new transportation plan that proposes a range of mobility options; and environmental efforts to enhance quality of life and reduce costs. Finally, Mississauga is a community of tremendous diversity, to be celebrated and considered in any planning initiative for the community.

In commissioning the study, it was agreed that inclusion of the Meadowvale Theatre would help that facility and respond to existing opinions and questions among some key stakeholders in the community regarding the possibility of a closer working relationship between these two culture facilities.

Expectations & Realities

Living Arts Centre

The Living Arts Centre opened in 1997 after years of planning and community engagement. Community expectations were high, and included widespread assumptions regarding the venue as a home for local area artists and arts organizations, and as a world-class theatre for nationally and internationally renowned talent.

A decision, driven by capital cost factors, to reduce the capacity of the largest hall to 1300 seats compromised its ability to present headliner talent at reasonable cost to the patron.³ Local groups found that the expense of using the new, technically superior facility, inclusive of labor and other charges, was higher than their budgets could sustain. Expectations for offices and support services for a broad array of arts organizations did not materialize. Visual artists appreciated the residency and teaching opportunities as well as the quality of the studios but found access to these top-notch facilities and opportunities limited to the few who were accepted into the program each year.

³ The ability to manage ticket price is a function of seat count, or together, “gross potential.” The decision to reduce the overall seat count reduced gross potential which could only be offset by what are perceived to be undesirable increases in tickets prices

Originally conceived as a public-private partnership, the financing plan for the new facility included significant private dollars to be raised by an independent board of directors. As a city-owned venue, the business plan called for LAC to receive direct support from the City for operational needs (utility costs, security, custodial services, etc.) -- costs which would be absorbed in the annual operational budgets of the various departments responsible for these services. Beyond that, the facility was to operate from revenues derived out of operations.

Sufficient private philanthropic support for the capital project failed to materialize, and the building project was completed with a loan from the City to the Living Arts Centre. In its first full season of operation, the Living Arts Centre incurred operating losses of \$6.9 million. Losses abated but continued, and the next five years’ aggregate loss was \$7.7 million.

A course correction was clearly required, and changes were made. With the year beginning 2005 annual surpluses from operations have replaced the losses (with continued absorbed expensed by the City). The City has suspended repayment of the loan, and its subsidy for operations has been restricted to the aforementioned building operations support.

However, public impressions of LAC’s success are measured. While many applaud LAC’s improved financial performance, there remains a perception among some arts organization

leaders and elected officials that LAC has not yet met their expectations of success. Questions continue regarding whether the Centre adequately serves the needs of the arts community, whether it is striking the right balance between arts and entertainment, and whether it has put business success ahead of mission fulfillment. This apparent lack of alignment between community expectations and operating success emerged as a key focus of our study.

Meadowvale Theatre

The Meadowvale Theatre was built in 1989 as a home for community performance groups. Five community theatre groups comprised early resident companies. Sharing the facility inspired this group to create an “umbrella” organization to assist with marketing endeavors and ensure programming coordination.

When the theatre was originally developed, the City of Mississauga organized an Advisory Board comprised of representation from the community theatre groups and others who had advocated for and supported the construction. In order to benefit from possible philanthropic contributions to the theatre, the board developed independent Charitable Status Standing. In the early years, the Advisory Board engaged in direct programming to encourage usage of, and attendance at, the theatre. A key outreach component early on was to develop a membership

program – member benefits included a newsletter which helped to advertise programs and bring awareness of the theater to the community.

More recently, the Advisory Board has recommended capital improvements and advocated for equipment repair and replacement for the facility. In 2005, the City approved a Meadowvale Theatre Capital Improvement Reserve Fund, to be funded out of a \$1.50 surcharge on tickets sold to events at the theatre. One-third of the funds collected goes to the Meadowvale Theatre Advisory Board for program-related capital improvements. The balance is used to offset the cost of capital improvements funded through the City’s capital budget.

The formation of the Culture Division has brought new resources and attention to the theatre by the City, and revealed that the historical involvement of the Advisory Board, while productive, was inadequately defined. Tensions exist concerning roles and responsibilities of various constituencies of the theatre – the Culture Division, theatre staff, and the Advisory Board. Resolution of these issues has emerged as a priority for Meadowvale Theatre recommendations.

“Myth-Busters”

In the course of our inquiry AMS encountered certain perceptions which, we believe, have been regularly repeated to the point where to many they have become statements of fact. AMS researched these questions in the context of best practices and industry standards in an effort to determine their accuracy, and now confirm that many of these viewpoints are erroneous:

“LAC is breaking even.”

The Living Arts Centre indirectly receives approximately \$1.5 million in essential annual support from the City in the form of direct payment of many facility costs⁴. Absent this subsidy, the institution would be faced with a significant shortfall to be covered from by contributed revenues sources.

“LAC is not doing a good job.”

AMS believes LAC is a responsible steward of the organization. Benchmarks and other comparable data suggest that the number of events, level of participation, earned revenues, mix of uses, staffing levels and other key indicators are in line with industry standard.

⁴ Maintenance, security, utilities, custodial, building supplies

“LAC’s success is on the backs of the arts groups.”

Non-profit rental rates are in-line with those at similar facilities. Unfortunately, local arts organizations themselves have not yet been able to develop sufficient institutional capacity to use the main performance facility with regularity. LAC has worked to develop policies to increase access through the Program Initiatives Fund. Festivals and other non-traditional programming is one way LAC has increased participation by diverse audiences. Increasing institutional capacity could be a priority for the Culture Division of the City.

“Commercial rentals are turning LAC into a convention center rather than an arts center.”

Commercial rentals have not grown disproportionately over time, and are in-line with customary practice.

“Meadowvale Theatre is a feeder system for the Living Arts Centre.”

Significant differences in scale, utilization, production capacity and mission intent make any significant partnership between these two City-owned facilities unlikely.

Living Arts Centre: Findings & Recommendations

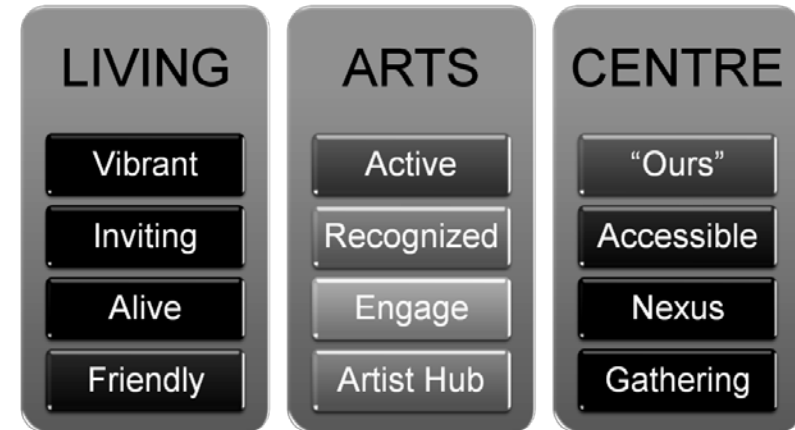
Informed by considerable internal analysis, external research and relevant aspects of the Culture Master Plan, Downtown 21, Mayor's Arts Review Task Force Report (December 2005) and Mississauga Strategic Plan, AMS developed a series of recommendations concerning Mission & Vision, Programming, Community Access, Marketing & Branding, Facility Use, Relationships and Governance for each of the Living Arts Centre and Meadowvale Theatre.

While the study was originally conceived to be "joint-use" in nature, the significant difference in scope and scale of Living Arts Centre and Meadowvale Theatre makes it more useful to present findings individually for each institution. Further, while not cited within our original charge, we find certain recommendations to impact the role of the new Culture Division, both in its relationship with these two organizations as well as in its leadership role for the arts ecosystem in Mississauga.

Defining Success

Community expectations remain high for the Living Arts Centre. A highly energized, exciting venue with a regular pattern of diverse activity and participants is envisioned by those describing success: *"Full & vibrant 24/7/365. Somewhere people want to be..." "A hub for artists. To go, have coffee, chat, congregate, and know other artists are there..." "Throw, paint, sell, attend, sing... art everywhere."*

The graphic below serves to describe the expectations the community holds for LAC:



Mission

The Living Arts Centre mission is:

To nurture, foster, encourage, promote and support the presence and development of the performing and visual arts in Mississauga and the neighbouring communities.

The mission of the Living Arts Centre is notable for its charge to “nurture, foster, encourage, and support” the arts in Mississauga. There is, we believe, currently little differentiation between this charge and the mandate of the new Culture

Division to: *work... collaboratively with a wide variety of internal and external partners to build strong cultural institutions, complete communities and promote new forms of wealth creation.* This suggests a need to clarify the role that LAC serves in the community.

As part of its inquiry into the Living Arts Centre, AMS studied the operations of four comparably-sized performing arts facilities in selected markets that share similar aspects to Mississauga.

The four comparable institutions studied, in contrast to LAC, are similar in their missions to *enrich, entertain, engage, and provide powerful experiences* to their communities.

Venue	Location	Primary Hall cap.	Second Hall cap.	Local Pop.	CMA/MSA	CMA/MSA Pop.	Ownership
Centre in the Square	Kitchener, Ontario	2,047	120-280	205,000	Kitchener-Waterloo	450,000	City of Kitchener
Hamilton Place	Hamilton, Ontario	2,191	325	500,000	Hamilton	700,000	City of Hamilton
California Center for the Arts	Escondido, California	1,524	405	145,000	San Diego	3 million	City of Escondido
Mesa Arts Center	Mesa, Arizona	1,600	558, 200	460,000	Phoenix	3.6 million	City of Mesa

Hamilton Entertainment and Convention Facilities Inc.
(Hamilton Place): *We deliver memorable event experiences. We provide exceptional value and excellent service. We are an empowered, creative and valued team. We are treated with respect and recognized for our outstanding performance. The City of Hamilton and its citizens are proud of us!*

Centre in the Square (Kitchener): *To create memorable experiences.*

California Center for the Arts, Escondido: *To enrich the lives of all within its reach through the Arts and their power for community building and enhancement by providing diverse artistic, cultural, educational, social and entertainment experiences of the highest quality.*

Mesa Arts Center (Mesa, Arizona): *To inspire people through engaging arts experiences that are diverse, accessible, and relevant; and that enhance the quality of life and vitality of the greater region.*

Recommendation 1: Update the Living Arts Centre's mission to focus on opportunities to entertain and provide compelling arts and cultural experiences for Mississauga citizens.

A mission statement serves the dual purpose of providing a yardstick for decision-making (both inclusion and exclusion) and articulating the institution's distinct value proposition for investors. LAC's current mission statement suggests that the venue is in service of the development of the local arts organizations rather than to provide engaging, quality arts experiences. The development of the Culture Division reinforces the City's role and responsibilities to foster the local arts sector. Refinement of LAC's mission will provide clarity to stakeholders and investors, and serve to position the institution to succeed at meeting community expectations.

Achieving Success

Mission fulfillment will revolve largely around programming at the Centre, engagement of local artists and arts organizations, and use of LAC's complement of facilities to engage and serve as a "hub" for Mississauga's arts scene.

Programming

As might be expected, input around programming ranged widely, but when analyzed clear themes emerge.

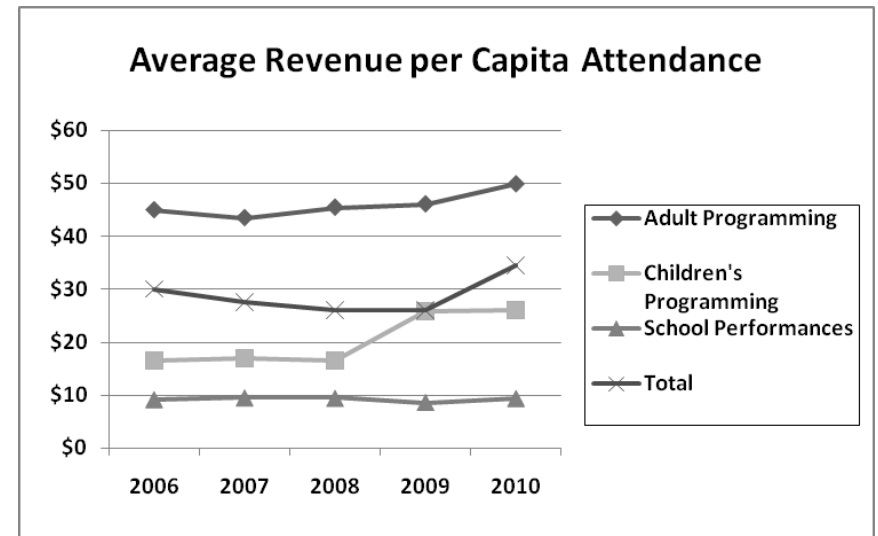
Performing Arts Programs are net positive in all areas.

Exclusive of unallocated fixed marketing costs, performing arts programs have made a positive contribution to the bottom line for the past few years. This is not to say that all individual programs are profitable, but that would be an unreasonable expectation. Best practice suggests that within each line of business the program mix has positive net financial results. Analysis documents that adult programming is the area that provides the greatest net financial benefit to the institution:

LAC Presents: Net Profit*			
	2008	2009	2010
Special Events (Adult)	\$229,317	\$102,331	\$116,455
Special Events (Family)	\$9,079	\$53,780	\$0
Wiggle Club	\$2,920	(\$1,082)	\$30,796
School Shows	\$28,629	\$24,861	\$37,067
Relaxed Series	\$9,419	\$15,392	\$14,871
Total	\$279,364	\$195,282	\$199,189

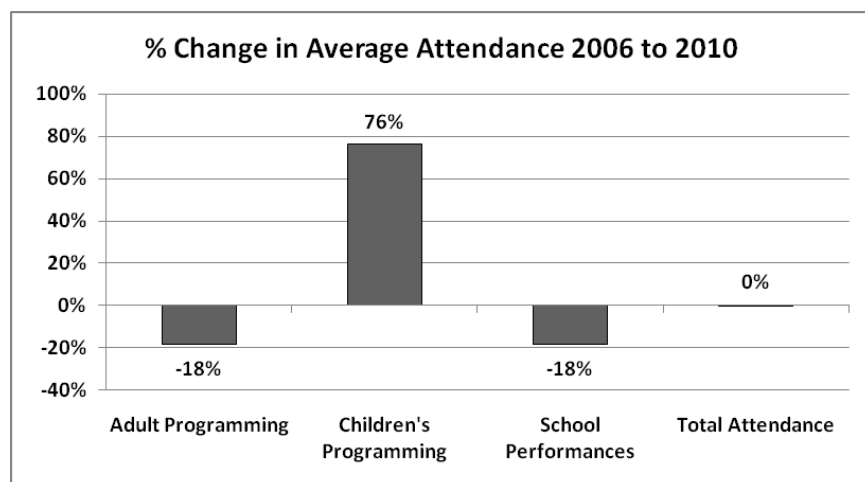
* includes internal chargeback expenses, but not marketing fixed costs

On a per capita basis, adult programs also provide the greatest revenue:



Programming on the Adult Series can be improved.

While overall average attendance across all LAC presented events has been virtually flat over the past five years, average attendance at adult performing arts events has declined 18%.



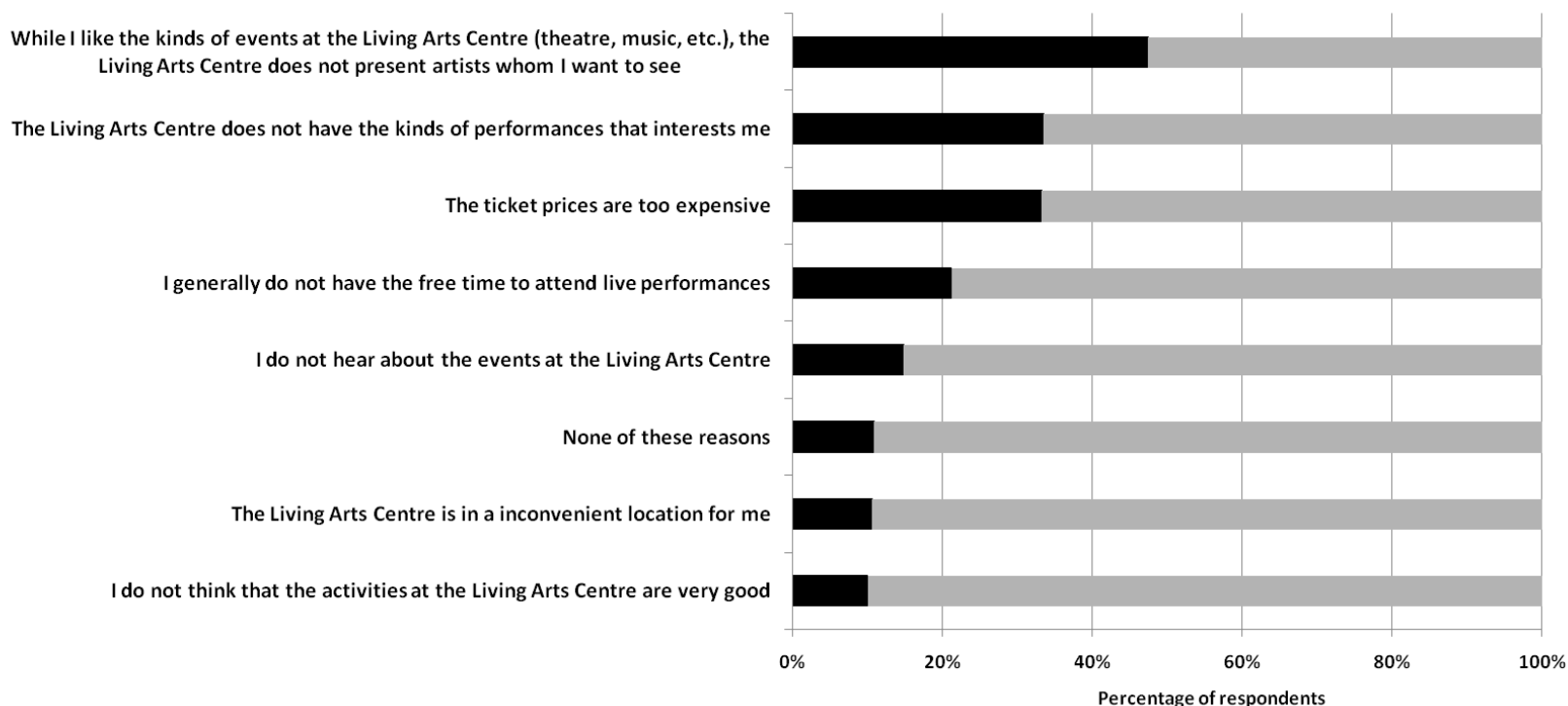
As part of our inquiry AMS fielded a web survey to develop a deeper understanding of community engagement and support for existing arts and cultural programming; identify opportunities for new program development to fill perceived gaps; and test perceptions regarding the Living Arts Centre and Meadowvale Theatre. A link to the survey was sent to a variety of lists from the City (Culture Master Plan and Cultural Mapping Project participants, Mississauga Library Systems,

Living Arts Centre and Meadowvale Theatre client lists). In addition a link to the survey was available on several websites and a press release was issued noting the opportunity to participate.

Survey respondents who were aware of the Living Arts Centre and who had attended LAC two times or fewer in the past year were asked about why they do not attend more frequently.

The most common response was that the Living Arts Centre does not present artists that respondents want to see (47.5%), followed by the Living Arts Centre does not present the kinds of performances that interest respondents (33.5%):

Reasons for Not Attending the Living Arts Centre (n=358)



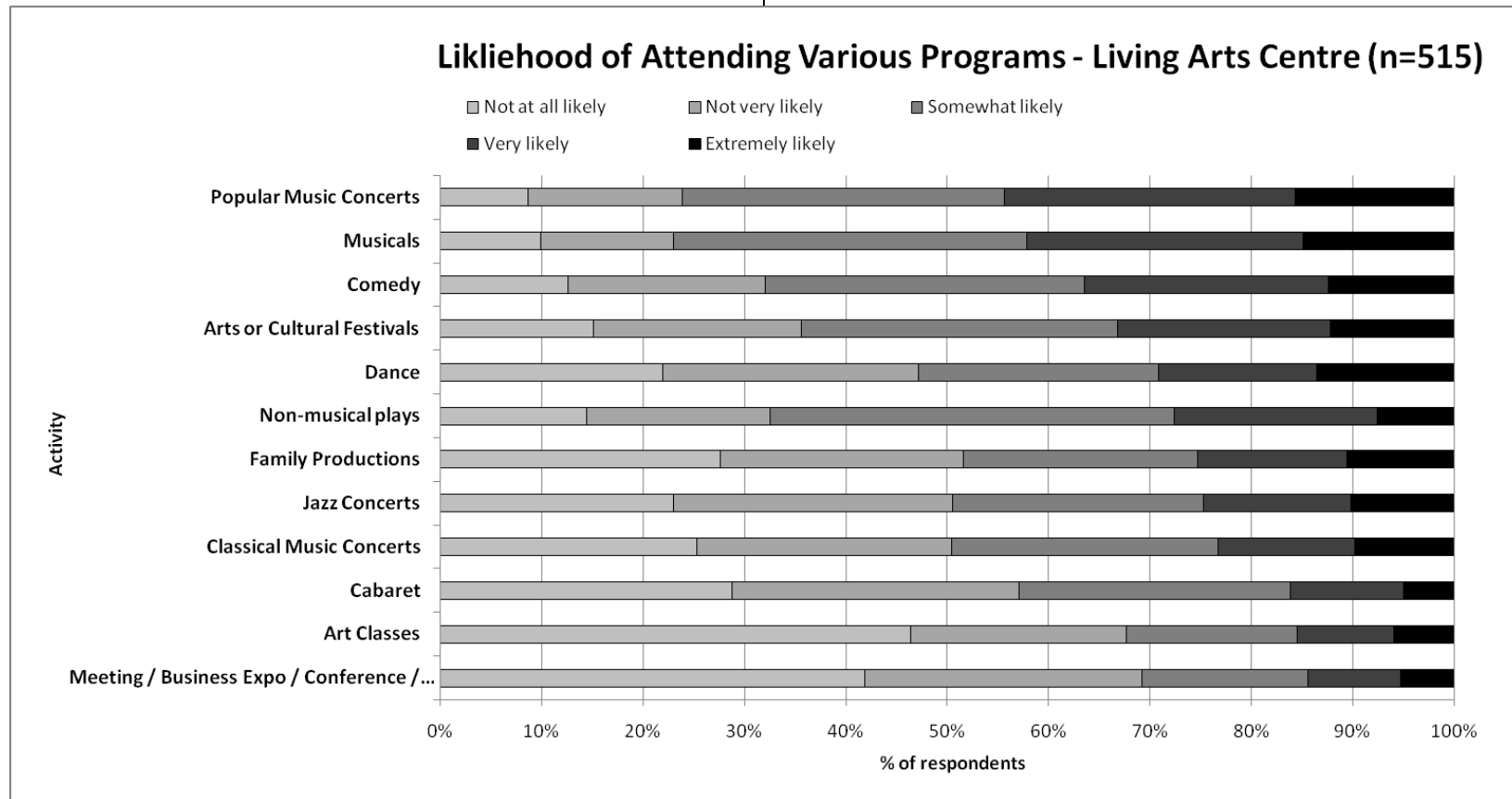
Recommendation 2: Understanding the constraints of the main performance venue size, develop resources to subsidize headliner acts to introduce new audiences to the entertainment experience they desire.

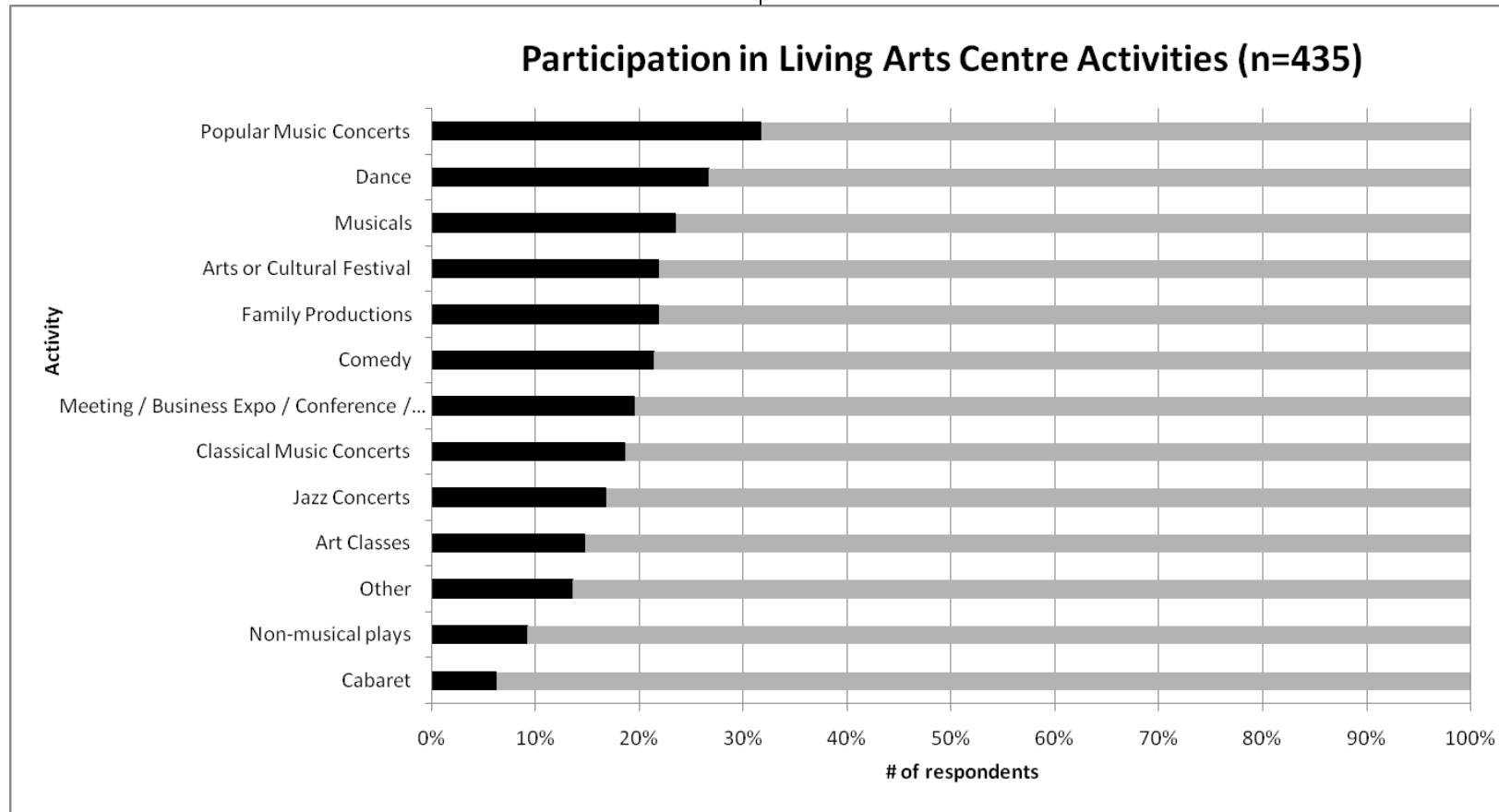
Maintaining a focus on Adult Programming, LAC should work to improve average capacity sold with more popular titles.

Using the Program Initiatives Fund, LAC can subsidize the fee for headliner acts in order to keep ticket prices at market rate. LAC should aggressively seek sponsorships for these popular acts as well.

Community preference for programs includes popular music, musicals, and comedy. It is notable that over 40% of survey respondents indicated that they were very or extremely likely

to attend musicals, while only 23.4% of respondents who had attended the Living Arts Centre had attended one. Programming preferences should be explored through further market research.





Survey responses suggest that there may be some price flexibility for the more popular forms of entertainment. When asked why they attend events at LAC, 47% of survey respondents who had attended events at LAC indicated that they thought LAC events were a good value for the price.

Respondents also regularly estimated that they had paid less than they actually did (on average), suggesting some price elasticity.

LAC Presents 2010 Average Ticket Prices vs. Survey Estimate		
Genre	Average Adult Ticket Price Paid (2010)	Median Survey Response: Estimated Price Paid
Popular Music	\$70.00	\$70.00
Dance	\$37.39	\$35.00
Music	\$49.42	\$40.00
Musicals	\$67.91	\$55.00
Jazz/Blues	\$44.51	\$37.50
Non Musical Plays	\$33.34	\$45.00
Opera	\$47.61	\$50.00

Recommendation 3: Create a leadership position for performing arts programming.

LAC has relied on an external consulting expert to make programming recommendations. While this expertise is valued, a more integrated approach to program planning will be required to achieve the goals of this plan. Responding to community interest requires a more connected presence; one that can respond quickly as opportunities arise.

Historically, LAC has launched a comprehensive season of offerings in the Spring for the following season. The timing has been largely driven by the production schedule of the

season brochure, with a desire that all offerings be included in this single printed piece.

The brochure continues to garner positive sales results. However, in order to capitalize on routing of popular artists and benefit from fee discounts, flexibility to book artists closer to the performance date is critical. The need for close coordination with the senior team in a rapid decision-making environment calls for this expertise to be in-house. Further, successful engagements often call for co-promotions or other detailed negotiations that require an understanding of institutional priorities and integration with comprehensive planning.

Research into comparable arts centers, similarly located adjacent to major entertainment markets, suggests that it is critical for the Living Arts Centre to find its own, unique programming voice. Centre in the Square in Kitchener “block books” with other regional presenters to ensure that it owns its local market. It will also not program anything that is already available in the community, striving to complete the system compatibly rather than engage in direct competition. At the Ronald V. Joyce Centre for the Performing Arts at Hamilton Place, the mandate is not to make money but to reflect the cultural needs and desires of the community. Everything from educational events to Jerry Seinfeld takes place at the Centre, and they are careful not to be defined too

closely with any specific genre or particular type of artist. California Center for the Arts (Escondido) will only present talent that would not appear at area casinos.

Community Access

A more robust presenting series is only one piece to fulfilling the Living Arts Centre's mission. Learnings from the case studies suggest that the programming provided by local organizations helps to ensure a diversity of activity and audiences. Mesa Arts Center engages in a large number of collaborations and co-promotions with community-based organizations and has found them to be very successful strategies. Community-based festivals and events provide free programming that ties the Center into the community and beyond the immediate city of Mesa into the entire valley. This reinforces the need for full-time programming staff that can engage with community-based organizations, to develop concepts, help build capacity and facilitate activity, in coordination with the efforts of the Culture Division and Mississauga Arts Council in this area.

Rental arrangements with local arts groups vary. The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony calls Centre in the Square its home, and receives a discount off the nonprofit rental rate in exchange for a commitment of more than 50 days of usage each year. The City of Kitchener provides an annual operating

subsidy to pay for the local community group's usage of the space.

Hamilton Place's cites its mission when accommodating organizations that cannot afford the published rental rates. There are two resident organizations – the Philharmonic and the Opera – to whom it rents and loses money. The Opera uses the space about 25 nights annually and the Philharmonic uses it about 20 nights per year. The resident organizations get special rates, but negotiate their schedule as any other partner does. The City of Hamilton absorbs annual losses incurred from these rentals.

California Center for the Arts has no special rates or scheduling policies for specific users. Mesa Arts Center provides marketing support (quarterly email blast, access to the PAC advertising rate in the newspaper, a table at all festivals) and other services (access to the Center's ticketing system, all in-house equipment for free) in addition to special rental rates.

Mississauga's arts organizations enjoy discounted rental rates which are comparable to those at the facilities studied. Unfortunately they have not been able to use the Living Arts Centre at a scale that would suggest a meaningful partnership opportunity:

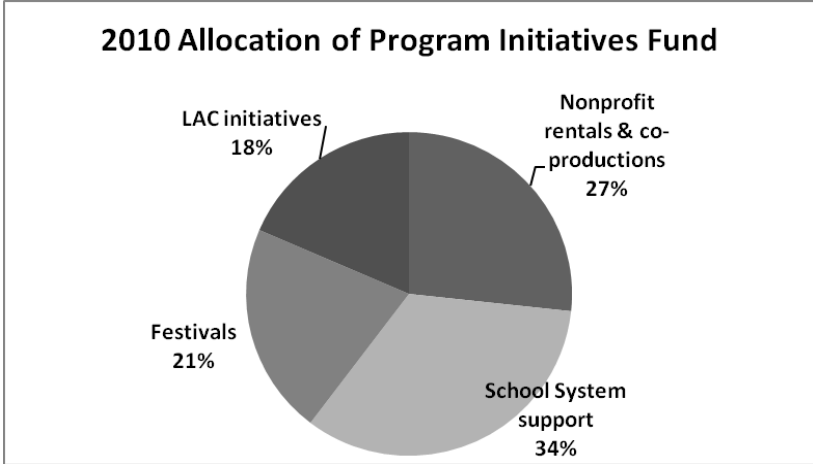
Venue	Capacity	Non-profit (peak) rental rate (per seat)	Resident orchestra	Number of Dates in Main Hall	Operating Budget Range
Centre in the Square (Kitchener)	2047	\$1.39	Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony ⁵	50	\$3.5 to \$5.0 million
Hamilton Place	2193	\$1.14 or 11%	Hamilton Philharmonic ²	20	\$1.0 million to \$2.0 million
Living Arts Centre	1315	\$1.38 or 12%	Orchestras Mississauga	6	\$333,000
Living Arts Centre	1315	\$1.38	Mississauga Choral Society	2	\$134,000

Recommendation 4: Use Program Initiatives Fund to co-present with local groups.

As Mississauga’s arts and cultural organizations provide access to diverse program offerings and audiences, LAC should judiciously continue to invest in select complementary activities that support its audience development and branding goals.

⁵ Budget data provided by Orchestras Canada; updated November 2010

This is different from providing a blanket subsidy to arts groups. LAC already has a differentiated rental structure that recognizes the need to provide access to the facility on a cost recovery basis. As noted above, rental rates for nonprofit groups are in line with those found elsewhere. However, LAC has noted the importance of being accessible to the diverse community, and has established a Performance Initiatives Fund which furthers its audience development goals, either through direct programming or in partnership with others.



In 2010, \$68,656 was allocated in support to 17 programs. As the fund grows, LAC can selectively continue to partner with organizations, engage in co-productions, support festival programming and develop school partnerships within the context of its mission and goals.

Recommendation 5: Create “second stages” to feature local artists.

Mississauga is a community that embraces its festivals and smaller scale programming. More than 50% of survey respondents reported attending an arts and cultural fair or festival in the past year, and 35.5% of respondents reported attending an arts and cultural fair or festival in Mississauga during the same time period.

LAC can ensure greater presence of local artists at its facility by creating less expensive performance environments. At the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., free performances are offered every day at 6:00 p.m. on a portable stage constructed in the Grand Foyer. The success of this program, which features local artists, is realized through sponsorship and includes a recent initiative to stream the performances over live webcasts.

The Living Arts Centre has several locations, inside and outside, where a similar early evening initiative could be successful. With a rise in the area’s residential population and the opening of Sheridan College’s downtown campus, this effort could serve the multiple goals of enlivening the facility, driving business to the box office, and providing additional revenues to LIVE Restaurant.

Recommendation 6: Work with the City to co-sponsor arts programming at Celebration Square.

With the construction of Celebration Square well underway, the City of Mississauga is poised to deliver a cultural asset to the community just a block away from Living Arts Centre. This “outdoor community center” intends to include a variety of attractions such as a skating rink, regular fairs and festivals, and a performing arts amphitheatre.

The Living Arts Centre, with expertise and infrastructure already in place, is a natural partner for the City in programming and providing technical support to performances in the Square. As the City looks to create synergies between the goals established by the Culture Division for the arts sector, success at Celebration Square, and an LAC strategy to support local artists in a variety of venues, a branded series *LAC Presents at Celebration Square in Partnership with the City of Mississauga*, funded out of the City’s budget for programming at Celebration Square, and featuring, in large part, Mississauga’s arts organizations (and headline acts as appropriate) will create a ‘sum that is considerably larger than its parts’.

Several of the comparable facilities studied also have a campus approach to their facilities. California Center for the Arts includes a 12-acre campus which hosts a temporary outdoor space that is assembled and disassembled annually.

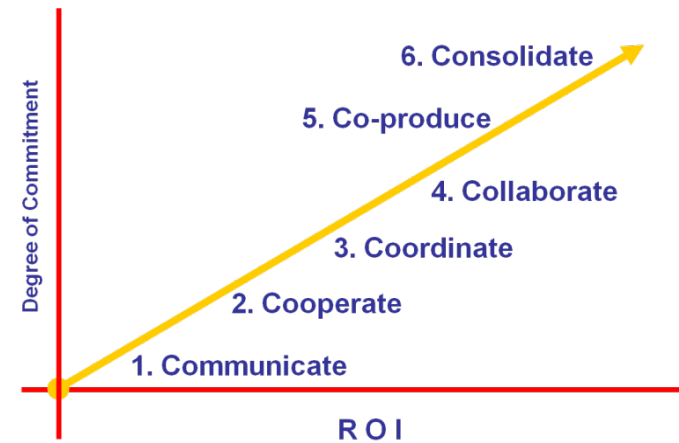
Mesa Arts Center also features a 700-foot long outdoor Shadow Walk that bisects the campus and serves as a community gathering place for festivals, concerts, and events.

Recommendation 7: Consider shared services initiatives and increased marketing support.

As noted earlier, many arts centers support their local arts groups both directly, through subsidy, and indirectly with coordinated calendar advertisements, website linkages and other marketing support. With the Culture Division now in place we believe the Living Arts Centre could play an important role in an exploration of shared services for the arts in partnership with the Culture Division.

This implies an important role for the Arts Council as well. While a study of the Arts Council and its role was not in the purview of this study, it is the important third entity in support of arts and culture in Mississauga. The Arts Council has the unique ability to represent independent artists as well as organizations, and to help provide a consolidated voice in understanding needs and advocating for investment in Mississauga's arts sector.

Collaboration evolves on a continuum which begins with convening and sharing of information:



The Living Arts Centre could serve an important role by providing the locus: the center where conversation takes place. Sharing of ideas and opportunities, challenges and frustrations is an important first step, and the ability to provide the neutral environment for such conversations is an important asset. An important opportunity in this regard is to house the Mississauga Arts Council, and perhaps the Culture Division, at LAC. The Culture Division of course takes the lead, in using its influence to encourage participation and its resources to implement consensus-based initiatives.

Facility Use and Development

The final component in achieving the vision is the use of the facility itself. Two of the recommendations above, the use of

temporary or non-traditional spaces to feature local artists and the use of the facility to convene arts groups and artists around shared priorities begin to define a vibrant, multi-use hub of activity beyond the traditional presentations and classes.

Recommendation 8: Maximize “highest and best” utilization of the facility. Analyze all spaces for use in relation to demand and achievement of mission.

The most significant potential for near-term increased activity may be in the area of studio arts. LAC has hosted between 20 and 28 Resident Artists annually since 2000. Participation in Studio Arts activities beyond the Resident Artist program has been consistent, and is capped by lack of additional classroom space.

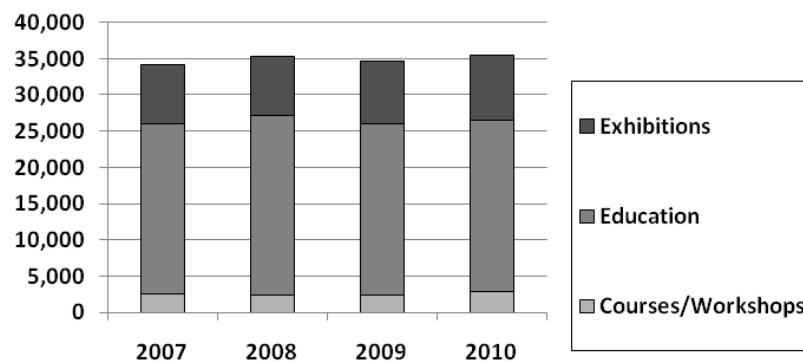
Certain areas of the facility appear to be underutilized and may be effectively re-purposed to allow for continued growth in this area. AMS recommends that LAC examine reconfiguring Rogers Theatre and the current photography studio, for example, for additional community studio arts classes.

Recommendation 9: Consider satellite Studio Arts program offerings and visual arts exhibits under LAC at other City supported venues and community centres.

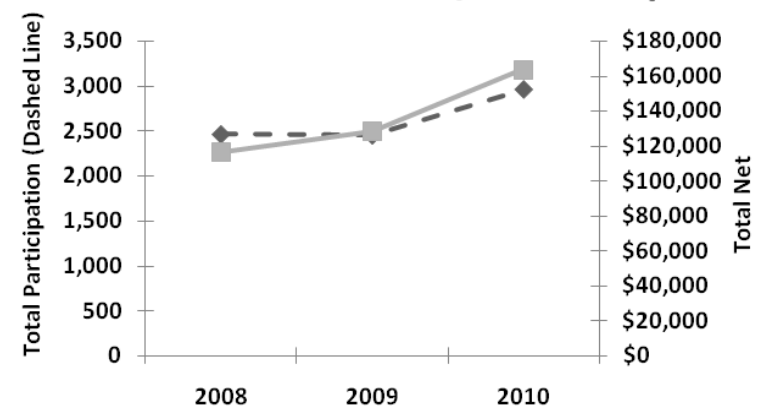
Interest in community courses and workshops continues to grow, and growth in net profits from this area has exceeded attendance growth.

As with the recommendation to present programming at Celebration Square, LAC may benefit by branding its Studio

Total Participation in Studio Arts



Studio Arts: Courses/Workshops



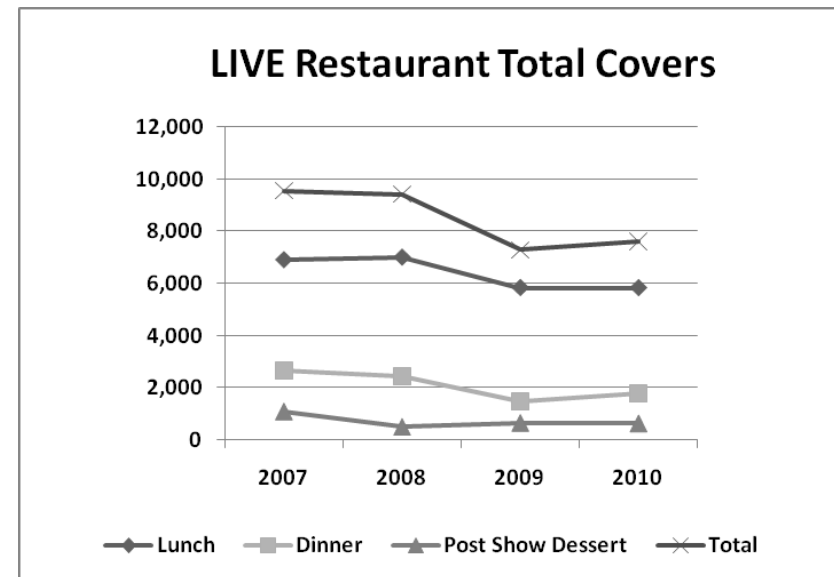
Arts programs and expanding access to them *outside* of the facility. Community centers and senior centers, for example, may be willing partners to provide expanded access to arts programming for their constituency.

Similarly, visual arts exhibits outside of the gallery may bring valuable ongoing partnerships and a new constituency to the permanent gallery. These efforts, which should be non-competitive in nature, can drive interest and traffic to the LAC gallery and advanced courses at LAC that require specialty equipment.

Recommendation 10: Reconfigure LIVE restaurant to capitalize on Sheridan College presence; consider indoor (and outdoor plaza) pub/coffee shop environment.

LIVE Restaurant business declined 20% from 2008 to 2009, and stabilized at this new lower volume in 2010. While economic recovery may improve the situation, the opportunity that presents itself is the relocation of 1,700 college students and related faculty and staff to the area. A more casual environment, with multi-tiered menu and pricing strategy may be required to access this new market.

Recommendation 11: Encourage transient activity in lobby and grounds with café tables, displays, art installations, etc.



As more creative use of the non-traditional spaces is considered, activities, presentations and displays should be developed which drive additional traffic into the building at all times. The goal is to make LAC a destination by having multiple reasons why people are present every day. Whether a student accessing free wi-fi while drinking a cup of coffee or a parent proudly viewing a student art showcase; whether a patron enjoying a free preview event or a neighbor stopping by for a glass of wine and some music, it is the amalgamation of these activities that will achieve the vision as described: a *living, arts, centre*.

Driving Success

As part of our evaluation, we explored organizational and operational factors which could impact achievement of the vision. We also explored how the Living Arts Centre might broaden its reach within the Mississauga marketplace; how it might be best structured to achieve success; and how it could be best aligned with larger City objectives.

Market & Brand Definition

AMS analyzed the Living Arts Centre patron data using the PRIZM_{C2} lifestyle segmentation system, developed by Nielsen Claritas, which assigns one of 66 lifestyle segments to each Canadian household based on a range of demographic and consumption data. The top eight segments make up 79.8% of total patrons.

Rank	Total Subscribers & Single Ticket Buyers Segments	# of tickets	% of total tickets	Relative demand index
1	Winner's Circle	9,549	21.4%	105
2	Pets & PC's	6,279	14.1%	85
3	Suburban Rows	4,350	9.7%	121
4	Newcomers Rising	4,196	9.4%	97
5	Urbane Villagers	2,897	6.5%	108
6	Cluttered Nests	2,819	6.3%	95
7	South Asian Society	2,494	5.6%	82
8	Money & Brains	2,249	5.0%	115

Source: Environics Analytics

While this list of segments mirrors the top segments within the Living Arts Centre's market, the relative demand index is low for most of these segments. In other words, the number of ticket sold in relation to the number of households in the general population indicates a low relative yield by those segments known as Pets & PCs, Newcomers Rising, Cluttered Nests, and South Asian Society.

Recommendation 12: Deepen relationships with best performing market segments.

AMS recommends that LAC adopt a "Keep/Invest" marketing strategy. Certainly retaining and more deeply penetrating the top market segments will bring results. Unfortunately, the relative presence of many of those segments in the market area is quite small.

Rank	Total Subscribers & Single Ticket Buyers Segments	# of tickets	% of total tickets	% of households in trade area	Relative demand index
1	Exurban Crossroads	15	0.0%	0.0%	143
2	Upward Bound	87	0.2%	0.2%	122
3	Suburban Rows	4,350	9.7%	8.1%	121
4	Suburban Gentry	1,078	2.4%	2.1%	118
5	Old World Style	961	2.2%	1.9%	116
6	Cosmopolitan Elite	1,170	2.6%	2.3%	115
7	Money & Brains	2,249	5.0%	4.4%	115
8	Urban Spice	189	0.4%	0.4%	114

Source: Environics Analytics

The two segments with most potential for growth are *Suburban Rows* and *Money & Brains*. Each of these segments presents different profiles which may influence motivation for attending. Residents of *Money & Brains* are highly educated, and have substantial incomes. With sophisticated tastes they value experiences over objects. Suburban Rows is comprised of younger, upper-middle class immigrant families with college educations. This cohort typically spends more than they save, indulge their children, and value assimilation, consumption and networking. Targeted programming solutions combined with segmenting marketing should yield better penetration in these segments.

Recommendation 13: Align programming and marketing strategies to reach underserved audiences.

Areas where LAC has had some success, and which have a robust presence in the marketplace include Newcomers Rising, Cluttered Nest, South Asian Society, and Pets & PCs.

These segments represent opportunity, and LAC should consider specific programming initiatives and marketing strategies dedicated toward deepening its relationship with these segments.

While each segment boast individual traits, these four segments do share certain qualities in common – they are younger immigrants who place significant importance in the

Total Subscribers & Single Ticket Buyers Segments	# of tickets	% of total Tickets	% of households in the trade area
Newcomers Rising	4,196	9.4%	16.5%
South Asian Society	2,494	5.6%	10.8%
Pets & PC's	6,279	14.1%	10.0%
Cluttered Nests	2,819	6.3%	6.8%

family. Educated and upper middle-class, they are technologically savvy, and want to be known as sophisticated with an appreciation for quality. They appreciate networking opportunities that come with social experiences.

Recommendation 14: Continue co-promotions and establish collaborative marketing efforts with rental clients.

An analysis of LAC audiences reveals that crossover exists between LAC audiences and those of various rental clients.

Rank	Patron Subscribers & Single Ticket Buyers		MCS Subscribers and Single Ticket Buyers		Orchestras Mississauga Subscribers and Single Ticket Buyers		Rental Single Ticket Buyers	
	Segment	# of Tickets	Segment	# of Tickets	Segment	# of Tickets	Segment	# of Tickets
1	Winner's Circle	9,549	Winner's Circle	175	Winner's Circle	1,831	Winner's Circle	18,605
2	Pets & PC's	6,279	Young Digerati	105	Newcomers Rising	1,502	Pets & PC's	15,767
3	Suburban Rows	4,350	Suburban Rows	84	Urbane Villagers	1,215	Newcomers Rising	8,034
4	Newcomers Rising	4,196	Cluttered Nests	78	Money & Brains	967	Cluttered Nests	6,326
5	Urbane Villagers	2,897	Suburban Gentry	68	Suburban Rows	967	Urbane Villagers	6,322
6	Cluttered Nests	2,819	Newcomers Rising	68	Pets & PCs	914	South Asian Society	5,489
7	South Asian Society	2,494	Urbane Villagers	54	Cluttered Nests	838	Suburban Rows	5,023
8	Money & Brains	2,249	Old World Style	51	Blue-Collar Comfort	598	Money & Brains	4,047
Source: Environics Analytics								

The table at the bottom shows the same analysis groups, but the top segments by relative demand indices.

This comparison shows how different programs at the Living Arts Centre can attract different segments from the community. None of these programs have the same top segment, and there is not very much overlap in terms of segments most likely to engage in these activities.

The ticket buyer segments for the various analysis groups look quite similar to one another. Of particular note is that the Winner's Circle segment is common to all five analysis groups. It is important to note that these rankings are by number of tickets sold, and not by the quality of a particular segment (i.e., not by the relative demand index⁶).

Rank	Patron Subscribers & Single Ticket Buyers		MCS Subscribers and Single Ticket Buyers		Orchestras Mississauga Subscribers and Single Ticket Buyers		Rental Single Ticket Buyers		Studio Single Ticket Buyers	
	Segment	Relative Demand Index	Segment	Relative Demand Index	Segment	Relative Demand Index	Segment	Relative Demand Index	Segment	Relative Demand Index
1	Exurban Crossroads	143	Young Digerati	1,102	Lunch at Tim's	339	Park Bench Seniors	205	Asian Up-and-Comer	330
2	Upward Bound	122	Suburban Gentry	362	Startups & Seniors	226	Old World Style	169	Nearly Empty Nests	177
3	Suburban Rows	121	Mr. & Ms. Manager	310	Money & Brains	197	Urbane Villagers	123	Ontario Originals	177
4	Suburban Gentry	118	Old World Style	300	Urbane Villagers	181	Asian Up-and-Comers	120	Asian Affluence	167
5	Old World Style	116	Big City Blues	233	Grey Pride	176	Cosmopolitan Elite	119	Suburban Gentry	136
6	Cosmopolitan Elite	115	Grey Pride	208	Cosmopolitan Elite	163	Pets & PCs	112	Lunch at Tim's	127
7	Money & Brains	115	Single City Renters	199	Newcomers Rising	138	Cluttered Nests	112	Newcomers Rising	124
8	Urban Spice	114	Cluttered Nests	128	Suburban Gentry	134	New Italy	108	Pets & PCs	124
Source: Environics Analytics										

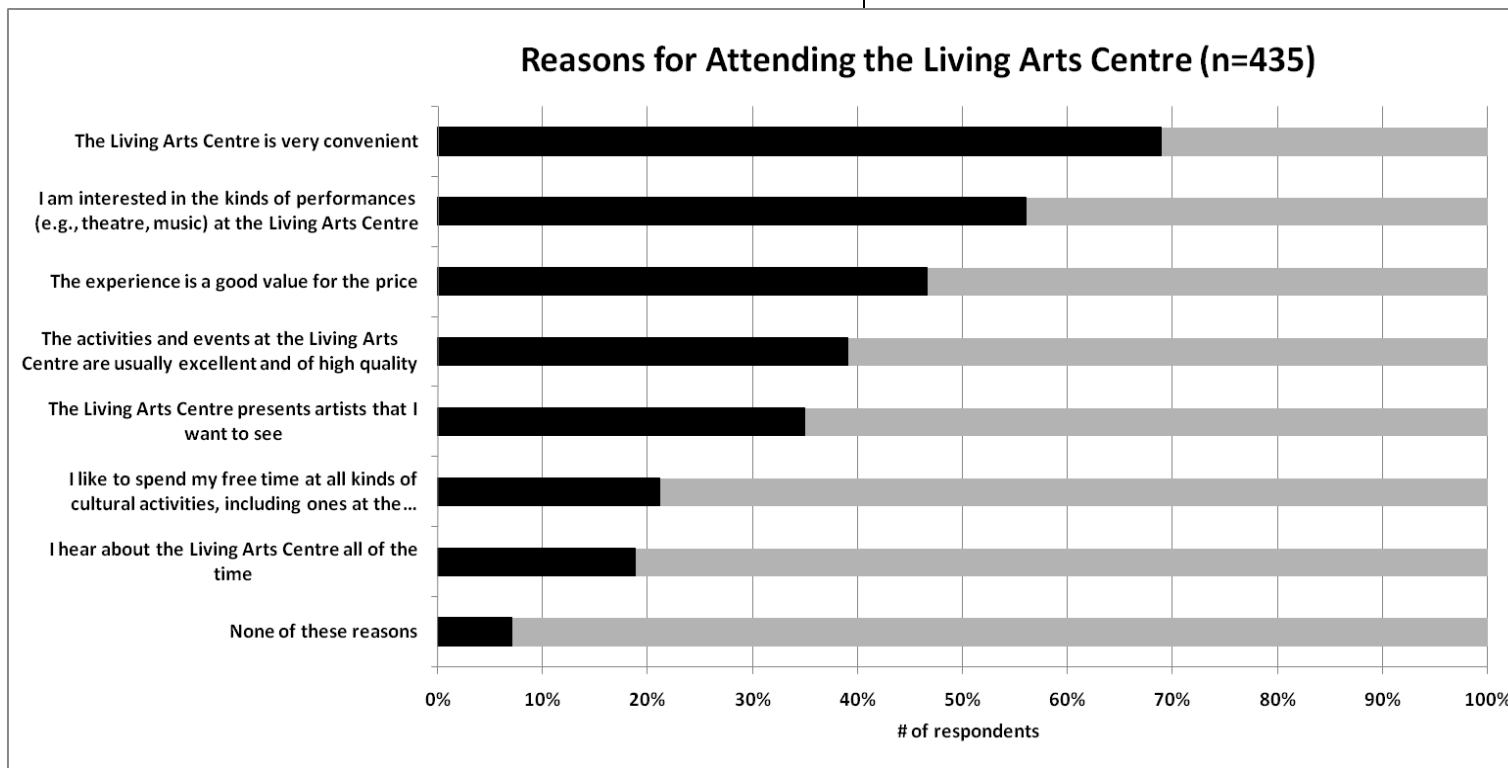
⁶ The relative demand index measures the correlation between the number of tickets purchased versus a base count (in this case, total tickets purchased at Living Arts Centre).

Recommendation 15: Invest in research to establish and communicate the LAC brand proposition – “convenient, intimate, experiences.”

Nearly 70% of survey respondents who had attended performances at the Living Arts Centre cited its convenience as a reason for attending. This was supported by open comments that noted parking, cleanliness, safety, and the

ease of attending in comparison to Toronto.

To reinforce other brand elements, including the quality of experiences, AMS recommends that LAC engage in regular patron research to inform the programming initiatives described above. A similar effort should provide ongoing information on satisfaction with studio arts courses, and desired additional offerings.



Program offerings should regularly be enhanced with artist talkbacks, receptions, and other efforts to reinforce quality, value and intimacy of the experience. Some of these should be “members-only” events (see below).

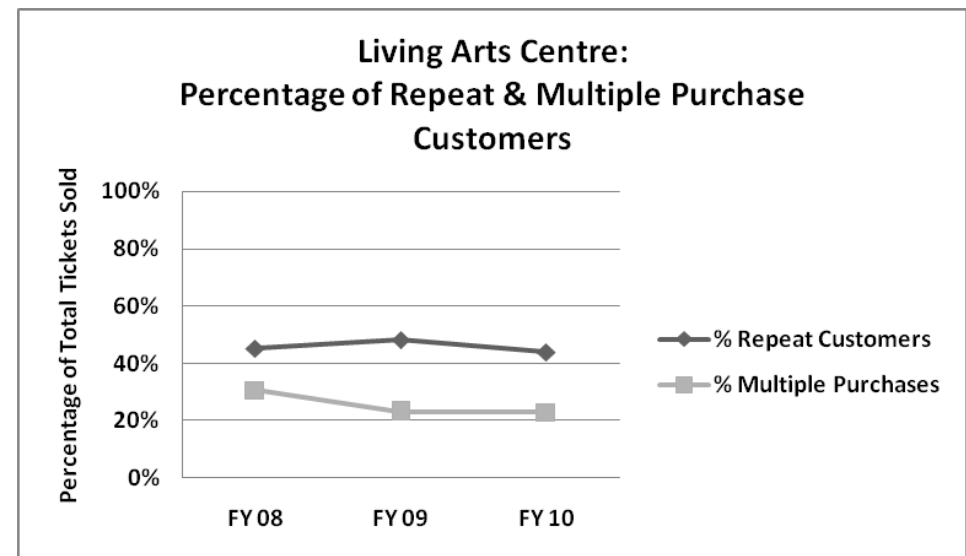
Recommendation 16: Establish membership program.

While The Living Arts Centre does provide discounts for purchases of multiple events, it does not structure its patron relationships around subscriptions. Typically, subscriber benefits go deeper than financial discounts, and include: same seating at each event (should it be desired), advance purchase option when renewing, ability to exchange tickets to a different performance, a subscriber newsletter, etc. These benefits provide an affiliation with the institution beyond the purchase transaction.

While the industry is experiencing a decline in subscription commitment, the conventional thinking is that this institutional affiliation remains important to the committed patron.

LAC has about the same success in selling multiple performances to its patrons as organizations who have subscription programs. In 2009 the average percentage of tickets sold on subscription for the 31 centers participating in AMS’s PacSTATS analysis was 22%. In that same year, LAC sold multiple tickets to 23% of its patrons. As the industry

grapples with a decline in subscription commitment overall, best practice suggest that more and more venues are moving toward sophisticated membership programs that continue to engage their best supporters. AMS recommends that LAC adopt a membership strategy to provide benefits to more loyal patrons.



With a programming strategy that includes more opportunistic programming, exclusive event notification may be a valuable benefit for members. Certain “members-only” events will enhance the intimacy of the experience, and provide additional affiliation. This program will likely not

become an important source of additional revenue, but may pay dividends in patron loyalty and audience growth over time.

Recommendation 17: Continue to invest in non-traditional marketing techniques.

Direct mail is still a successful approach which provides a comprehensive catalog of offerings to the core audience. For the more occasional attender, performing arts centres are increasingly focused on electronic communication and social networking. In Kitchener, one marketing staff person has been dedicated to Social Networking as part of the Centre's marketing strategy. A second person focuses on variable pricing strategies to enhance revenues at the margin. In Escondido, the Center only does one printed piece: the season brochure. They have migrated to using email blasts to promote individual events.

Governance

Achieving success as defined herein will not be easy. It will require a dedicated focus on mission, energized and innovative leadership, and the ability to garner additional financial resources to support programmatic initiatives and investment in the facility.

The Statement of Work issued by the City of Mississauga specifically requested a review of the governance structure of

the Living Arts Center and an assessment of the feasibility of transferring accountability for the Living Arts Centre to the Culture Division.

To inform recommendations concerning governance of the Living Arts Centre, AMS researched contemporary thinking regarding the roles and responsibilities of boards in both Canada and the United States. Next, we conducted interviews with the leadership of eight performing arts centres in Canada to learn about the board policies, procedures, and practices that are most successful. Finally, we surveyed LAC's own Board of Directors and interviewed stakeholders to ascertain their perceptions on the organization and their role in achieving success.

It is important to recognize that governance is a process, subject to constant evolution, and not a defined outcome. Whether Canadian or American, boards bear certain specific responsibilities beyond the central guiding principle that all boards share a fundamental stewardship role of promoting the health and well-being of their organizations:

1. Determine or maintain mission and purpose of the organization.
2. Select, support and evaluate the chief executive.
3. Ensure effective organizational planning.
4. Monitor and strengthen programs and services of the organization.

5. Ensure adequate financial resources for the organization's operation.
6. Protect the organization's assets and provide financial oversight ("fiduciary" responsibility).
7. Build and maintain a competent board.
8. Ensure transparency, accountability, and legal and ethical integrity.
9. Enhance the organization's public standing.

Board Structure

While recommendations below suggest some areas where the

LAC board could strengthen its efforts, AMS believes that the current governance structure is both a standard arrangement and appropriate to the needs of the organization and its ability to succeed.

Recommendation 18: Retain private operator model of governance for the Living Arts Center.

Of the seven Canadian centres studied, five are owned by a municipality. However, only one of these five is operated by its owner; the other four have independent governance much like the Living Arts Centre.

Name	Location	Budget	Owner	Operator	Governing Body
Place des Arts	Montréal, QC	\$35 million	Société de la Place des Arts de Montréal		11-member board
Capitol Centre	North Bay, ON	\$2.3 million	City	Capitol Centre	17-seat board (12 members)
National Arts Centre	Ottawa, ON	\$72 million	National Arts Centre Corporation		8-member board
Rose Theatre	Brampton, ON	\$2 million	City		City Council
Joyce Centre	Hamilton, ON	\$3.8 million	City	Hamilton Entertainment & Convention Facilities	10-member board
Centre in the Square	Kitchener, ON	\$9 million	City	Centre in the Square	14-member board
EPCOR Centre	Calgary, AB	\$8 million	City	EPCOR Centre	20-seat board (17 members)
Thomson & Massey Halls	Toronto, ON	\$21 million	The Corporation of Massey Hall & Roy Thomson Hall		25-member board

In three instances some board seats are reserved for elected officials (2 of 10 at the National Arts Centre; 4 of 14 at Centre in the Square; 3 of 10 at the Joyce Centre in Hamilton).

In addition, at some centres (Hamilton, Place des Arts, Centre in the Square, National Arts Centre) citizens are appointed to the board or nominations to the board are approved by Council. This system works well when it ensures a level of 'churn' rather than systematic re-appointment of current members. There does not appear to be any correlation between level of financial support by the City and designated board seats – all seven centres receive significant annual support from the City:

	National Arts Centre (Ottawa)	EPCOR Centre (Calgary)	Thomson & Massey Halls (Toronto)	Place des Arts (Montreal)	Centre in the Square (Kitchner)	Joyce Centre (Hamilton)	Rose Theatre (Brampton)
Owned	Provincial crown corporation	Private	corporation	Provincial crown corporation	City	Provincial crown corporation	City
Operated	Crown corporation	Private	corporation	Crown corporation	Private	Crown corporation	City
Budget	\$72 M	\$8 M	\$21 M	\$35 M	\$9 M	\$4 M	\$2 M
Board Size	10	20	25	11	14	10	Council
City Support	Stable annual line-item in department budget	Free occupancy; operating contribution	Property tax exemption	Operating & Tax subsidy approx. 18%	Annual subsidy for community group use; set capital. (\$122k)	City covers any deficits	Subsidizes loss up to set amount (\$800k)
Designated Seats?	2 Mayors	6 Resident Companies	CEO	CEO	Mayor & 3 councillors; 2 tenant reps	Mayor & 2 councillors; Tourism rep	

City representation on the board is reported as most successful when it results in enhanced understanding of the operation and institutional goals, and an appreciation for the value of the City's investment.

In two instances (EPCOR and Kitchener) local performing organizations also have designated seats on the board. In both cases the representation is selected by the user groups rather than submitting to the standard nominating process. As such, these representatives are not viewed as bearing the same role or responsibilities to the institution as other board members. Creation of ex officio positions that are representative in nature typically is an effort to enhance

communication amongst various stakeholders. AMS believes it is more productive to conduct periodic meetings with user groups outside of the governance process.

Recommendation 19: Encourage rotation of Councillors on LAC board. Replace City Manager position with Director of Culture Division (ex officio).

At the moment the City Manager and four councillors sit on the Living Arts Centre board of directors. One councillor participates ex officio by virtue of his district. Of the other three, two have been on the LAC board at least since 2003. Rotation of councilor board

members would broaden understanding and appreciation of the LAC's role and the City's investment among City Council. We suggest the Board be divided into three classes of Directors, with one councillor in each class. Directors would each be appointed for a three-year term, and no director, unless an officer or ex officio director, to serve for more than two consecutive terms.

With the creation of the Culture Division and the important relationship between the Culture Division and LAC contemplated within these recommendations, AMS recommends that the Director of the Culture Division serve, *ex officio*, on the Living Arts Centre Board of Directors. This arrangement will enhance communication and help to inform the City's pursuit of its cultural policy.

Recommendation 20: Improve board rotation. Strategically recruit new board members through nominating process. Cultivate new leadership.

The attached chart is a chronology of board participation since 2003. Highlighted are those individuals who have held leadership positions within the organization.

While board rotation policies exist and are implemented, leadership has been closely held by a small group of individuals with long tenure.

Institutional knowledge and commitment are highly valued in all organizations. Continuity typically ensures that priorities are achieved and working relationships are smooth. However, the voices of long-standing members in leadership positions may have a tendency to dominate and reinforce the same way of doing business, quashing valuable contributions of newer members and dampening innovation.

LAC's current nominating process is through public advertising for the position. While this openness and transparency is admirable, LAC would benefit from more strategic identification and recruitment of community leaders who

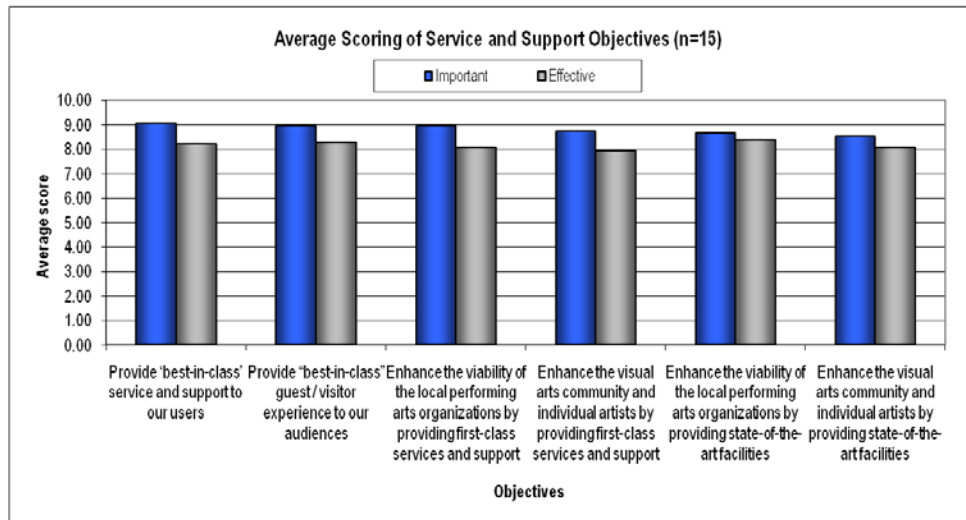
FY 03	FY 04	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08	FY 09	FY 10
David O'Brien	Eve Adams	Eve Adams	Eve Adams	Janice Baker	Janice Baker	Janice Baker	Janice Baker
Brian deLima	Janice Baker	Janice Baker	Janice Baker		Lovleen Bassan	Lovleen Bassan	Lovleen Bassan
Ron Duquette	Brian deLima	Brian deLima	Mike Bullard	Mike Bullard	Delphee Boyle	Delphee Boyle	Delphee Boyle
Frank Dale	Ron Duquette	Ron Duquette	Jake Dheer	Jake Dheer	Mike Bullard	Mike Bullard	Mike Bullard
			Chuck Ealey	Chuck Ealey	Jake Dheer	Jake Dheer	Jake Dheer
		Don Edmonds	Don Edmonds	Don Edmonds	Chuck Ealey	Chuck Ealey	Chuck Ealey
Doug Fowles	Doug Fowles	Doug Fowles	Doug Fowles		Don Edmonds	Don Edmonds	
Ralph Hunter	Ralph Hunter	Ralph Hunter	Ralph Hunter	Ralph Hunter	Patrick Egan	Patrick Egan	Patrick Egan
David Irwin	David Irwin	David Irwin					
Sherry Lee	Sherry Lee		Cobi Ladner	Cobi Ladner		Cobi Ladner	Cobi Ladner
Andre Mak	Andre Mak		Les Mayer	Katie Mahoney	Katie Mahoney	Katie Mahoney	Katie Mahoney
Les Mayer	Les Mayer	Les Mayer	Les Mayer	Les Mayer	Ron Lenyk	Ron Lenyk	Ron Lenyk
Bob McNutt	Bob McNutt	Bob McNutt	Bob McNutt	Bob McNutt	Bob McNutt		
Pat Mullin	Pat Mullin	Pat Mullin	Pat Mullin	Pat Mullin	Pat Mullin	Pat Mullin	Pat Mullin
		Ron Nisbet	Ronald Nisbet	Ronald Nisbet	Ronald Nisbet	Ronald Nisbet	Ronald Nisbet
Drew Pallett	Drew Pallett	Drew Pallett					
Maja Prentice	Maja Prentice	Maja Prentice	Maja Prentice	Maja Prentice	Maja Prentice	Maja Prentice	Maja Prentice
Anthea Radford	Anthea Radford	Anthea Radford	Anthea Radford	Anthea Radford	Anthea Radford		
Anthony Schwarz	Anthony Schwarz	Anthony Schwarz	Anthony Schwarz	Anthony Schwarz	Anthony Schwarz		
		Richard Schwarz	Richard Schwarz	Richard Schwarz	Richard Schwarz	Richard Schwarz	Richard Schwarz
Frank Rende	Frank Rende		Larry Rodo	Larry Rodo		Karen Sheehan	Karen Sheehan
Ted Woloshyn	Ted Woloshyn	Ted Woloshyn				John Weir	
Ex Officio							
Ruben Goulart	Ruben Goulart	Ruben Goulart	Ruben Goulart	Ruben Goulart	Ruben Goulart	Ruben Goulart	Ruben Goulart
Gerry Townsend	Gerry Townsend	Gerry Townsend	Gerry Townsend	Gerry Townsend	Gerry Townsend	Gerry Townsend	Gerry Townsend
	Frank Dale	Frank Dale	Frank Dale	Frank Dale	Frank Dale	Frank Dale	Frank Dale
						Ralph Hunter	Ralph Hunter

possess the skills and relationships necessary to help LAC achieve its goals.

Recommendation 21: Transition from an ‘oversight’ board to a ‘mission fulfillment’ board.

When rating the LAC’s mission, board members gave almost uniformly high marks to the importance of each objective, but lower marks for effectiveness in achieving them.

Respondents also had uniformly high marks for the importance of the LAC’s Service & Support objectives. Service & Support objectives were not ranked with the same level of



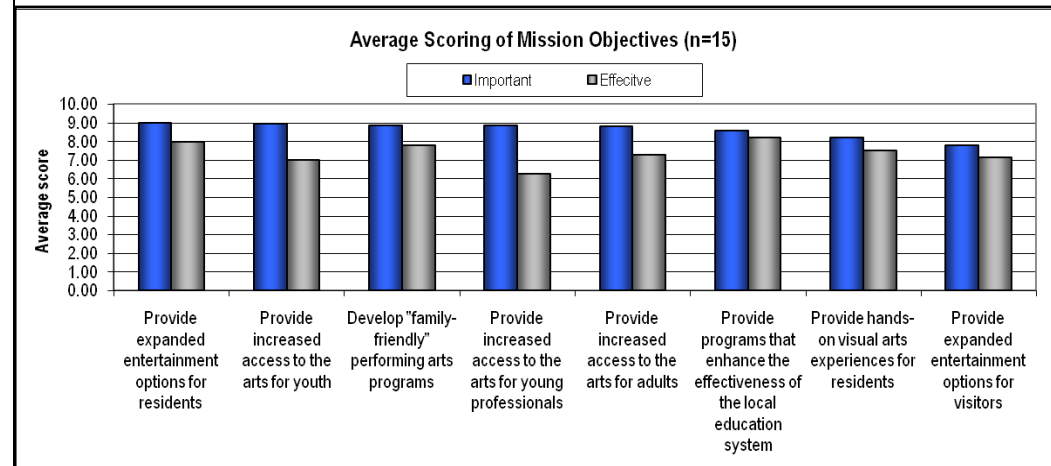
importance as Mission objectives, however respondents rated the effectiveness of the LAC’s Service & Support objectives more highly and more uniformly than the Mission objectives.

Community Objectives

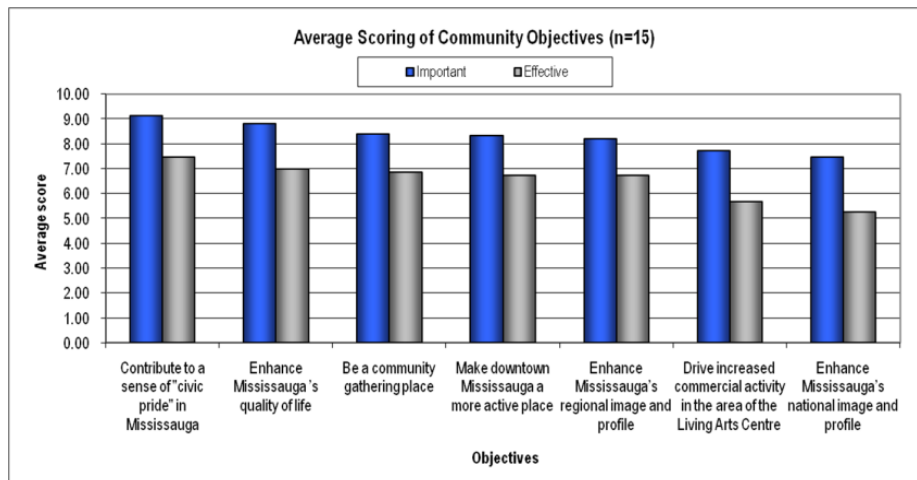
More variation is seen in respondents’ ratings of the importance of the Centre’s Community objectives, and a greater divergence between importance and effectiveness.

Respondents rated the overall importance of the Centre’s Community objectives at 8.3, but average ratings of individual objectives ranged from 9.1 (“Contribute to a sense of "civic pride" in Mississauga”) to 7.5 (“Enhance Mississauga’s national image and profile”), demonstrating a lower degree of consensus with regard to these objectives.

Respondents did not rate highly the effectiveness of the Centre in carrying out the Community objectives. Across all objectives, the average score was 6.6. Individual objectives



ranged from a high of only 6.9 (“Be a community gathering place”) to a barely-passing 5.3 for “Enhance Mississauga’s national image and profile.”



In looking at the divergence of opinions among respondents, the effectiveness ratings of all seven Community objectives had standard deviations of 2 or higher, among the highest on the entire survey. Consensus on the effectiveness of the Centre in meeting these objectives is clearly lacking.

In order to succeed at many of the goals established in this study, the LAC board must be aligned in its purpose. While fiduciary oversight is an important role for every board, fulfillment of mission – ensuring resources are available to

provide compelling arts and cultural experiences for Mississauga citizens, enhancing outreach efforts with advocacy, engaging community leadership around the vision for the centre, and monitoring successful implementation of planned strategies are important functions for the LAC board to embrace in providing leadership to this important institution.

Recommendation 22: Establish board member position description and evaluation process.

The success of a board in achieving the institution’s vision requires clarity of expectations at the outset. A clear board member position description aids in the recruitment process for new members and ensures that board members equitably participate in achieving success. Stated requirements typically outline expectations concerning minimum meeting attendance requirements, participation on committees, attendance at functions and expectation that board members advocate for the institution in the community. Clarity regarding any financial expectations (both “giving” and “getting” financial support for the institution) is also helpful.

Of the Canadian boards surveyed, half engage in annual self-evaluation processes. Those which do describe the process as a useful way to demonstrate where more education or procedural adjustments may be necessary.

Recommendation 23: Plan for leadership succession.

Both board and executive leadership at the Living Arts Centre has been consistent for many years. The working relationship between the chief executive and board chair is very strong; the staff and board are comfortable with their respective roles and responsibilities. While the Chief Executive does not have immediate plans to retire, eventually new leadership will advance the institution. In order to plan for a smooth transition, a succession plan for this shift should be in place.

Roles & Relationships

Fulfillment of the mission objectives expected of Board of the Living Arts Centre implies an even closer working relationship with the Corporation of the City of Mississauga. While essential, the services and support currently provided by the City are limited to facility operations and infrastructure, and as such, this support is covered by the annual operational budgets of the various departments responsible for these services.

Recommendation 24: Submit annual requests for program, resource and facility investment through the Culture Division.

As noted in the financial section below, recommendations from this study will require additional resources from the City potentially in at least three areas: facility investment, contributions to the Program Initiatives Fund, and support of events at Celebration Square. Rather than approaching each of these areas separately within the various departments at City Hall, AMS recommends that a comprehensive approach to City support be implemented through the Culture Division. The Culture Division budgeting process should include requests on behalf of LAC for facility maintenance and operations, capital investment needs, and programmatic

initiatives both at LAC and Celebration Square (and elsewhere, such as Studio Arts courses in other City facilities). Within the context of the Culture Division's budget timeline and reporting process, requests should recognize advances in achieving goals set for in this plan as well as aspirations for the next fiscal cycle.

Only the programmatic requests through the Program Initiatives Fund should be approached through the Culture Division grant-making process, however. Performances at Celebration Square should be considered a sub-contracting arrangement, where the City contracts LAC to provide expertise and services. Facility investment, either operationally or as a capital request, should be viewed in the context of other City-owned facilities.

Recommendation 25: Submit annual report to Council which enumerates successes and challenges and aligns progress against the plan.

The total amount of City support should be recognized on an annual basis, and include the figure for absorbed costs as well as contracted services and program grants. Given the importance of the close operational and financial relationship between LAC and the City, LAC should continue its annual reporting to Council as stipulated in the Relationship Agreement. Informational in nature, reports should cite progress against the recommendations accepted in this plan.

Linking to the Culture Master Plan

Approached ambitiously, the recommendations contained in this report serve to enhance many of the goals of the Culture Master Plan:

1. Strengthen arts, culture and heritage organizations

- The Program Initiatives Fund is a mechanism by which LAC can engage in co-presentations with Mississauga's arts groups.
- Sponsorship of arts programming at Celebration Square brings expertise, efficiencies, and audiences to performances by Mississauga's artists.

2. Encourage community celebrations and festivals

- Continued partnership in festival programming through the Program Initiatives Fund as well as the presence of "second stages" which feature local talent reinforces access to the arts in the downtown area.
- Partnering with the City to provide arts programming at Celebration Square brings expertise, efficiencies, and audiences to performances by Mississauga's artists.

3. Strengthen cultural infrastructure

- Efforts to maximize use of all areas of the facility includes the use of temporary or non-traditional spaces to feature local artists, the use of the facility to convene arts groups and artists around shared priorities, a reconfigured LIVE restaurant to include a pub and/or coffee shop and other efforts to encourage transient activity in the lobby and on the grounds.
- Satellite Studio Arts program offerings and visual arts exhibits supports the availability of arts programs in other neighborhood centres.
- Partnership with the City enables arts programming at Celebration Square.

4. Build partnerships and increase collaboration

- The Living Arts Centre's role as convener for discussions regarding potential shared services and/or collaborations within the arts sector complements the Culture Division's efforts.
- The Program Initiatives Fund successfully underwrites co-presentations and other partnerships that ensure diverse offerings and audiences at LAC.
- A strong partnership with the City Culture Division and Celebration Square supports a network of partnerships and centre city vitality.

- The recommendations of this study clarify roles and responsibility for arts leadership in Mississauga.

5. Strengthen the flow of information

- In its role as convener, LAC complements Culture Division's efforts to share information.
- Marketing collaborations provide mutual benefit to participants and enhance program understanding.

6. Identify cultural nodes and create an artful public realm

- The expansion of visual arts to non-traditional spaces encourages visitation and enhances public art initiatives.
- "Second stages" as well as efforts to enliven the campus support the visible presence of the arts downtown.

7. Attract and support creative individuals

- Development of informal "second stages" provides more affordable performance space for artists and cultural organizations.
- Partnership with the City at Celebration Square provides performance opportunities and showcases local performance artists
- Visual arts initiatives support schools and aspiring artists as well as enliven the facility.

The Culture Master Plan recommends that the Mississauga Culture Division act as a facilitator and builder of strategic partnerships. Along with the Mississauga Arts Council, The Living Arts Centre is a natural partner in providing arts leadership to advance arts growth and initiatives in Mississauga. Clarity of roles and responsibilities is the key. With its leadership, physical asset and technical experience, LAC is a significant resource to be drawn upon. As the City strengthens its investment in the arts and culture through the Culture Division, its role is to provide the financial underpinnings in support of cultural policy which enhances creative activities and quality of place.

Financial Implications

The recommendations include annual financial investment by the Living Arts Centre in programming and marketing efforts as well as potential capital investment.

Annual Operating Costs

A detailed operating estimate can be found in Appendix 6. Estimated investment to fully implement the above recommendations is approximately \$300,000 with proposed revenues of an equal amount. This breaks down as follows:

Living Arts Centre: Program Expenses		
Performing Arts	Headliner acts, staff position "second stages," Celebration Square	\$207,000
Marketing	Marketing collaborations, research, branding, non-traditional efforts	\$79,000
Studio Arts	Satellite classes	\$7,000
Development	Membership program	\$21,000
Total		\$314,000

Revenue offsets are projected from increased investment in the Program Initiatives Fund, (including competitive support from the Culture Division's competitive grant-making

program), fee for service from the City to sponsor Celebration Square performances, earned revenues from ticket sales, studio arts and LIVE Restaurant, and the membership program:

Living Arts Centre: Revenue Sources		
Performing Arts Initiatives Fund*	Headliner acts, community partnerships	\$41,000
City Contract	Celebration Square	\$118,000
Performance Revenue	Ticket sales	\$68,000
Studio Arts	Satellite classes	\$17,000
Food, Beverage	LIVE Restaurant	\$13,000
Development	Membership program	\$53,000
Total		\$310,000

** It is expected that LAC will apply to the Culture Division granting program for Program Initiatives Fund support annually.*

The magnitude and timing of annual investments can be calibrated according to available funds and early success. It should be noted that the additional support from the City is projected to come out of budgets established for the Culture Division (and Celebration Square) based on accomplishing existing priorities of those divisions rather than new line-items in the City budget.

Capital Costs

Certain recommendations require will require capital investment into the facility. A space use analysis to identify repurposing of certain spaces (Rogers Theatre, photography studio, etc.), reconfiguration of LIVE Restaurant and outdoor spaces and other moderate investment to maximize use of the non-performance spaces is required in order to make capital cost projections.

Recommendation 26: Conduct a space planning analysis for the Living Arts Centre.

Meadowvale Theatre: Findings & Recommendations

There have been long-standing opinions and questions among some key stakeholders in the community that the Living Arts Centre and Meadowvale Theatre should establish a more formal working relationship. Some believe that the Meadowvale Theatre should serve as a “feeder” to the Living Arts Centre. Others promote concepts of joint box office, co-promotional opportunities and other types of partnerships.

Given the significant difference in purpose and scale of the two entities, as noted above, AMS believes that a successful operating partnership is not practical. Marketing collaborations could very well be successful but should not be limited to these two entities.

Defining Success

An active and stable enterprise, future success for the Meadowvale Theatre is defined as enabling more diversity of activities and audiences, ensuring access and participation by a broad segment of the community, and increasing general

awareness of the facility among the public. *“Meadowvale Theatre is considered a ‘host theatre’,”* noted one workshop participant. *“People don’t think ‘I wonder what’s at the Meadowvale tonight?’ It does not have a brand of its own.”* The Meadowvale Theatre should be *“a leader in the development of programming for all parts of its community,”* stated another.

Statement of Purpose

Marketing materials for the Meadowvale Theatre articulate the following vision:

At Meadowvale Theatre, the community has the opportunity to experience all aspects of the performing arts including music, drama, dance, music theatre and comedy.... many local artists proudly display their creative talent... the Theatre provides an intimate and vibrant experience for all ages... , there is something for everyone to experience, learn from and grow with.

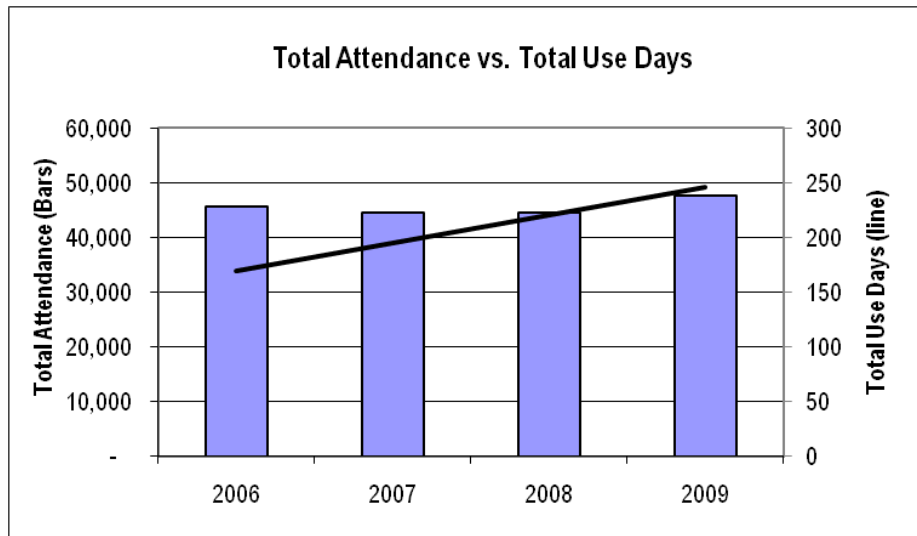
Achieving Success

Achieving this vision will require proactive efforts in the areas of programming, partnerships and marketing.

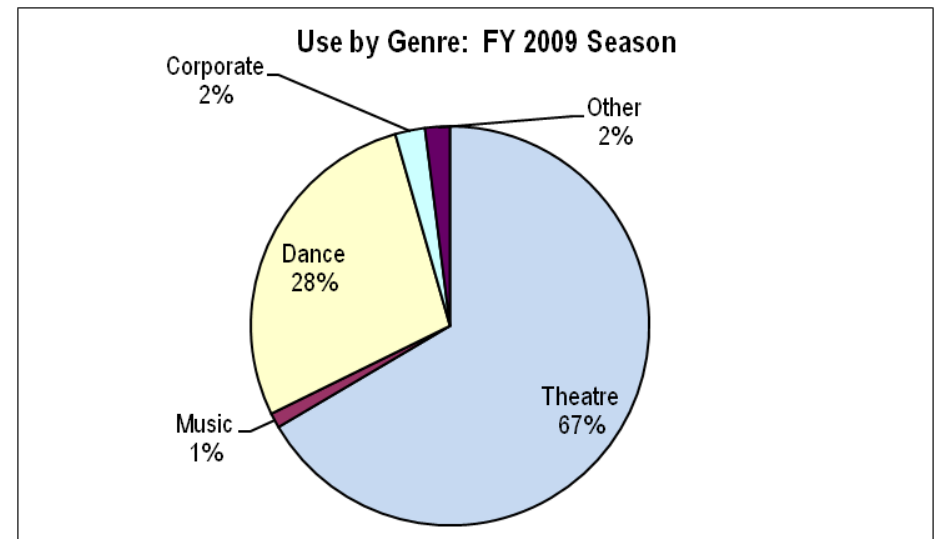
Programming

A key recommendation of this report is that the Meadowvale Theatre move beyond a purely rental facility to engage in direct program development to reach new audiences.

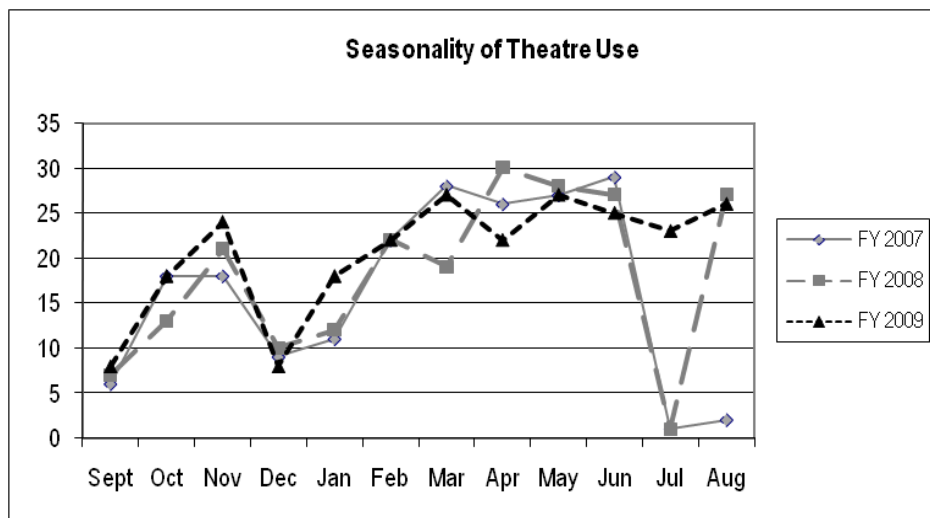
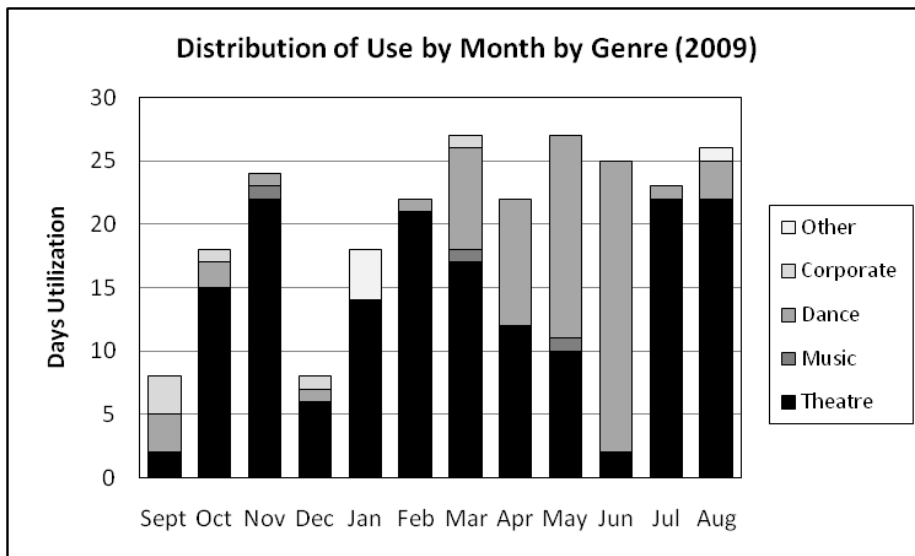
While utilization of the theatre has increased in recent years, attendance has been flat:



Currently, the schedule at the Meadowvale Theatre is dominated by theatrical presentations:



Dance is a significant secondary genre, almost all of which takes place in the spring, with the facility booked to capacity from March to June. This pattern of activity has not varied significantly in the past three years.



While it is positive for the theatre to have a predictable presence of rental clients, it will be difficult to increase the diversity of genre and not displace regular customers.

Recommendation 27: Establish 'Community Access' partnership initiative.

Meadowvale Theatre staff should engage in program collaborations to enhance the reach of the theatre in the community. By developing partnerships with schools and city agencies, underserved constituencies can be identified and served through special initiatives.

It will be important to develop programs that activate the facility when it is not already in use. For this reason, early efforts should focus on weekday activities such as classes, lectures, open rehearsals or matinee performances. Partnerships with senior centers and other day-time service agencies may also yield success.

Another priority should be to increase the use of the facility for camps, courses and workshops so that the facility is reliably a prime location for summer camps in dance, theatre and other artistic disciplines.

Recommendation 28: Create Community Access Fund.

AMS recommends dedicating the box office surcharge funds to program development rather than capital improvement

(see financial section below). Also, to the degree that Community Access initiatives can support the Culture Division's goal to "offer new cultural programs through partnerships," funds should be dedicated in the Division's budget to programs at the Meadowvale Theatre. Finally, the Advisory Board, with its not-for-profit qualification, is uniquely positioned to receive other grants on behalf of the theatre, and opportunities to support programs for underserved communities should be researched.

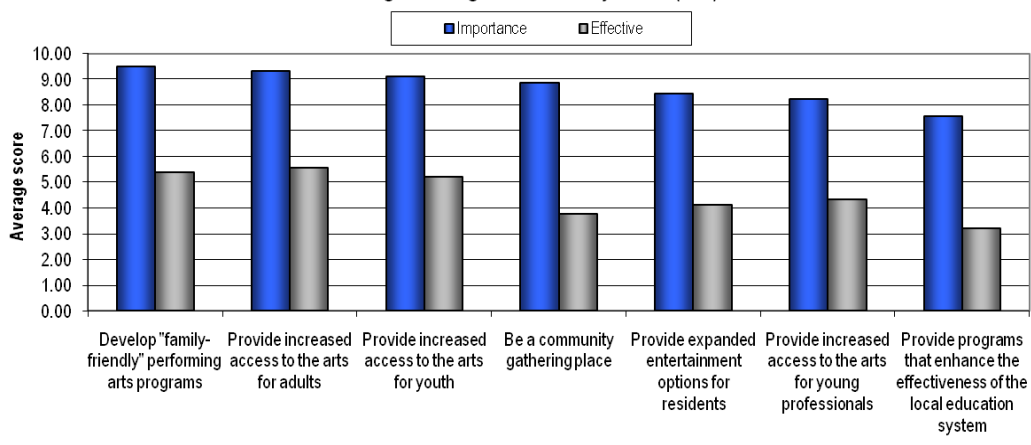
resources to dedicate to these areas, effectiveness ratings are understandably low.

The 'Community Access' initiative serves multiple goals: it increases attendance, diversifies offerings, focuses on youth and education, and uses the facility during non-peak times.

Recommendation 29: Selectively program small-scale music and comedy performances.

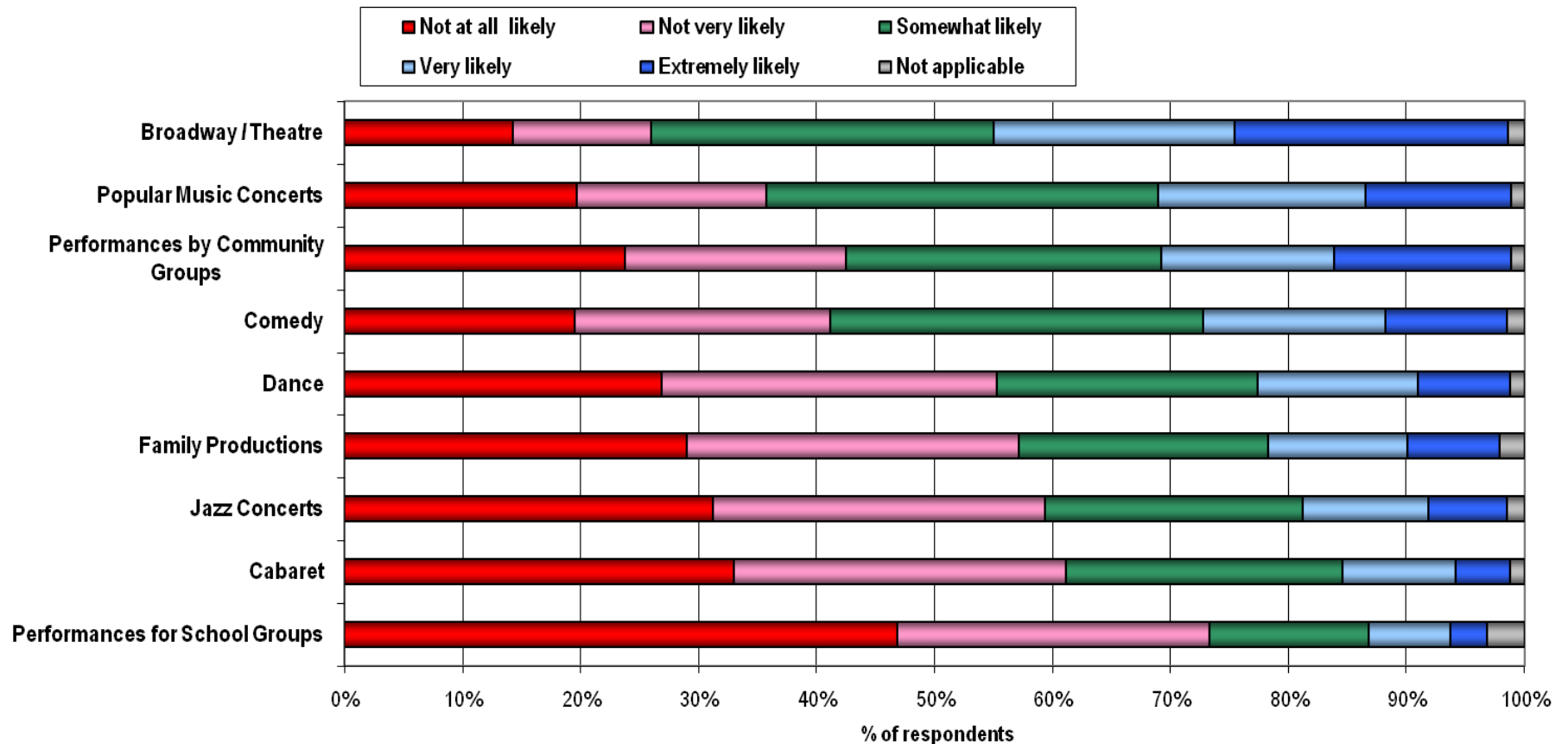
While the theatre is currently used only 1% of the time for music performances, "popular music concerts" was ranked second to theatrical performances by survey respondents citing their likelihood of attending various programs:

Average Scoring of Mission Objectives (n=9)



Advisory Board members rank such objectives such as program development, increased access to the arts and programs for youth very high in importance. Absent any

Likelihood of Attending Various Programs - Meadowvale Theatre (n=386)



Comedy is another genre likely to draw interest. Community 'open mike' nights on weekday evenings might showcase local

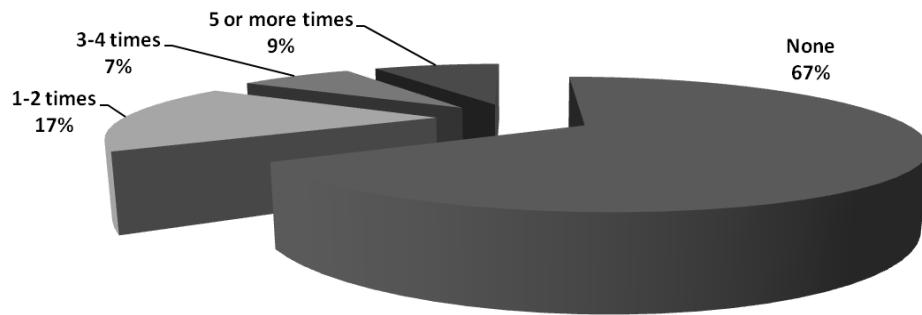
artists and bring new audiences to the theatre on otherwise dark nights.

Marketing & Branding

55% of community survey respondents identified themselves as having awareness of the Meadowvale Theatre. (Of survey respondents who attended cultural events in Mississauga, 75% were aware of the Meadowvale Theatre.)

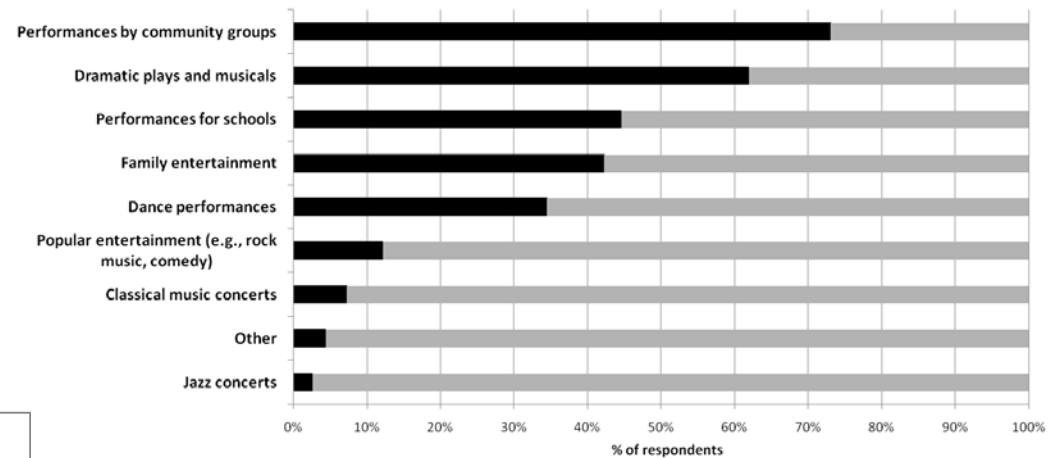
Of the respondents to the community survey who were aware of the Meadowvale Theatre, two-thirds had not attended in the past year:

Frequency of Attendance - Meadowvale Theatre (n=386)



Of those who were aware of the Meadowvale Theatre, 73% identified its use as a facility for performances by community groups:

Awareness of Meadowvale Theatre Activities (n=386)



Recommendation 30: Re-brand the Meadowvale Theatre.

While the Meadowvale Theatre has reasonably good awareness and appreciation for its use by community groups, it appears that Meadowvale Theatre is not top of mind when considering where to actually attend an event.

The Meadowvale Theatre should be known as a facility which offers arts performances and programs for people with a variety of tastes. With expanded programming initiatives such as those described above comes a responsibility to reposition the Meadowvale Theatre as a place where people go to experience the arts, rather than a home for certain arts performances.

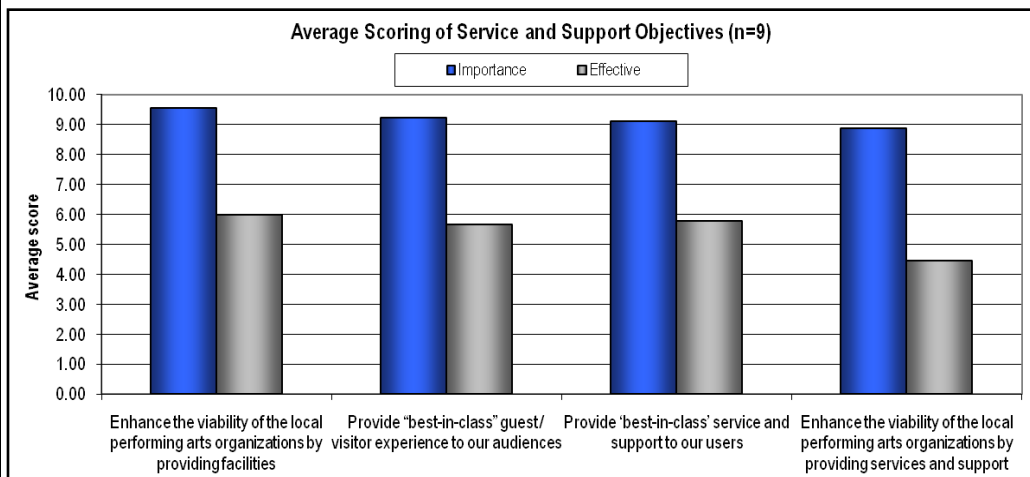
Recommendation 31: Create a dedicated Meadowvale Theatre website and marketing initiative.

Create a regular event calendar which includes all activities at the theatre. Send “This Month at the Meadowvale” promotional e-blasts to the patron list. The Meadowvale Theatre website should link to the Culture Division website.

Recommendation 32: Enhance the effectiveness of sharing box office data with rental clients. Provide additional marketing support for rental events.

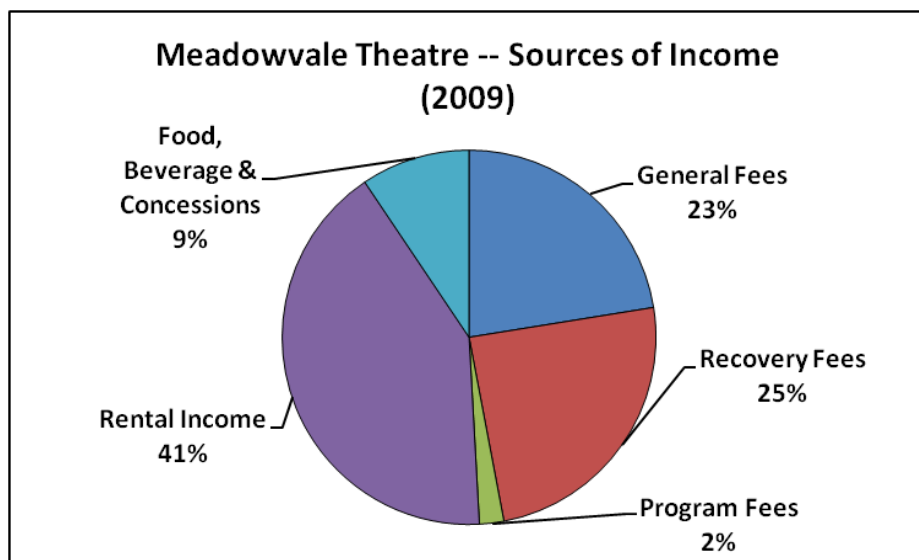
Meadowvale Theatre benefits from full audiences at events hosted by rental clients. Box office fees and food, beverage & concessions comprise 32% of the income for the facility. In

addition, Advisory board members ranked efforts to support local arts organizations as high in importance:



From interviews with different users of the theatre AMS understands that increased marketing support would be a top priority for additional efforts on behalf of rental clients.

Efforts should be made to encourage collaborative marketing of events at the Meadowvale Theatre. As part of the re-branding effort, Meadowvale should support marketing initiatives for its rental clients in exchange for the ability to highlight non-competitive activities at the Meadowvale Theatre to their patrons.



Recommendation 33: Engage in 'data mining' to identify likely patrons.

Like the Living Arts Centre, the Meadowvale Theatre patron list reflects the top segments in the market. However, unlike the Living Arts Centre, the relative demand index is higher than average for all but two of these segments. In other words, the number of ticket sold in relation to the number of households in the general population indicates a positive relative demand by all segments except Newcomers Rising, and South Asian Society:

Rank	Patrons and Subscribers	# of tickets	% of total tickets	Relative demand index
1	Winner's Circle	1,154	25.1%	235
2	Pets & PCs	674	14.7%	112
3	Suburban Rows	464	10.1%	176
4	God's Country	358	7.8%	163
5	Newcomers Rising	316	6.9%	39
6	Urbane Villagers	252	5.5%	199
7	Blue-Collar Comfort	241	5.3%	110
8	South Asian Society	201	4.4%	33

Source: Environics Analytics

Rank	Cluster	Household Count	% of Households	% in Ontario	Index
1	Newcomers Rising	162,570	17.9%	6.7%	269
2	South Asian Society	93,384	13.3%	2.6%	505
3	Pets & PCs	92,847	13.1%	7.4%	179
4	Winner's Circle	75,593	10.7%	4.7%	228
5	Cluttered Nests	50,216	7.1%	2.7%	268
6	Suburban Rows	40,706	5.8%	3.8%	150
7	Blue-Collar Comfort	33,918	4.8%	4.0%	120
8	God's Country	33,849	4.8%	3.8%	127

Source: Environics Analytics

Additional marketing efforts to traditional audiences should bear fruit. As new programs are developed, attention can be paid to cultivating increased participation by the two lower performing segments as well.

Driving Success

Governance

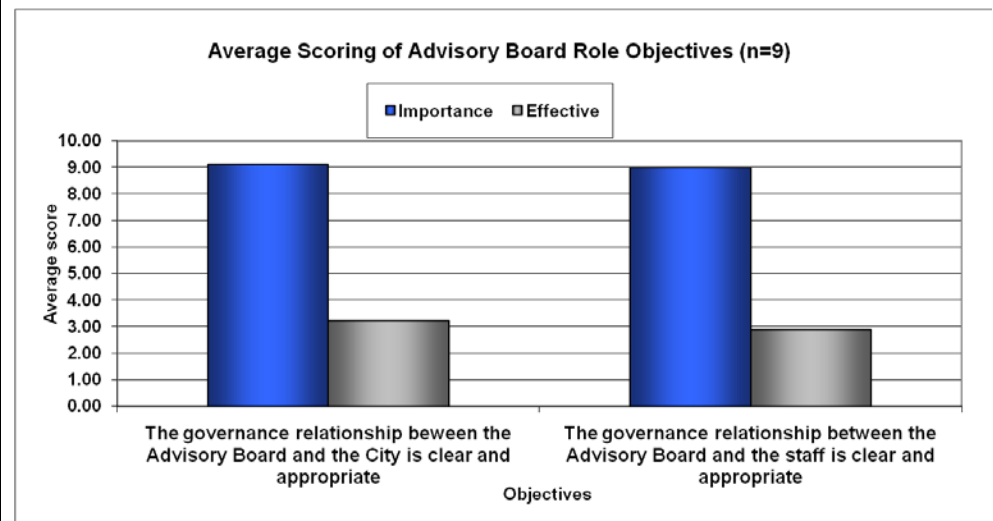
The picture painted here suggests a new reality for the Meadowvale Theatre. An active and engaged Advisory Board will contribute considerably toward its success. However clarity of roles and responsibilities is critical. As the Meadowvale Theatre staff takes on additional programming and operational responsibilities, decision-making must rest with those who bear financial accountability.

Advisory boards do not have any formal legal responsibilities, such as fiduciary responsibility over an organization's finances, hiring / firing power over executives and staff, or the power to commit the organization to contracts or to sign legal documents. Advisory boards are typically constituted to offer advice and support, including technical expertise, fundraising assistance, and serving as an advocate for the institution. Advisory boards also serve a critical community-engagement function, acting as a channel for community members to express their interests, voice their opinions with regard to the operation or programming of a facility and helping an organization's leaders to keep a "finger on the pulse" of community members. In supporting a public sector organization, advisory board members can provide critical lobbying efforts with elected officials when staff members are

precluded from doing so. Finally, an Advisory Board may also bring access to private sector philanthropy that might not be available to the public sector.

Recommendation 34: Clarify purpose and structure of Meadowvale Theatre Advisory Board.

While it is helpful for the Meadowvale Theatre to retain its legal structure to receive outside donations, by-laws should be adopted that clarify that the entity acts in an advisory capacity with regard to management decision-making and responsibility.

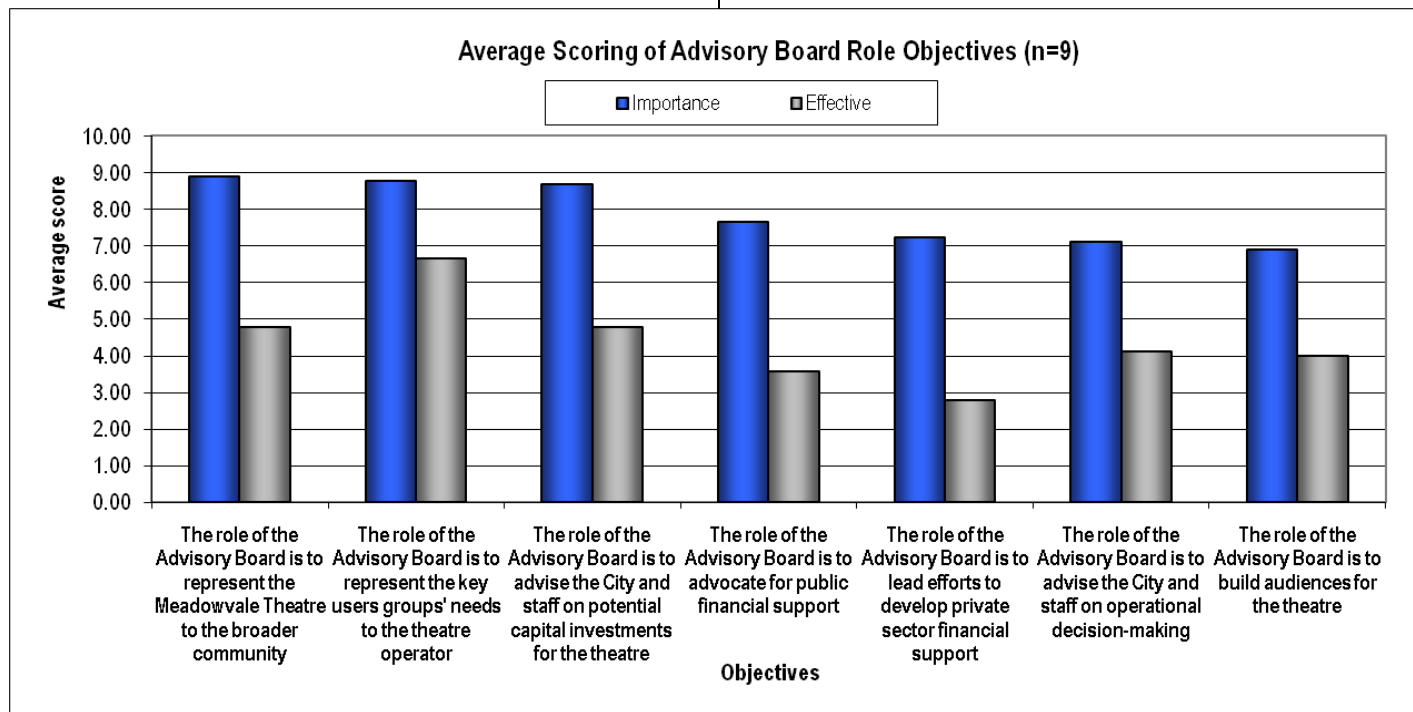


By a significant margin, in the survey of Advisory Board members the distance between importance ratings and effectiveness ratings was highest for the following two statements:

- *The governance relationship between the Advisory Board and the City is clear and appropriate;* and
- *The governance relationship between the Advisory Board and the staff is clear and appropriate.*

When it comes to the importance of various roles the Advisory Board should play, the priority is to represent the theatre to the broader community and to represent the user groups' needs (including for capital investments) to the staff and Culture Division. These roles are consistent with traditional advisory board responsibilities.

It should be noted that standard deviation was high on all Advisory Board Role Objectives responses. The Advisory Board's role is clearly not agreed-upon by respondents.

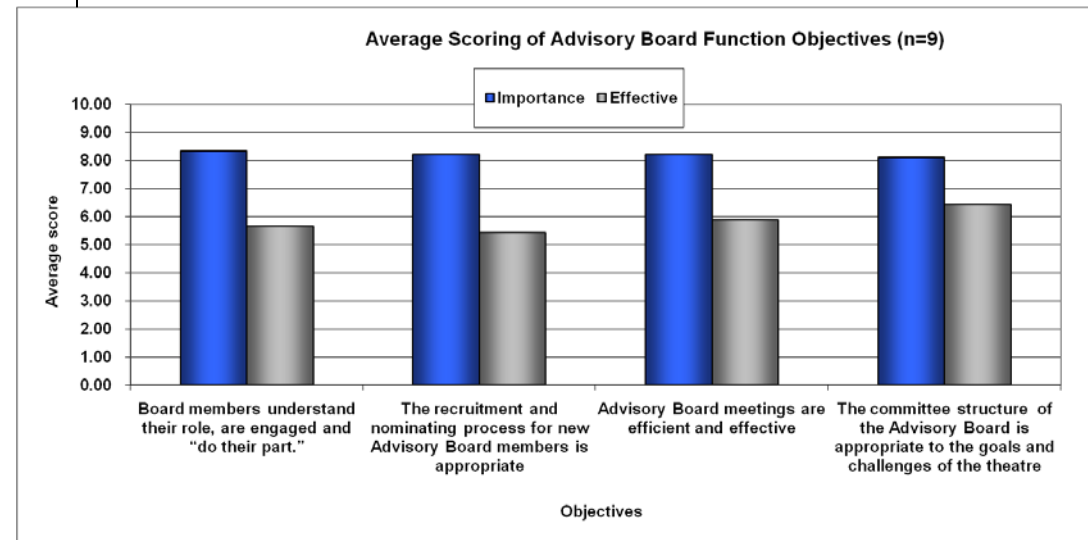


Recommendation 35: The Meadowvale Theatre Advisory Board should embrace the following roles:

- To create community support for the theatre
- To advocate on behalf of the community for the theatre and the groups that use the theatre
- To provide feedback and advice to the operating staff specifically concerning community engagement initiatives, marketing & branding efforts and capital investment needs.
- To serve as a resource to City leadership in growing support for the Meadowvale Theatre

Recommendation 36: Establish nominating procedure. Expand or modify existing board to accommodate additional constituencies.

If Meadowvale Theatre is to succeed by developing broader community engagement and delivery partnerships, additional board positions to reflect these priorities are important. Effectiveness ratings for the recruitment and nominating process are quite low:



The current Advisory Board members bring valuable historical perspective to the operation. Recruitment of new Advisory Board members will ensure continuing energy and diversity of perspective, as well as continuity should longer-term members choose to rotate off the board.

Recommendation 37: Establish regular meeting schedule with published agenda in advance.

With regard to board function responses once again saw standard deviations that were high, peaking at 3.5 for "Board

members understand their role, are engaged and ‘do their part,’” with individual respondent scores ranging from 1 to 10.

As new members come on board it will be important for them to understand their charge, as well as expectations regarding participation. A set schedule of meetings, with prepared agendas distributed in advance, helps to ensure attendance, preparation and participation, thereby improving effectiveness of board meetings overall.

Meadowvale Theatre staff and the Cultural Division should develop formal Advisory Board orientation procedures that include defined expectations, roles, and opportunities to engage with the theatre.

The importance of clarifying the role and responsibilities of the Advisory Board, defining its relationship with the City and Meadowvale Theatre staff, and increasing diversity and participation of members cannot be overstated.

Staffing

The Meadowvale Theatre had 248 use days in fiscal year 2009. While the pattern of utilization is predictable in any given year, there are months where the bookings require staff presence six or seven days per week.

Recommendation 38: Engage an additional full-time technical person to assist rental clients and run shows.

In recruiting people to the Meadowvale Theatre staff it is important to clearly define the technical skills required. Positions such as these typically fall outside of the “norm” of City human resource job descriptions. While working within the approved hiring process, active recruitment of individuals who possess the requisite technical knowledge will be necessary.

Recommendation 39: Develop one or two regular intern positions to assist with box office and front of house needs.

Once the day-to-day operating needs are adequately staffed, leadership can turn its attention to the development of program partnerships. Early efforts will require “in the field” presence of the Meadowvale Theatre Manager. Similarly, efforts to redefine and build the Advisory Board function will be a primary responsibility of the Executive Director.

Recommendation 40: Plan for additional program staff in year 3 of plan.

With new program partnerships in place an additional position will be required to effectively execute Community Access Programs.

Financial Implications

As a City owned and operated facility, the Corporation of the City of Mississauga holds total management and fiduciary responsibility for the Meadowvale Theatre.

Programmatic Expenses

Community access initiatives can be funded through a combination of sources: re-dedication of a portion of the box office surcharge fees; fees from program participants; sponsorships or grants garnered with support from the Advisory Board; and the Culture Division budget. As with any programmatic initiative, efforts are scalable according to the availability of funds.

Other Operating Expenses

Marketing and branding initiatives as well as the additional staff positions would need to be budgeted for through the Culture Division. These are investments that are less scalable in nature, and require commitment on the part of the City to initiate and maintain.

Capital investment

The Meadowvale Theatre is ageing and suffers from a decade of non-investment in regular repair and replacement. A multi-

year capital plan should be developed with input from the staff, Advisory Board, and key user groups to address and prioritize facility and equipment needs.

With the formation of the Culture Division much of this work is under way. Recent equipment purchase and repair as well as budget projections that include programmatic and human resource investment suggest that the City recognizes the value and potential of the Meadowvale Theatre in achieving its cultural policy goals.

Appendix 1: Situation Analysis Report

Appendix 2: Patron File Analysis Report Executive Summary

Appendix 3: Community Survey Report

Appendix 4: Comparable Facilities Case Studies

Appendix 5: Governance Report

Appendix 6: Financial Model
