



## VISION PLAN

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**Prepared by: Arts Centre for Edson Society (ACES)  
Edson, Alberta**

**2018**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

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***According to the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, “81% of Albertans attend at least one arts event per year and 53% of Albertans participate directly in an art form in their home or community.”***

The Arts Centre for Edson Society (ACES) is a group of Town of Edson and Yellowhead County citizens who have come together to:

- Advocate for the arts and culture community of Edson and area, and;
- Advocate for the future development of a new performing arts facility in the Town of Edson.

ACES goal of a new performing arts facility, which would be available to residents of Edson and Yellowhead County, would have the endless possibility of hosting a wide variety of performances and events.

Local residents and visitors to Edson would be extremely impressed with an architecturally-attractive building and the events that it would feature. ACES hopes this building will be a great addition to the greater community: a solid testament of who we are, what we value, and show how we define ourselves as proud members of a vibrant arts community.

For most of us, home is our first place, work is our second place and the attractions and amenities in our communities are our third place. It is these amenities that make our community a better place to live and work. ACES vision is for the performing arts facility to become a place to gather to tell our stories, share our experiences and nurture our ideas. Indeed, the facility can be the catalyst for all to get involved, take action, and continue improving the quality of life within our community.

Edson and Yellowhead County abounds with talent and more can be developed. This proposed facility can appropriately showcase and nurture this talent. Many social, ethnic, and educational groups will find use and benefit from such a facility. In addition to the cultural benefits, this facility will no doubt economically enhance Edson and Yellowhead County.

### ACES EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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President	Peter Taylor	
Vice-President	Clayton Dearden	
Secretary-Treasurer	Diana Inscho	
Directors	Gemma Christie	Ron Christie
	Rose Joudrey	Kim Martin
	Helen Payette	Doug Woodhouse

## ACES BACKGROUND

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ACES was founded in October 2007 by arts-orientated volunteers from Edson and Yellowhead County wanting to develop a new performing arts facility. The organization was incorporated as a society in September 2009 and gained charitable status in 2015.

As ACES worked towards their goal of a new theatre, they gained valuable input through two community consultations in 2008 and 2009, both of which were moderated by the members of the Ministry of Community Spirit. ACES members also toured nine different communities around Alberta in 2009 with theatres to gain valuable knowledge and ideas.

Armed with the knowledge from the consultations and the tour, ACES developed two major designs. The first one was a stand-alone cultural facility and the second would have seen a major expansion of the Edson and District Recreation Complex with a performing arts centre attached. Both of these designs were seen as too elaborate and too expensive for the community. Since then, ACES has changed its focus towards a new possible concept.

The advocacy work conducted by ACES resulted in them being approached by the Town of Edson to work together on the Pavilion in Centennial Park that was completed in 2010. This is one example of the successful partnership between ACES and the Town of Edson.

Within the Community Services Strategic Plan Project, which was conducted by the Town of Edson and Yellowhead County in 2017 and used input collected from community stakeholders, responders indicated that residents of Edson and area are interested in having improved community facilities including a performing arts space. Options being considered as part of the Community Services Strategic Plan Project include attaching a performing arts space to a new multi-use facility or attaching it to a local school. With this study in mind, ACES wishes to move ahead with one of these concepts.

The first concept would see the Town of Edson develop a new multiplex facility. This facility would house many new centres, one of which would be a new 250 to 300 seat theatre. The second concept is a 250 to 300 seat theatre attached to a local school. Although no official architectural designs have been created, ACES is excited to discuss these two possibilities with the Town of Edson and Yellowhead County as the community works towards solving their facility deficit in the future.

Whichever concept is finally agreed upon, ACES, after surveying the community and listening to their needs, is proposing a number of fine arts amenities within the new facility.

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## VISION PLAN OBJECTIVE

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ACES is proposing to work with the Town of Edson and Yellowhead County community to build a facility whose primary purpose is to act as a community gathering place and performing arts space for local artists and performers, as well as visiting performers alike.

*\*Note: In defining the requirements for an effective performing arts facility for the Edson and Yellowhead County area, serious consideration has been given to the potential for additional uses of the facility for the benefit of the community.*

Based on market research performed by ACES, the objective of this Vision Plan in relation to the development of a new performing arts facility will be to:

- Demonstrate the need & support
- Showcase the benefits
- Define potential users
- Propose possible concepts
- Examine hypothetical risks
- Recommend the next steps

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## 2. THE NEED FOR AN ARTS CENTRE IN EDSON

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*There is an identified need for performing arts and conference facilities in the Yellowhead region. This is based on the Edson and Area Community Services Strategic Plan in 2017 and is supported by the local needs assessment surveys completed in 2006 and 2008. The findings in these reports clearly show the high profile that arts and culture has in our community and suggests the need for improved arts facilities and the development of a new arts centre in Edson. It is in this context that ACES proposes the development of an arts centre in Edson.*

***“Having a vibrant arts community is a key factor in attracting and retaining knowledge-based and skilled workers: the arts encourages employees and their families to stay.”***

-Ripples Across the Province, [www.affta.ab.ca](http://www.affta.ab.ca), 2014

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## GROWING POPULATION

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In the 2016 Census of Population conducted by Statistics Canada, Yellowhead County recorded a population of 10,995. The Town of Edson’s 2012 municipal census (latest census) counted a population of 8,646, which is an increase of 14% since 2001. Looking at the Town population figures combined with the surrounding Yellowhead County area, that uses Edson as a service area, the population exceeds 19,000. As the population in Edson and Yellowhead County grows, both communities will need to address the growing demand for programs, services and facilities.

## INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS

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Many individuals from both Edson and Yellowhead County are very supportive of a new cultural arts facility in Edson. From people joining the ACES Facebook page (created in June 2011), to discussions with the community at events such as the Edson and District Trade Show, to letters of support, to community facilitated discussions, the community is demonstrating its desire to proceed with this project. As of February 2018, 386 people have joined the Arts Centre for Edson Society Facebook page. A campaign is also currently underway to show a listing of people from the Edson area that would support the development of a new performing arts facility in Edson. As of November 8, 2017, 100 people have joined the Arts Centre for Edson Society supporter list.

## COMPARABLE COMMUNITIES TO EDSON

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After researching various communities around Alberta, it was discovered that numerous communities, some larger and some smaller than the Town of Edson, have a large performing arts centre in their communities. Of the 15 Alberta communities that were surveyed, all of them had a cultural facility that contained more than 150 seats. Thirteen of these facilities were mixed/multiuse facilities, and two were stand-alone facilities. Six of these centres had smaller populations than Edson, and eight of the communities had a full time Arts/Culture Staff Member.

See Appendix B: Comparable Communities

## CURRENT FACILITIES

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In the past, a number of facilities in Edson and Yellowhead County have been used for community assemblies and performances. However, many of these venues have significant limitations regarding access, availability, production values and technical considerations. The list below details some of the challenges faced in producing public events and performances in some or all of the existing venues in the Edson and the surrounding Yellowhead County community:

- Small venue space (*oftentimes school plays are sold out with many hopeful people being turned away due to lack of available seating*).
- Limited stage size is a problem with all current venues.
- Stages must be custom-built in some venues.
- Seating must be removed after each performance in some venues.
- The seating rake is unsafe in some venues and some audience seating can create sightline issues for audience members.
- Easy and safe accessible lighting is an issue in most venues.
- Stage lighting and sound consoles must be set up and subsequently removed after each performance to ensure availability of the space in its entirety for the next user group.
- As the spaces are not designed for artistic performances, there are ongoing problems with restricted electrical supply, building support beams being in the way, and other structural issues.
- A lack of proper acoustics in all current venues is an ongoing challenge.
- There are inadequate dressing rooms and green rooms at all venues.
- Poor ventilation in most venues creates an uncomfortable atmosphere and is a health hazard.
- With a limited qualified theatre staff, large numbers of volunteers are required to set up and run productions or events at most venues.
- A lack of rehearsal space in the venue or limited access for rehearsals, which results in dress rehearsals being the first opportunity for performers to work in the space (*an unnerving situation for performers*).
- A lack of access and egress for disabled persons, both audience members and performers, in some venues.
- Some venues have certain operating hours that limit evening and weekend performances.
- Blacking out windows is sometimes required, which adds to the complexity of mounting professional quality productions.

***“The municipalities find themselves at a crossroads of opportunity – a time when existing facilities are at or are approaching end of life and will need replacing or refurbishing, when solid growth is expected in the region and population requirements will increase, and when renewed co-operation makes it possible to join resources and plans.”***

*-Edson & Area Community Services Strategic Plan, Western Management Consultants, 2017*

### **2017 Edson & Area Community Services Strategic Plan**

The Town of Edson and Yellowhead County commissioned Western Management Consultants (WMC) to prepare a Community Services Strategic Plan to identify the needs and wishes of the Edson area residents with respect to several components of community activities. The findings in this report clearly show the high profile that arts and culture has in the community and suggests the need for improved arts facilities. The report also suggests that a performing arts facility should be built in conjunction with a multiplex facility or attached to a local school.

The following are some excerpts from this report supporting the need for improved performing arts facilities in Edson:

Page ii: *“There is strong support for a new multi-purpose community centre and recognition that there will be a need to develop and implement a reasonable funding strategy involving multiple partners.”*

#### **From Community Stakeholder Sessions**

Page 4: *“It was suggested by a number of attendees that a Library/Theatre complex should be built, and some suggested the former hospital site as a possible location.”*

Page 4: *“There was considerable discussion about the Red Brick School, and the advantages and disadvantages of the building. Generally, the space is small which limits use of the facility for large functions. The theatre was described as well used, but with a number of challenges. These include: the lack of technology to aid productions, no backstage, lack of audience space, poor heating and air conditioning, limited accessibility, and inability to accommodate some activities; e.g. dancing.”*

Page 4: *“The Arts Centre for Edson Society (ACES) representatives reiterated their position that more space is needed for arts and culture activities, and their support to build a new or renovate facilities.”*

Page 5: *“The majority of participants felt that Edson is behind comparable communities in the provision of services and programs”. ... “A common concern was the lack of facilities in the winter months.”*



## Finding and Recommendations

Page 57: *“Respondents from industry support enhancements to community services to differentiate the area from other communities. This makes it easier to attract and retain talented employees and their families”.*

Page 57: *“An aging recreation and culture physical infrastructure will require renewal in the foreseeable future”.*

Page 58: *“In addition to the Multiplex, Edson and area should develop a theatre attached to a high school in Edson. If this is not possible, the theatre should be integrated into the Multiplex to serve convenient and meetings markets, as well as regional entertainment venue”.*

## Volume 2: Respondent Priorities for Expansion or Development, Key Word Analysis

Page 9: *“Indoor, Arts, Theatre/Stage”* together comprise 36% of the complete list of the top priorities for expansion and/or development.

## Volume 2 Appendix 2: Recreation Services Data and Calculations

Page 1: Top Words/Phrases *“Drama, Dance, Theatre and Arts”* together comprise 22% of additional high frequency participation activities.

Page 2: One sample response was *“We NEED a proper theatre to accommodate the proven Drama theatre productions and their audiences”.*

Page 3: Top Words/Phrases *“Indoor, New Theatre, Arts and Culture, Drama, Theatre”* comprise 29% of the complete list of words/phrases in the report.

Page 3: One sample response was *“Feel a strong need for more indoor activities to promote healthy active lifestyles for all ages during the many winter months”.*

## Volume 2 Appendix 3: Recreation Services Data and Calculations

Page 3: Top Words/Phrases *“New Theatre/New Theater”* comprises 13% of all top words and phrases in the additional comments section.

Page 4: Some sample responses included *“It is time for a new theatre in Edson”* and *“A theatre is something that would benefit the community”.*

## Volume 2 Appendix 4: Arts & Culture Services Data and Calculations

Page 2: Key Words/Phrases “Arts, New Theatre, New Theater, Concerts, Plays” comprise 41% of the additional comments under Question 18.

Page 3: Some sample responses included:

*“I wish there would be more arts and culture opportunities in Edson” ... “The Town of Edson should build a new theatre” ... “We need a new theatre” ... “Please do something to make the Red Brick more usable or build a new theatre. Not all of our family are able to see my grand daughter’s shows because there are never enough tickets available. Never had this issue in Athabasca” ... “Arts centre if considered must be in town easily accessible not something you have to drive to” ... “Participate in arts and culture events with my family whenever possible” ... “It would be ideal to attach an arts facility to a high school, but have the ability to close it off for public use after hours”.*

## Volume 2 Appendix 5: Priorities and Revenue Sources

Page 1: Under Question 21, the top six priorities (combined weight) for expansion and development (28 listed) were as follows: **1. Indoor**, **2. Pool**, **3. Arts**, **4. Field House**, **5. Facility/Facilities**, **6. Theatre/Stage**.

### **2008 Peers Regional Community Facility Feasibility Needs Assessment**

The Peers Regional Community Facility Feasibility Needs Assessment, which was prepared by RC Strategies, gathered information from community members about facilities that are needed in the Peers region. Three of the top six choices were:

- Larger capacity for banquet / events / parties / etc.
- Performing arts space / theatre.
- Arts & crafts space.

These needs can be met within the proposed new facility in Edson.

### **2006 Indoor Facility Study**

The Indoor Facility Study, which was prepared by Paul Conrad & Associates, had participants respond to the survey question that asked ‘what would be the most important recreation and cultural indoor facility the community should develop in the next five years?’ Two of the top five responses were:

- The creation of a ‘multi-use facility’.
- The building of a ‘350+ seat theatre’.

These needs can be met within the proposed new facility in Edson.

## MORE SURVEY INFORMATION

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### **2012 Survey of the General Public, EKOS Research Associates**

Three in four Canadians (75%) attended a performing arts performance by professional artists in 2011:

- 44% attended a theatrical performance, such as a drama, musical theatre, dinner theatre, comedy;
- 42% attended a popular musical performance such as pop, rock, jazz, blues, folk, country and western;
- 20% attended a symphonic or classical music performance;
- 15% attended a dance performance.

86% of Canadians are accessing performing arts presentations via television, Internet or other media channels. Yet, they are twice as likely to ascribe a high importance to live performing arts attendance than to any media-based consumption.

79% of Canadians say they would miss it if there were no live, professional performing arts available in their community (21% to a moderate extent and 58% to a high extent).

### **2010 Minister's Dialogue with the Arts Sector, Alberta Culture and Community Spirit**

This report found that there is a strong need for funding of the arts, and that arts organizations across the province are experiencing a shortage of facilities for performance and practice. One finding that is noteworthy in this report was the absence of any arts facilities in the Yellowhead region.

### **2010 General Social Survey, Statistics Canada**

37% of Canadians (10.4 million) attended a cultural or artistic festival in 2010. This represents an increase of 57% since 2005. In comparison, Canada's gross domestic product grew by 18.3% over the same period.

### **2008 Alberta Recreation Survey**

The 2008 Alberta Recreation Survey identified a number of activities undertaken by Alberta households. Two of the top nine activities were listed as:

- Attending a fair or festival.
- Attending a museum or gallery.

Both of these activities can be achieved within the proposed new facility in Edson.

### 3. BENEFITS

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***“A strong arts presence is a contributing factor in maintaining the health of a community – attracting both tourists and residents.”***

-Social Impacts and Benefits of Arts and Culture: A Literature Review, Department of Canadian Heritage, 2016

The benefits of a new performing arts facility can be seen through a number of different social and educational groups, as well the potential economic spin-offs.

#### SURVEYING DIFFERENT DEMOGRAPHICS

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Many social groups and educational organizations will benefit from a new facility. The building will be accessible to people of all ages and socio-economic backgrounds. These groups include local artists, indigenous community members, persons with disabilities, seniors, Yellowhead County residents and youth. Each were asked **“How a new performing arts facility would benefit our community and how would their demographic benefit from a new performing arts facility?”**

##### **Local Arts Benefits**

The arts are important to individuals as a means of creative expression. The arts are important to communities as they provide an opportunity to come together and feel part of something greater than ourselves. A new performing arts facility would benefit our community and the arts community by creating a space of possibility--one that has fewer limitations than existent facilities. Investment in the arts is an important part of growing a vibrant, dynamic community.

-Response composed and submitted by Robyne Willock, January 19, 2018

##### **Indigenous Peoples Benefits**

Indigenous people are natural artists. We existed with only the materials around us and made art that was both purposeful as well as beautiful and unique. As many people know, space is important to Indigenous people. We believe that space is not owned, but it is shared. Having an arts centre means having a new space to showcase art and exist with one another in a facility that is set aside for creative minds. It means a place to have workshops showcasing Indigenous art as well as other forms of art. It would be important to contact the local Indigenous people and have the space available for young emerging Indigenous artists to access the centre. Edson currently doesn't have an art space that is all encompassing and accessible for members of the community, let alone Indigenous people. Having this art facility would open doors for a lot of Indigenous artists and youth who want to explore the arts. It could provide inspiration for individuals and an opportunity to learn about cultural art. It provides an opportunity for local Indigenous artists to showcase their work as well.

- Response composed and submitted by Mackenzie Brown, Warrior Women, February 13, 2018

### **Persons with Disabilities Benefits**

To hear that ACES is advocating to develop a new performing arts centre truly warms my heart for a couple of reasons. One being that being the Director of one of the agencies for Persons with Disabilities, both mental and physical, to see the individuals get excited for and after the shows is so rewarding. There are individuals whose interest cannot be held for great lengths of time but we have not experienced them want to leave these productions. The individuals express their love of the productions through communication, both verbal and expressive. Your group has gone over and beyond on supporting the individuals getting to the venue and being able to experience the show. To have a new venue would benefit the individuals in being able to get into and watch the productions with greater ease, cause we both know getting the wheelchair in and out can be difficult and frustrating, not only to the individuals but the workers as well. With limited mobility as some of the individuals have they are able to enjoy the show but at the same seats year after year, with a new centre they would be able to enjoy the shows at different levels and different points as you and I are able. Like I said previously you and your team are very accommodating but this is something that is not always offered to the individuals. We have come a long way in regards to Persons with Disabilities being able to access the community and what the community has to offer it would be a great benefit to have the performing arts with this same accessibility. The performing arts gives individuals with disabilities the opportunity to see how emotions can be expressed creatively. The individuals also have the opportunity to use the productions as way to use socialization within the community, which we know can be difficult for an individual with disabilities and even more difficult when they have to sit within their own group because of limited access to sitting, a new performance arts centre will allow for a broader range of sitting arrangements. On another hand I truly believe the new centre would be beneficial to the community as whole, the outdated venue does make it difficult to enjoy the production fully when you are sweating and squished, but gentlemen like Mr. Taylor and his team make it so worth it. There has been times when parents, loved ones and friends are unable to watch a production due to limited capacity, yes I know there is more than one shows but this still makes it difficult and we would all benefit from a bigger venue. The stage is very small but doable because they make it work, but imagine the production and shows if the platform wasn't so limited. I as a community member and an advocated for Persons with Disabilities I feel very strongly that the community as a whole would benefit with a new arts centre. I want to thank Mr. Taylor and ACES for what they do and all the hard work and countless hours they put in to bring art, theatre and drama programs to our community.

-Composed and submitted by Sherri Brown, Executive Director, Supporting Choices of People Edson (SCOPE), February 13, 2018

### **Senior Benefits**

I feel that we need a new arts centre as the current venue is not friendly for seniors with disabilities in regards to mobility. I recently had a hip replacement and went to see a production at the Red Brick. I found the stairs very steep and frankly a little scary. Some seniors could find our current facility a deterrent and would not attend a performance. Having a more accessible facility would keep our seniors more active and stimulated. It has been said that our current venue is "good enough". That is not a standard I want to live by.

Having a new Arts Centre would allow Edson to showcase our local talent better, and allow seniors more opportunities to attend, even if they have limited mobility.

A town the size of Edson should want to be proud of a facility that would be so greatly used and utilized.

-Response composed and submitted by Rita Stinert, local senior, February 25, 2018

### **Yellowhead County Benefits**

As a Yellowhead County resident, I fully support my tax money be used to build a new an arts centre as the current facilities that we have in our community do not hold enough people, are too cold or too hot, uninviting and have unsafe stairs.

With a new facility we will be able to hold so much more events for our community. As a music instructor we will be able to hold music recitals, family talent shows, larger drama productions and so much more. As of now we do not have the room anywhere in the Town of Edson or Yellowhead County community to hold them.

Having a new facility will bring all generations together as we have a huge talented community.

-Response composed and submitted by Christine Chase, Yellowhead County resident and Music Instructor, February 14, 2018

### **Youth Benefits**

A new performing arts facility would bring our community together so that we could collaborate, gather and create. The performing arts give a sense of security and belonging to so many youth in the community. To have a facility to share their talents would be very meaningful, not only for the performers but the community members who would be in the audience enjoying great work. Many youth would greatly benefit from a performing arts facility because they could have a place to call their own, and to showcase their talents. For many youth in the community, the arts are a huge part of their identity, and a performing arts facility would help strengthen that identity.

-Response composed and submitted by Jayna Fedorak, local youth, January 7, 2018

The community of Edson has consistently supported and encouraged all ages of the members of this community to participate and develop amazing talent through the performing arts. As a Trustee with Living Waters School Division I have personally witnessed how our students at Holy Redeemer Catholic Junior/Senior High School have found joy and purpose in developing their skills and talents with the drama program. The students work diligently to maintain their school work while they put in many hours to perfect their character along with their fellow cast members to present amazing plays for the residents of Edson. Schools and communities have always generously supported youth with sports for healthy development. The performing arts teach our community youth to work together and build healthy relationships among various age groups that help to nurture and promote success in school and within our community. The many people who are actively involved in the performing arts in Edson are the people who stay or return to our community to foster pride and development within Edson and the surrounding area. I fully support the development of a new performing arts facility for the community of Edson.

-Response composed and submitted by Tammy Kennedy, Trustee, Living Waters Catholic Regional School Division #42, January 9, 2018

## NATIONAL & PROVINCIAL DATA

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Data collected through national and provincial research also outlines the benefits of community performing arts venues.

- Canadians believe that performing arts venues provide community-wide benefits, such as improved quality of life (87% say moderate to high importance), fostering a sense of community pride (87%), contributing to economic development (88%), and greater community safety through increased activity at night (60%).  
-EKOS Research Associates, Survey of the General Public, The Value of Presenting, 2012
- 86% of Canadians feel that live performance spaces in their community contribute to quality of life.  
-Phoenix Strategic Perspectives, The Arts and Heritage in Canada - Access and Availability, 2012

## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC SPIN-OFFS

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***FACT: Events scheduled for the Edson area were moved to other venues in a different community.***

***FACT: The proposed facility could be used for conferences, retreats, weddings & receptions and more.***

***FACT: Every event that was lost to another community is revenue not gained by local businesses.***

Having a fully functional performing arts facility in the entire Yellowhead region will have a significant positive economic impact on local businesses including:

- Chamber of Commerce membership
- Hotels and other accommodation providers
- Restaurants, cafés, bars, pubs, etc.
- Retailers
- Local attractions (e.g. Galloway Station Museum, Red Brick Arts Centre and Museum, etc.)
- Marketing tool for attracting future residents and employees

### **Local Business Benefits**

Creativity is at the heart of everything we do. ATB Financial is a strong supporter of the arts shown by having a branch dedicated to the Arts and Culture in Calgary on Stephen Avenue and with a Arts Barn in the Old Strathcona district in Edmonton. Connecting and strengthening Alberta's creative community is a focus for ATB Financial as we understand the challenges that artists face as we consider ourselves artists as well. Having a new performing arts facility would enhance the existing arts community by encouraging greater public participation. The venue could be a multi-use facility which could attract entertainers, guest speakers and conferences from outside the community.

-Response composed and submitted by Axel Axmann, Branch Manager for Edson Alberta Treasury Branch, February 12, 2018

## National & Provincial Data

- 65% of business and skilled workers agree that a thriving arts and culture scene is a driving factor when considering relocation.

- Nanos Research, Culture for Competitiveness: How Vibrant Culture Attracts Top Talent, 2016

- \$378 million in economic activity is generated annually through activities associated with Alberta's Arts sector. Revenues generated through arts programming have consistently exceeded expenditures.

-Ripples Across the Province, [www.affta.ab.ca](http://www.affta.ab.ca), 2014

- The live performance domain contributed \$2.5 billion to the Canadian Gross Domestic Product in 2014.
- The live performance domain accounted for 55,000 jobs in 2014.

- Statistics Canada, Provincial and Territorial Culture Indicators, 2016

- 80% of Canadians agree theatres are important for attracting visitors to communities.

- Nanos Research, Canadian Theatre: Creating Vibrant Communities, 2014

- In 2008, Canadians spent more on performing arts (\$1.426 billion) than on movie theatre admissions (\$1.216 billion) or live sports events (\$0.645 billion)
- A considerable percentage of lower-income households choose to spend money on live performing arts. Households with incomes of \$25,000 or less are more likely to spend any money on live performing arts (15%) than on museum admissions (12%) and live sports (4%).

- Hill Strategies, Patterns in Performing Arts Spending in Canada in 2008

## 4. POTENTIAL USERS

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***The communities of the Town of Edson and Yellowhead County have voiced their need for a new performing arts theatre in recent surveys, all of which indicated a high emphasis on performing arts.***

*Through detailed research of events that take place in the Edson and Yellowhead County community, it is evident that a broad range of groups and individuals will make use of a facility designed for performances, community gatherings and a variety of other uses.*



## EDSON-BASED PERFORMERS AND PRESENTATIONS

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In the Edson and Yellowhead County arts and culture community alone, there are approximately 37 active community groups likely to take advantage of a designated performance facility.

In the period between January 2009 and January 2011, there were more than 140 performances and other events offered in Edson involving hundreds of volunteers, support staff and performers. Total attendance for the same period amounted to approximately 35,000 - this equates to each Edson resident attending four events per year.

See Appendix C: Potential Users from the Edson Area

*\* Note: During this time frame, the Edson and Yellowhead County area did not have adequate facilities for numerous large events and conferences. These events were booked into facilities in other municipalities. The Edson and Yellowhead County area would have benefited from a proper performance space with better acoustics and seating for larger audiences.*

## REGIONAL PERFORMERS AND PRESENTATIONS

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In the centre of the West Yellowhead region, Edson is a desirable location for a performing arts/conference facility. Edson's proximity to Drayton Valley, Hinton, and Whitecourt, as well as its position between Edmonton and Jasper, make it accessible to performers and audience members alike.

Current local facilities are ill-equipped or unsuited to handle both larger acts that require more complex (technical) set-ups, and performances for larger audiences.

A new facility would be able to host performers from outside the region such as:

- Performers
- Fair and Festivals
- Musicians and Concerts
- Art gallery and exhibitions
- Speakers
- Regional events such as conferences, corporate training and business retreats

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## GENERAL COMMUNITY USE

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A performing arts facility in Edson would open up a wide variety of uses for the general community. With this in mind, the facility will be flexible enough to accommodate a wide range of events including but not limited to:

- Performance events for adult and youth audiences such as plays, musicals, concerts, spoken word, and dance
- Rehearsal space
- Art gallery and exhibitions: 3D art, sculptures, oversize installations, etc.
- School use such as graduation, plays, concerts, guest speakers, etc.
- Community /public meetings
- Community exhibitions
- Fairs and festivals
- Cinematic events
- Conferences and workshops
- Corporate training and retreat events
- Community exhibition space
- Guest speakers
- Election & public forums
- Weddings and other celebrations
- Funerals & memorial services

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## 5. PROPOSED CONCEPT

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***While all theatres must contain certain elements, there are many types of theatre design. ACES would like to see a new performance space take into account the unique needs of our community and design a theatre to fit these needs.***

ACES has completed a vast amount of research to determine what the perfect cultural performing arts facility will look like in Edson. After consulting different organizations around Edson and Yellowhead County and examining a variety of theatres and theatre concepts from across Alberta, ACES believes it has created a concept that would meet and exceed the needs of the community.

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### BASIC CONCEPT

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The proposed facility, in response to a deep community desire for a new theatre, was based on input from many groups and community members. In August 2008 and August 2009, ACES members, armed with research collected in 2007, travelled to ten communities around Alberta researching and examining a variety of cultural facilities. These communities ranged in size, but all had excellent information to offer to the future construction of a new facility. These communities included Athabasca, Drayton Valley, Fort Saskatchewan, Leduc, Rosebud, Sherwood Park, Spruce Grove, St. Albert, Sundre, and Westlock. In addition, two community brainstorming sessions were held in Edson in May 2008 and September 2009 to hear what the community saw as needs in the new facility.

***No matter what the final layout of the facility, the new performing arts centre should be based on the following concept and the proposed amenities.***

## **Type of Space**

A key component of a successful performing arts space in a community facility is versatility. ACES supports designing a theatre that can be used for a variety of events and activities for all potential users.

One additional option to increase the usability is to include a banquet room and kitchen/catering facilities to accommodate more events such as dinner theatres.

## **Capacity**

ACES would like to see a theatre with traditional seating for approximately 250 to 300 people with a safe audience rake. Increased capacity would allow local groups, who either sell out very quickly or have a lengthy waiting list tickets for patrons, to offer tickets to more residents of Edson and area. A 250 to 300 seat theatre would also be a viable option for drama and dance festivals. Local performances by schools, theatre and musical groups could be accommodated more easily. The theatre should also allow for ample room for audience members in the seats and space between rows to allow for maximum comfort. Theatres with comparable seating capacity can be found in other Alberta communities of a similar size.

## **Stage Area & Theatre**

In order to accommodate a variety of performances and events the stage area in the theatre would need to include the following:

- Stage size of approximately 40' to 50' wide and 25' to 30' deep; this size would allow for adequate wing space and room behind the back curtain
  - The shape of the stage may vary from the traditional proscenium rectangle depending on the theatre design
- Entrances to the stage from both stage left and stage right from the backstage area
- Dressing rooms, green room and accessible washroom facilities in the backstage area
- An accessible loading bay with a large loading door attached to the side or back of the stage
- Cyclorama screen
- Double door access to theatre house
- Seating and appropriate access for disabled persons
- Appropriate air conditioning and air flow

## **Technical Requirements**

Lighting, sound and multimedia equipment:

- Lighting grid and lighting instruments to allow for both general area washes and specials; a state of the art lighting board to run this equipment
- A sound system which allows for various devices to be utilized including microphones and digital devices
- Projection system which can be used for presentations as well as performances
- An accessible technical booth from which to run lights, sound and multimedia equipment
- Accessible lighting grid where lights and bulbs can be changed and arranged easily and safely

## Lobby

The lobby of the facility can be used as an excellent welcoming space for visitors to the facility. It may house a number of amenities:

- A visual art gallery
- Concession and/or bar area
- Wall acknowledging donors to the capital or operating cost of the building
- Administration offices
- Accessible washroom facilities that meet Alberta's building codes
- Coat check

## Further Requirements

A new performing arts facility needs to make excellent use of the space, while at the same time acting as a beautification tool for the community. Things that can be included are:

- Outside beautification areas
- Storage space underneath the audience seating area
- Ample parking, as well as parking for disabled persons
- Meeting room space

Other ideas are always welcome to help enhance this space so that it can best serve the needs of the community.

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## PROPOSED CONCEPT SCENARIOS & PARTNERSHIPS

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It is beneficial to provide three scenarios for the creation and operation of a new Arts Facility/Multi Use Facility in the town of Edson. They are broken down as follows:

1. Scenario I – Partnerships as a Community Run Facility
2. Scenario II – Partnerships as a Facility Attached to a School
3. Scenario III – Partnerships with Private Business

Each scenario provides the opportunity to partner with different groups and organizations within the community. ACES has always encouraged partnerships to move towards the development and day-to-day operations of the facility. In addition, financial success of the theatre would be greatly assisted with the hiring of a dynamic theatre/staff manager and technical director.

### **Scenario I: Attached to a Multiplex Community-Run Facility**

Scenario I, to which ACES believes is the most viable choice, is to build a performing arts centre within a new multiplex facility. The performing arts centre should include all the amenities recommended within this plan. The facility can be used within the following partnerships:

- Town of Edson for meetings (including Town Council meetings), forums, workshops, conferences.
  - It may be possible to partner with the Town to include their new offices in the space.
- Yellowhead County for meetings (including County Council meetings), forums, workshops, and conferences.
- Grand Yellowhead Public School Division (Ecole Pine Grove Middle School, Ecole Westhaven Elementary School, Mary Bergeron School, Parkland Composite High School) for their drama, art and music performances, one-act festivals, ceremonies, graduation, concerts, awards nights, conferences, and meetings.
- Living Waters Regional Catholic School Division (Holy Redeemer Catholic Jr/Sr High School, Vanier Community Catholic School) for their drama, art and music performances, one-act festivals, ceremonies, graduation, concerts, awards nights, conferences, and meetings.
- Yellowhead Kiaina Christian School for their drama, art and music performances, ceremonies, graduation, concerts, awards nights, conferences, and meetings.
- Community Futures for meetings, workshops, events.
- Edson and District Chamber of Commerce for workshops, meetings, events, and conferences.
- Various performing arts groups in Edson and surrounding area including, but not limited to:
  - Arts Alive Festival;
  - Canada Day celebrations;
  - Chautauqua Edson Arts Council for their annual concert series and other performances;
  - Culture Days events;
  - Double Feature Theatre for dramatic performances;
  - Edson Recreational Dance for lessons, recitals and competitions;
  - Essence Dance for lessons, recitals and competitions;
  - Indigenous Peoples Day event;
  - Local choir groups for concerts;
  - Music educators for recitals, festivals and awards;
  - Town of Edson Community Services programs and events
- Various visual arts groups in Edson and surrounding area including, but not limited to:
  - Edson Craft Centre (Potters) for art shows;
  - Edson Creative Arts Society for workshops, classes, and art shows;
  - Edson photography club for workshops, classes, photography shows.
- Various Sports groups in Edson and surrounding area for AGM/Awards nights;
- International Women's Day workshops/meetings;
- Edson Rotary Club for special performances, large meetings and conferences;
- Many of the services within the facility such as ushers, coat check and other front of house duties would be run by volunteers. This volunteer group would also be a partner.

Should it be possible to integrate the arts centre with a multiplex facility, the following partners, although not limited to, may be involved:

- Edson Curling Club
- Edson Figure Skating Club
- Edson Minor Hockey
- Edson Minor Soccer
- Edson Orcas Swim Club
- Edson Public Library

### **Scenario II: Attached to a Local School**

Scenario II would be to attach a new performing arts centre to one of the local schools. The performing arts centre should include all the amenities recommended within this plan.

This scenario also includes the partnership list from the first scenario and the theatre would still be a community-run facility. However, the most important partnerships in this scenario are those between the municipalities, who would develop and maintain the community use portion of the facility, and school division(s). Very careful long-term agreements would need to be drawn up between the two entities.

The school in which to attach the theatre would have to be negotiated between the municipalities and the school divisions.

### **Scenario III – Partnerships with Private Businesses**

The third and final scenario is to build a new performing arts facility within the concept of a private partnership. The main component of the building would be operated by the municipality with private businesses operating businesses within the facility.

This scenario can range from minimal partnerships such as sponsorships or commercial space for lease within the building, to the facility renting out several spaces within the building to private companies. All of the partnerships from Scenario I would also apply to this scenario along with the partnerships listed below.

Whether the facility is municipally or privately run, operation costs could be reduced by including commercial space for lease within the building. These spaces would be best set up as “double-loaded” spaces with access from both the inside and the outside of the facility. Some examples of renters in these spaces could be, but not limited to:

- food kiosks and concessions,
- sports stores,
- art and art supply stores,
- music stores,
- music, art, yoga, and dance studios,
- restaurants and lounges with patio space,
- offices and/or micro offices,
- micro stores for local artisans or entrepreneurs.

In addition to this, the feasibility of a facility like this is greatly increased if as many interest groups as possible are included in a single space (ie. developing the entire multiplex facility from Scenario I within this concept), thus increasing traffic and users for businesses to benefit from. There is also the benefit of more multi-use spaces within the facility. It may also be easier to attract private investment with a true multi-use facility.

It would be beneficial to partner further with the Edson & District Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary Club of Edson, Alberta Culture and Tourism, Alberta Touring Alliance, and other culture and tourism groups to encourage the potential for business to invest and set up shop, as well as to utilize the facility to its highest use. This scenario also increases the potential for overall growth in our community.

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## 5. RISK ASSESSMENT

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As with any major capital project, there are a number of potential risks. ACES will address these risks within the three concept scenarios.

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### INTERNAL & EXTERNAL RISKS

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ACES has examined the initial potential weaknesses of the project and addressed them below.

- Lack of municipal funding and/or resources.

ACES recognizes there may be limited municipal funding available for this project and has plans to form an offshoot of the society (Friends of the Arts Centre for Edson Society – FACES) whose specific purpose of FACES would be to leverage funding from provincial and federal grants, corporate sponsors and other individual and community organizations to help ensure this project is successful.

- Perceived competition with current Edson and area projects.

It is an exciting time in the Edson area with many projects being spearheaded. All of these projects not only help grow the already strong community spirit in Edson and Yellowhead County, but they also encourage visitors to stay and play in our area. An arts centre is sure to complement these facilities, not compete with them. ACES encourages a balance between arts and culture facilities and programs with sports and recreation facilities and programs. Focussing on one of the other would be extremely detrimental to the community as a whole and would only serve to divide our residents on the issue even further.

- Perceived competition with existing Edson and area facilities.

The proposed performing arts centre will be filling an identified need for performing arts and conference facilities in the Yellowhead region (see Section 2). There is no existing facility in the Edson area that provides the space, equipment and audience seating as proposed by this project. In fact, many speakers and performers have been lost to venues in other municipalities due to lack of adequate facilities in the Edson area.

- Feasibility of a community facility attached to a local school.

Through ACES travels to other communities, especially with ones that have community facilities attached to schools (Leduc, Spruce Grove, Westlock), it was recommended by the staff of these buildings to not attach to a school. Although the construction of the facility was excellent, the partnerships between the municipality and the school divisions is very strained. Conflicts have arisen through insurance issues, communication failures, maintenance expectations, facility hours, and overlapping school and community events. ACES encourages that both the municipalities and the school division(s) clearly outline the expectations of one another and continue to keep communication lines open. It must also be expected that those who negotiate this partnership may not be the ones who are still in those positions ten or fifteen years down the road, making the agreement all the more important to be detailed and specific.

- *“Edson and area should develop a theatre attached to a high school in Edson. If this is not possible, the theatre should be integrated into the Multiplex to serve convenient and meetings markets, as well a regional entertainment venue.”* -Recommendation from the 2017 Edson & Area Community Services Plan

One recommendation was made to build the theatre within a phase 2 concept of a proposed multiplex. One danger is that once the phase 1 section of the facility is complete that no timeline is given for the theatre and there might not be funding to include the theatre at a later date. This would then mean the performing arts centre would never come to fruition within an appropriate timeframe. ACES strongly recommends that if Town of Edson and Yellowhead County build a multiplex that a theatre be included in phase 1 or a theatre be attached to a local school simultaneously during the construction of a multiplex. The benefit to this is that the overall cost will be less in the long run due to economy of scale.



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## 6. THE NEXT STEP

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After lobbying for a new performing arts centre since 2007, ACES recommends it is time for the community to move to the next step.

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### COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP

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ACES wishes to see Edson Town Council, in conjunction with Yellowhead County Council, take a leadership role in creating a working group of citizens representing different organizations that have a stake in the development of a new multiplex facility. Members of ACES wish to have representation within this group.

The working group can be made from ACES members and several interested parties such as, but not limited to:

- Town of Edson and Yellowhead County Council members
- Town of Edson and Yellowhead County Administration
- Edson Trustees from Grande Yellowhead School Division and Living Waters Catholic Regional School Division
- Other potential user groups and/or tenants
- Business community members

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### A PLAN

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This working group would then build a plan on how to proceed to the next step. Within this plan, things to consider are, but not limited to:

- Location (Town of Edson and Yellowhead County began process on February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018)
- Design of the performing arts facility (ie. proscenium or thrust stage)
- What to include
- Overall capital cost
- Operating budget
- Preliminary architectural designs
- Communication with the public
- Sponsorship from local and regional corporations
- Timeline from beginning construction to completion
- Hire Facilities Manager and/or Theatre Technician

The plan designed by this working group will lay the foundation for the future of new performing arts centre.

## 7. CONCLUSION

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ACES firmly believes the construction of a new cultural facility in Edson is a *need*; it will undoubtedly help to make our community *exceptional*.

Our community is on the verge of making some great changes. There are a number of large capital projects underway or planned for the near future, while at the same time there are many private buildings that are changing hands and the new owners making significant upgrades that contribute to the beautification of our community. Such things impact how our community is perceived by others; also these changes affect how we see ourselves.

When viewed in this way ACES believes this project is a significant asset that will make the Edson and Yellowhead County area exceptional. Apart from providing high calibre entertainment opportunities for everyone, it will impact employee recruitment, employee retention, and opportunities for our young people. Furthermore, this new cultural facility will result in an overall increase in the quality of life for our community.

ACES understands that a new cultural facility is not essential to the Town of Edson and Yellowhead County in the same manner as roads, water and sewer lines. However, its importance lies in how significantly it improves our community, and how it takes the name or the brand of Edson and Yellowhead County far beyond our borders. Essential services are necessary to be able to live in a community, but arts-related opportunities make people *want* to live in a community.

The Arts Centre of Edson Society wishes to emphasize that this proposal is helping to work towards making Edson and Yellowhead County an exceptional area. This project will motivate people to move here, stay here, work here, raise their children here, retire and grow old here. This project will help to make Edson and Yellowhead County home.

## 8. APPENDIX

### APPENDIX A: COMPARABLE COMMUNITIES

<b>Community</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Facility Type</b>	<b>Seats</b>	<b>Community Arts Coordinator</b>
Brooks	10,000+	Stand Alone	80	No

**Comments:** We currently use an empty building in a strip mall at the generosity of the landlord. We pay utilities but not rent under the caveat that we must leave on a moments notice if it gets rented. We have lights, chairs, set, and other various items that we would need to find a place for it we had to leave. The city here has discussed creating a shared arts space but it has never come to fruition.

<b>Community</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Facility Type</b>	<b>Seats</b>	<b>Community Arts Coordinator</b>
Canmore	10,000+	Mixed/Multiuse80 or Attached		No

**Comments:** We perform at the Canmore Miners's Union Hall which we also rent out for other events and performances. You should speak to the folks at artsPlace Canmore which is a dedicated visual and performing arts facility in Canmore with paid staff. That is probably closer to the model you're looking at.

<b>Community</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Facility Type</b>	<b>Seats</b>	<b>Community Arts Coordinator</b>
Grande Prairie	10,000+	Stand Alone	165	No

**Comments:** Grande Prairie Live Theatre would be happy to share our experiences with our facility and how it has expanded the live performance and film scene in our region. There are so many positives with having a dedicated space for live performances and films of all kinds. Things that are often overlooked or cut because of start up budgets are adequate storage space, adequate wing and backstage space, going cheap on equipment, under estimating actual facility costs, and over estimating rental revenues. Do not base your project on current use. Base it on what could happen in the future as your region develops an understanding for the new possibilities available from a new facility.

<b>Community</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Facility Type</b>	<b>Seats</b>	<b>Community Arts Coordinator</b>
Stettler	5000-8000	Mixed/Multiuse200 or Attached		Unsure

**Comments:** Make it a multipurpose facility. It is helpful if the venue can be booked out for other events other than theater. Think concerts, weddings, grads, dinner theater etc.

<b>Community</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Facility Type</b>	<b>Seats</b>	<b>Community Arts Coordinator</b>
Westlock	8000-10,000	Mixed/Multiuse254 or Attached		No

**Comments:** Working with other arts groups and community theatre is key to having a healthy relationship in the community itself and being able to tap into the different pools of people that can help on stage and behind the stage.

Prepared by: Helen Payette, ACES Director      January 2018

Community	Population <8098	Population >8098	Full Time Arts & Culture Coordinator	Stand Alone Facility	Mixed / Attached Facility	>150 seats
Athabasca	X		X		X	X
Drayton Valley	X			X	X	X
Fort Saskatchewan		X	X	X	X	X
Hinton		X	X		X	X
Jasper	X			X		X
Leduc		X	X		X	X
Lloydminster		X	X	X		X
Medicine Hat		X	X	X		X
Sherwood Park		X	X		X	X
Spruce Grove		X	X		X	X
St. Albert		X	X		X	X
Sundre	X			X	X	X
Trochu	X				X	X
Westlock	X				X	X
Whitecourt		X			X	X

Prepared by: Anita Michie, ACES Supporter      November 26, 2007

### APPENDIX B: POTENTIAL USERS FROM THE EDSON AREA

The following community groups hold events in Edson and the surrounding Yellowhead County area on an annual basis.

Group	Activity	# of Performances, Workshops, etc.	Current Venue	Potential Uses for new Facility
Alberta Culture Days	Celebration of the Arts (including Arts on Fire Awards)	2-3	Edson Public Library, Galloway Station Museum	2-3
Arts Alive Festival	Arts Festival	5-7	Red Brick Arts Centre, Edson Public Library	3-4

<b>Group</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b># of Performances, Workshops, etc.</b>	<b>Current Venue</b>	<b>Potential Uses for new Facility</b>
Community Futures Leadership / West Yellowhead	Meetings / Workshops, Gala Event	3	Hinton	1-2
Chautauqua Edson Arts Council	Musical Groups, Plays	4-6	Red Brick Arts Centre	4-6
Double Feature Theatre	Performing Arts	2-3	Red Brick Arts Centre, Rosevear Hall	2-3
Edson & District Chamber of Commerce	Small Business Awards, Tradeshow, Christmas Party	5	Edson & District Recreation Complex*, Edson Legion, Repsol Place	1-2
Edson Craft Centre (Potters)	Classes / Workshops. Art Shows	15-18 Workshops, 2 art shows	Edson Public Library	2-4 (Visual Arts Gallery)
Edson Creative Arts Society	Classes / Workshops, Art Shows	5-7 Workshops, 2 art shows	Edson Public Library	2-4 (Visual Arts Gallery)
Edson Minor Hockey	Awards Night, Hockey Tournament Dinner	1-2	Edson Legion	1-2
Edson Recreational Dance	Dance Classes, Performances	2	Red Brick Arts Centre, Parkland Composite High School, Various Locations	1-2
Essence Dance	Classes, Attends Dance Festivals	2-3	Red Brick Arts Centre	1-2 (hosting own Festival)

<b>Group</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b># of Performances, Workshops, etc.</b>	<b>Current Venue</b>	<b>Potential Uses for new Facility</b>
Federation of North American Wild Sheep	Fundraiser	1	Edson Legion	1
First Responders Dinner	Fundraiser	1	Edson Legion	1
International Women's Day Edson	Dinner Entertainment	1	Edson & District Recreation Complex*	1
Local Choirs	Concerts	2	Various churches	1-2
McMann Youth, Family and Community Services Association	Octoberfest	1	Edson & District Recreation Complex*, Edson Legion	1
Pandora Players	Plays	2-3	Edson Legion, Edson & District Recreation Complex*, Red Brick Arts Centre	2-3
Parkland Composite High School	One-Act Plays, Main Stage Production	6-8	Edson & District Recreation Complex*, Red Brick Arts Complex	5-7
Pine Grove Middle School School	Main Stage Production, One-Act Plays, Christmas Concert	14-16	Red Brick Arts Centre, Ecole Pine Grove Middle School	7-10
Reflections Speaker Series	Dinner / Speaker	1	Edson & District Recreation Complex*	1
Rotary Art in the Park	Summer Concerts & Plays	7-9	Centennial Pavilion	4-5 (options for a winter series)

<b>Group</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b># of Performances, Workshops, etc.</b>	<b>Current Venue</b>	<b>Potential Uses for new Facility</b>
Edspn Rotary Club	Special Performance	1	Edson & District Recreation Complex*	1
Supporting Choices for People, Edson	Dinner / Speaker	1	Edson & District Recreation Complex* / Edson Legion	1
Town of Edson	Mayors Black Tie Gala, Christmas Party, Volunteer Appreciation Gala	3	Edson & District Recreation Complex* / Edson Legion	1-2
Vanier Community Catholic School	Christmas Concert	1	Vanier Community Catholic School	1
West Yellowhead Music Society	Special Performances	1-2	Edson & District Recreation Complex*	1-2
Yellowhead County	Volunteer Appreciation Gala	2-3	Red Brick Arts Centre, Edson Public Library	1-2

\*August 2018: Edson Town Council is moving forward with the demolition of the Edson & District Recreation Complex

**Participation in Town of Edson Community Services Arts & Culture Events, 2017**  
***Over 12,000 people participated in the special events.***

- Town of Edson ran 28 Art & Culture programs.
  - 11 were cancelled, 2 were child programs, 9 were adult.
- Rotary Sundays in the Park - 2800 participants.
- Canada Day - 3500 participants.
- The Canada 150 celebrations outside of Canada Day -2200 participants.
- Youth Canada 150 Workshops – 84 participants across 3 workshops
- Alberta Culture Days - 480 participants across all activities
  - There were celebrations happening without the Town’s collaboration as well.
- AXIS Theatre performed *Hamelin* -114 attendees.
- The Christmas Light Up at the Galloway Station Museum - 350 attendees.

-Information compiled by Alicja Broda, Recreation & Culture Programmer, Town of Edson, 2018

## APPENDIX C: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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Numerous questions have been asked by elected officials and citizens at large regarding ACES project.

**Q:** A 250-300 seat theatre is a large building. Do you have dimensions? And a usability percentage?

**A:** It is too soon to predict dimensions without architectural drawings and not knowing whether it will be attached to another building or stand-alone. The percentage of usage would be 33-50% made up of local groups only and not considering travelling groups. This number could be even higher even higher with exceptional management.

**Q:** Any building has large operating costs such as heating and power. Have you taken those numbers into consideration?

**A:** Yes, we have taken operating costs into consideration. This will be a major part of the discussion when planning for the facility.

**Q:** Have you fundraised? Do you plan to?

**A:** No. Upon recommendations by Edson Town Council, we have not done any fundraising so far. Yes, we will fundraise and work on applications for grants with the permission of the Town and County Councils once project officially moves forward. That is part of our mandate. We have developed some fundraising plans that can be found on our website. These plans were made when ACES was proposing to attach a theatre to the Edson & District Recreation Complex, however they still provide a general outline what a fundraising campaign might look like.

**Q:** Are you familiar with the Arden Theatre in St. Albert. Can you compare that facility to what you are hoping to build?

**A:** ACES toured the Arden Theatre in 2008. The theatre is over 500 seats, so our proposed theatre would be roughly half that size in seating. We would hope to have much the same technology and atmosphere.

**Q:** Would ACES run the theatre? The Peers Multiplex is run very efficiently by a community group.

**A:** We feel it would be too much for a volunteer group to take on and best in the hands of the local municipalities.

**Q:** What are the current town facilities that are used for arts and culture performances?

**A:** The current facilities for performing arts are the Red Brick Arts Centre, various school gymnasiums, Repsol Place, Edson Royal Canadian Legion, and various community halls in the Town and County. Until it was closed and set for demolition, the Edson & District Recreation Complex was also used for performances.

**Q:** Hinton recently built a theatre with a capacity of 162 seats and they are managing quite well with that. Have you seen that facility?

**A:** We toured the Hinton Guild in May 2018. It has an amazing manager who has done quite well to manage and upkeep the theatre since it opened in September 2017. This space is quite unique and offers many possibilities. It shares itself as a local movie theatre. We would certainly be open to where discussions could go by mirroring some of the Guild's designs.

**Q:** Can we assume that a facility would cost \$10-11 million?

**A:** Without an architect to design the space and do an official cost estimate, it is impossible to know the actual cost. That said, with today's economic climate, it is a good presumption that a theatre would cost



that amount. ACES would work hard to fundraise and apply for provincial and federal grants to help offset the cost.

**Q:** Are you familiar with the 2017 Edson Visitation Study? In there, it says the local businesses would prefer recreational facilities to help attract employees?

**A:** We have reviewed that study and it touches on many challenges that local businesses face in Edson. One such challenge is the lack of recreational spaces, youth facilities and entertainment that would help in attracting employees to the region. Beyond that, ACES feels very strongly that to continue to help foster and grow a diverse population that the community must strike a balance between recreation and culture. The businesses within that study also praise the local arts and culture community for assisting in developing a sense of community pride through events such as the Rotary Art in the Park. ACES knows that a new performing arts centre would help foster this feeling of pride even further.