

# 2024 Business Plan

## 1. Introduction

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Since its inception as a gallery in the mid-1960s as an idea rooted in Oshawa and its community, The Robert McLaughlin Gallery (the RMG) has continued to grow and evolve alongside the City.

Over the last three and a half years, the RMG has navigated the COVID-19 pandemic, racial inequities in the wake of the resurgence of Black Lives Matter protests, responding to calls for truth and reconciliation, and increasing economic disparity. There is an increasing need for galleries to reflect art and structures that represent diverse histories, experiences, and perspectives as agents for social change. In this context, the RMG's current strategic plan focuses building connected, caring, and creative communities through art.

Underpinning all of this work is our commitment to the City of Oshawa, its residents, businesses, and visitors. We believe in the power of art to contribute to positive well-being, revitalize our downtown, and support the economic recovery by partnering with those investing in Oshawa's growth.

However, the RMG like many of our non-profit and charitable partners is facing unprecedented challenges in addressing our financial realities.

We are facing:

- The costs of maintaining aging infrastructure in our building
- The highest inflation rate in over forty years
- Slow recovery of earned revenue streams following the COVID-19 pandemic
- A need to address lower than average employee compensation as a historical issue in the charitable arts sector

We hope that over the last three years the RMG staff team and Board of Directors have demonstrated our commitment to revitalizing the downtown and to helping Oshawa's entire community thrive. Understanding the very tight fiscal restraints for the City, we also believe in asking for what is needed to operate as the world-class public art gallery that Oshawa deserves.

A briefing note presented to the City's Leadership Team on August 31, 2023 is included as Appendix 1 to this document.

## *Vision and Mission*

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### **Vision**

Art cultivates connected and caring communities.

As an artist-centered and community-oriented public art gallery in Durham Region, we bring people from diverse backgrounds together to engage with art that inspires new perspectives, generates meaningful conversations, and creates a sense of belonging.

### **Mission**

We build relationships with diverse artists and communities through art.

The RMG works in collaboration with artists, partners, and audiences to present dynamic and inspiring collections, exhibitions, and programs in an inclusive and equitable environment.

## *2. Service Description and Client Identification*

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### **Organization**

The Robert McLaughlin Gallery is in the treaty lands of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation. This land has been the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg since 1700; before that time, it was stewarded by various communities belonging to the Haudenosaunee and Wendat confederacies. It is covered under the Williams Treaties and the Dish with One Spoon Wampum. This area continues to be home to many Indigenous people from across Mishiike Minisi. We recognize the sovereignty of all Indigenous nations and are grateful for the opportunity to learn, live, and work on this land.

We acknowledge that the RMG is in treaty land, and respect our collective responsibility to protect and nurture the land. We also recognize the continuing impacts of colonialism and our responsibilities to redress the ways this has helped shape our organization. We are committed to working to address structural inequities and to centering Indigenous voices in the gallery.

The RMG is an External Agency of the City of Oshawa, serving as a cultural and community asset. The building is owned by the City but leased nominally (\$1) and managed by the RMG. The Robert McLaughlin Gallery is incorporated in the Province of Ontario as a not-for-profit public art gallery, governed by a Board of Directors. The Directors broadly represent the community of Oshawa and the Region of Durham.

The overall responsibility for artistic objectives and management of the RMG is that of the Chief Executive Officer, supported by a professional staff team.

## Our Values

**Culture of Care:** We are committed to fostering a culture of care that places the health and wellbeing of our staff, artists, partners, and audiences above all else. Kindness and respect are central to all of our relationships.

**Artist-Centered and Creative:** We are dedicated to supporting artists in their work and creating an environment for them to flourish. We provide opportunities for the community to imagine and create.

**Equity and Justice:** We are dedicated to integrating anti-oppressive and anti-racist processes throughout all facets of the organization. This includes prioritizing work with staff and artists from institutionally excluded groups. We further understand our role in shaping Indigenous and Canadian art history. We are therefore committed to creating just, inclusive, and accurate stories of our past and present, and to providing a platform for diverse voices to engage with contemporary issues we face today and into the future.

**Relationship-based and Collaborative:** We prioritize long-term and sustainable relationships with artists and community members. We bring together multiple perspectives and people and invite unique opportunities for collaborations.

**Accessible and Inclusive:** We provide welcoming and accessible experiences to art for a diversity of people, both inside and outside of the gallery.

**Accountable and Open:** We are both an accountable and transparent organization. We take responsibility for our actions, including our mistakes, and promote a safe and open gallery for all.

## Our Strategic Priorities

Annually, the RMG team sets operational goals and tasks to achieve the priorities as set out in our strategic plan. Staff performance plans link directly to these goals.

1. *Engage diverse audiences in new and familiar ways*
  - Ensure an equity-based, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lens within our team, collection, curation, programs, and exhibitions.
  - Expand memberships, visitorship, and volunteer opportunities
  - Enhance storytelling and communications to reach broad audiences
  - Integrate a hybrid digital and physical future
2. *Foster community connections and partnerships*
  - Deepen connections and supports for artists

- Strengthen existing and establish new community partnerships, both on and off-site
  - Collaborate with the arts and culture sector in Oshawa, Durham Region, and beyond
3. *Reimagine the gallery, making space for all*
- Allocate gallery and building space for community gathering
  - Thoughtfully consider and promote the RMG's role and presence in Downtown Oshawa
  - Transform the gallery's outdoor spaces through creative and welcoming placekeeping opportunities<sup>1</sup>
  - Develop a plan to ensure the gallery's community gathering spaces are approachable and accessible
4. *Continue to foster a culture of care*
- Maintain a culture of care at the workplace
  - Extend our culture of care within our broader community of artists, partners, and audiences
  - Commit to supporting equitable and just initiatives
5. *Achieve organizational resiliency and sustainability*
- Further develop strategic funding opportunities and diverse funding streams
  - Match organizational ambitions with financial and human resources

## We Are Community Centric

Shaped by our deep commitment to work with our communities and to create a space for meaningful connections, our curatorial programming seeks to be nimble and responsive to local issues and the conditions of the present moment. Knowing that none of our work would be possible without artists, we actively support artistic practice and work collaboratively to build robust and thoughtful exhibitions, public programs, and community engagement.

Our Permanent Collection is a core pillar of our programming and research. As we continue to grow our Collections with intention, addressing gaps and historical omissions, we also strive to contextualize the artworks through the lens of both the historical period in which they were created and the present socio-political moment.

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<sup>1</sup> **Placekeeping:** While placemaking refers to the participatory creation and shaping of public spaces to express the uniqueness of local culture, placekeeping takes a longer term view, ensuring that when placemaking happens, the quality of that place is secured for the long term. Placekeeping keeps the cultural memories associated with a locale alive, while supporting the ability of local people to maintain their way of life as they choose.

We are open to taking risks with challenging programming, prioritizing process and progress over outcomes and perfection. Acknowledging the continuing legacies of colonialism and its impacts on the gallery, we work to address these inequities and build relationships with our local IBPOC communities. As we progressively redefine the role of a public art gallery in a regional context, we see the gallery as a unique place for civic engagement and instigate collaboration, tending to the relationship between our institution and the many different publics we serve.

The Gallery functions as a welcoming cultural gathering place and tourist destination in the region, contributing to the community's growth in jobs and economic development.

Our programming responds to our diverse communities including seniors, youth, families, new Canadians, Indigenous, Black, people of colour, and people of all abilities.

We are also responsive to the growth of the student population and see this as an important demographic to engage through current offerings including RBC Emerging Artist Program, the Access to Culture in Durham Community (ACDC) Pass—an art student access pass for Durham College students—and our influential social media reach. We recently launched a digital public art tour in collaboration with TeachingCity Oshawa and Durham College. We host annual student exhibitions with the Durham District School Board and the Durham Catholic District School Board that give young emerging artists their first opportunity to present work in a professional gallery setting.

As public arts engagement has shifted and transformed, the RMG maintains relevance to the public by continuing to support professional local arts communities. This is demonstrated through hosting yearly exhibitions by arts organizations, such as the Oshawa Art Association, Oshawa Seniors' Association, and a new exhibition in 2023 with Cultural Art Expressions focusing on IBPOC artists in the Region.

These opportunities situate the RMG as an arts leader and mentor in the region, and increases visual literacy across communities, particularly at a time when schools are cutting enrichment and arts programs, and professional development programs are scarce.

## **Our Programming**

Respected on the national landscape, and as the premiere gallery in the Durham Region, the RMG is a cultural leader for Oshawa.

### *Exhibitions and Permanent Collection*

The Permanent collection includes nationally significant modern Canadian abstraction, the largest holding of works by Painters Eleven in the world, an expanding collection of contemporary art, and public art. Though this is the founding core of our collection, the RMG is also dedicated to collecting with intention in order to reflect the diverse voices and contemporary issues that make up the continuing story of Canadian art, including that of our local community. We work to build public pride in the collections.

The collection is a distinct legacy of the McLaughlin Family and history of Oshawa, a history that we honour and uphold. The RMG also holds works by internationally recognized artists like Emily Carr, Lawren Harris, David Hockney, and Andy Warhol.

Our collecting priorities are to acquire:

- Significant Canadian art that is undeveloped or under-developed in the collection
- Painters Eleven
- Significant artists from Durham Region
- Historical/Contemporary work by equity deserving artists

All acquisitions go through a rigorous process and evaluation. The Acquisitions and Collections Committee and Board of Directors approve all works of art before formal accession into the collection. As we diversify our collection, we are also in the process of deaccessioning artworks that meet the rigorous criteria outlined by our advocacy and membership organizations. Deaccessioning is an important part of maintaining and caring for a collection.

The Thomas Bouckley Collection, which represents an archival photographic record of Oshawa and the region, is a vital link in connecting the community with stories of our past. This collection is built annually through community partnerships. Partnerships with the Abilities Centre, Community Development Council of Durham, Abilities Centre, and AIDS Committee of Durham Region result in to capture diverse experiences within the Region, which are now part of this archival photography collection.

We collaborate with Canadian public galleries in producing travelling exhibitions and publications that circulate throughout Canada. This type of collaboration generates revenue and assists us in reducing costs while accessing artists and programs that would typically not be available to our audiences. Similarly, we are able to support the touring of local artists to other regions in Canada.

The RMG is committed to the creativity and contributions of local and regional artists. We create opportunities for the artistic community through curating exhibitions of their work or engage in particular projects that highlight collaborations with local artists and curators.

## *Learning and Engagement*

The RMG community is an inclusive, warm, and friendly space that supports creative learning in a multitude of ways. 21st Century Learning practices are holistic throughout the RMG, where celebrating different voices, contributing to well-being, and co-creating are at the heart of what we do.

We are finally back to operating all programs post-pandemic, however, only with project funding support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. We welcomed more participants than ever to summer camp, introduced a teen after school art program, and continued with PA day camps, school visits, adult tours, and workshops.

Our Homeschool Program has grown significantly over the past three years offering art classes to families who fulfill the art curriculum expectations at home, a service expanding with the onset of the pandemic. Conducted three times a year for an 8-10 week duration, this highly sought after program has consistently had full class enrollment.

## **We Are Accessible To All**

We remain steadfast in our commitment to free admission and programming opportunities. This continues to include both in-person and digital experiences:

- Tours on weekends for any visitors
- Ontario Power Generation (OPG) Second Sundays for families
- RMG Fridays
- Exhibition openings
- Artists talks and panel discussions
- Partnered engagement series with the Gap Committee and Back Door Mission
- Support hosting community events like Empty Bowls for Feed the Need Durham

We want to build connections, and offer meaningful experiences through art. Together, we can do more to support those who need it most.

## **Volunteer Impact**

Volunteers are a vital asset and generally support all areas of gallery operations. Volunteering provides an opportunity for socialization, particularly for seniors or others who may feel isolated. We are still rebuilding our volunteer program post-pandemic, with most volunteers coming from high school and senior populations. The RMG also hosts a number of internships supported by Canada Summer Jobs and Young Canada Works to help grow knowledge and skills in emerging arts professionals.

### 3. 2023 Accomplishments

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Our 2023 Accomplishments are categorized by the Agency Objectives stated in our 2023 Business Plan presented to Council. These initiatives aligned with the City of Oshawa’s five strategic goals as stated in more detail in the 2023 Business Plan. They also support the RMG’s strategic and enabling priorities.

#### Agency Objective 1 - Engage diverse audiences in new and familiar ways

Strategy	Result
Ensure an equity-based, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lens within our team, collection, curation, programs, and exhibitions	Presented touring exhibition <i>Powerful Glow</i> of Indigenous artists inspired by Mi’kmaq artist Mike McDonald curated by Lisa Myers
	Commissioned new work from local Black artist Aaron Jones <i>Fountain of Dreams</i> presented in the Luke Galleries
	RMG curator Erin Szikora mentored emerging Indigenous artists for the exhibition <i>World-builders, shapeshifters</i> that explored Indigenous futures; opening celebrated in connection with regional Indigenous creative arts showcase
Expand memberships, visitorship, and volunteer opportunities	Established revised volunteer program focused on engaging high school students who also participate in our youth arts workshops
	Expanded Preferred Partners program available to members and held offsite members event at Old Flame Brewery

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Strategy	Result
	Continued to work with businesses and developers to expand our reach; unfortunately these projects often go through an exploration/development stage but partners decide to not move forward e.g. Atria display at 80 Bond Street
Enhance storytelling and communications to reach broad audiences	<p data-bbox="1037 477 1904 553">Completed brand refresh onsite with signage, vinyl, and painting throughout the building</p> <p data-bbox="1037 553 1904 672">Developed interactive elements to explore the collection online thanks to Digital Collections Access Grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage</p> <p data-bbox="1037 672 1904 751">In collaboration with TeachingCity Oshawa and Durham College, launched a digital public art tour downtown</p>
Integrate a hybrid and digital physical future	Continued to host select programs virtually such as artist talks that involved speakers from across the country and virtual studio tours for our RBC Emerging Artist in Residence program
	While interest in virtual school visits dropped, we developed at-school learning sessions for teachers to book complemented by digital tools including a 360 tour of the permanent collection exhibition

**Agency Objective 2 - Foster community connections and partnerships**

Strategy	Result
Deepen connections and supports for artists	Worked with local Inuk artist Couzyn Van Heuvelen to commission new work for the RS McLaughlin to tour to venues across Canada

Strategy	Result
	<p>Presented group exhibition of contemporary textile artists that prioritized presentation of equity deserving artists</p> <p>Continued professional development opportunities for artists through the RBC funded program</p>
<p>Strengthen existing and establish new community partnerships both on and offsite</p>	<p>Co-create project with GAP Committee and Back Door Mission, and Grace Wins to culminate in community exhibition and conversation in Gallery A</p> <p>Developed partnership project with Abilities Centre to create new content for Thomas Bouckley Collection of archival photographs</p> <p>Hosted a seniors social to nurture existing relationships with seniors service providers and invite new seniors visitors to the gallery</p> <p>Held new regional juried art exhibition in collaboration with Cultural Art Expressions to focus on the diversity of cultural experiences in Durham Region</p>
<p>Collaborate with the arts and culture sector in Oshawa, Durham Region, and beyond</p>	<p>Led Durham Arts and Culture Collaborative to secure funding from the Region of Durham for a mapping study to be completed of the arts and culture sector in the Region to advocate for more funding and collaboration</p> <p>Continued to support City-wide events such as the Peony Festival, Canada Day, Convergence Festival, and Bright &amp; Merry Market. Activated these events either through a specific RMG booth or through onsite programming to complement the events and attract more tourists and visitors</p>

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### Agency Objective 3 - Reimagine the gallery, making space for all

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Strategy	Result
Allocate gallery and building space for community gathering	Provided complimentary space to a number of community partners and charitable organizations including Ontario Tech, Bawaajigewin Aboriginal Community Circle, and Feed the Need Durham
	Renovated Arthurs to provide a more flexible space for a wider variety of events
	Continued with accessibility initiatives including staff training, integration within our exhibition and programming planning
	Upgraded technology in Lookout space with funds from Ontario Trillium Foundation to increase usability of the space
Thoughtfully consider and promote the RMG's role and presence in Downtown Oshawa	CEO participated in working group to develop strategic tourism plan; sits on Tourism Advisory Group
	Continue to work collaboratively with downtown businesses and partner organizations to cross-promote and work together on events
	Planned Civic Conversations series to encourage dialogue between visitors and others about issues facing our community
Transform the gallery's outdoor space through creative and welcoming placekeeping opportunities	Completed backyard project with input from our Community Advisory Circle, CLOCA, and City staff that includes creative play, shade structure, seating, artwork restoration, and urban planters for programming in future years
	Add elements to the front of the building to encourage exploration of the gallery. The lightbox project did not move forward due to budget constraints and concerns regarding the limestone building façade

**Agency Objective 4 - Continue to foster a culture of care**

Strategy	Result
Maintain a culture of care at the workplace	Expanded group health benefits provided to staff modernizing the plan to give more flexibility to the team
	Maintained membership in the Indigenous Curatorial Collective to provide outside support to BIPOC staff members
	Instituted 4 day work-week in the summer as a permanent benefit for staff; added flexibility into other 'personal emergency leave' days
	Continued evaluation of capacity, workload, and support to avoid overwhelm and burnout
	Quarterly staff surveys completed with results summaries shared back with staff with identified action items; results also shared with the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors
Extend our culture of care within our broader community of artists, partners, and audiences	Integrated team values within other areas of our work including adding a 'care clause' to artist contracts, training Front of House staff, and promoting an intentional working culture for all
Commit to supporting equitable and just initiatives	Continued to hold monthly-staff led equity discussions on topics of accessibility, gender diversity, days/months of significance, and homelessness
	Completed review of all policies with considerations of equity
	Posted out equity statement and commitments publically with a promise to share updates at least annually

**Agency Objective 5 - Achieve Organizational resiliency and sustainability**

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Strategy	Result
Further develop strategic funding opportunities and diverse revenue streams	Renovated Arthurs and purchased new furniture to present more attractive venue rental option in downtown Oshawa, alongside revision of our venue rental package and pricing
	Took new approach to the RMG Shop with more local and regional artisans on consignment; less financial investment from the RMG and more support for artists
	Developed new prospect process and began to include asks for a larger number of family foundations; securing sponsorship revenue continues to be a challenge for the RMG
Match organizational ambitions with financial and human resources	Continued to plan within three-year budget framework. The RMG is still drawing from a Board restricted fund to meet revenue goals until the end of 2025, by which point we hope our agency generated revenues have recovered. We are adjusting or cutting our programming to maintain our deficit reduction plan
	Worked with staff team to assess and plan for personal and organizational capacity and plan programming at least one year in advance

## SWOT Analysis

### *Strengths*

- Recognized as a community gathering space for all to engage in art
- A track record of achieving our goals and taking action on our objectives to support our values and mission
- Collaborates regularly for greater impact, building opportunities across Durham Region arts and culture sector by taking a leadership role
- Strong governance and leadership from our Board of Directors and Senior Leadership
- Integral support from the City of Oshawa, in particular Facility Management Services, on capital and development of the community arts greenspace
- Strong evaluative tools, facilitating organizational learning and guiding growth
- Dedicated, empathetic, skilled, and diverse staff team
- A team culture that focuses on and embodies accountability, care, and belonging
- Expansive purpose-built facility supports programming and holds an important and expanding collection of modern and contemporary art
- Sharing and offering that space to others for use
- Community partnerships and socially engaged exhibitions increase awareness of contemporary art and the RMG, and explore urgent issues facing our communities
- Collaborations and partnerships with UOIT, Trent University and Durham College to raise awareness of the RMG, increasing visitation, and enhance student life experience and reputation of “university town”
- Commitment to equitable access by breaking down barriers to the arts for all
- Successful funding applications to foundations to help build our learning program and take on capital developments such as The Backyard at the RMG

### *Challenges (Weaknesses)*

- Continued reduction and elimination of our deficit, during a time when our agency generated revenues have experienced a 75% decline
- Market fluctuations can have a significant impact on our invested funds that include our endowments and other donor restricted funds
- Our staff compensation remains well below both the sector average and comparable roles at larger institutions. Our salaries are sometimes 12% lower than industry averages.
- Slower return of and program participants in some areas is resulting in slower growth of agency generated revenues
- Ensuring the building and space does not intimidate or create barriers to access.
- Need to raise awareness across the broader community that the RMG is here, free, and accessible

### *Opportunities*

- Continuing to support the revitalization of Downtown Oshawa
- Phase 2 of The Backyard as a legacy project for the City's Centennial
- Continuing to build on our fundraising capacity and strategy.
- Working with new community partners and strengthening and deepening relationships
- Raising awareness of the RMG locally, regionally, and nationally to build pride in our City, as well as our future as a hub for contemporary and community-engaged arts practice
- Providing space to community groups who may otherwise may not have it, including groups like the GAP Committee and arts/culture groups with no bricks and mortar.
- Providing more support for local and regional artists
- Expanding popular programming like our youth after school art workshops, RMG Fridays, and community art exhibitions with additional resources
- To become a workplace that embodies care and does not subscribe to urgency culture
- To build a reputation as the leading regional public art gallery in all of Canada

### *Threats*

- Deficit may not be fully rapid in 2023
- No more federal supports or subsidies for pandemic recovery from spring 2022
- Slow return of revenue from venue rentals and the gift shop
- Continued operating budget pressure from repairs and facility maintenance of a building with systems and functions that are nearing the end of their lifecycle.
- Staff turnover at such a small institution is challenging and often stalls or delays our programs and initiatives

Within each of the challenges, we see opportunity. Within each of the threats, we see resilience. Our strengths and opportunities give us the adaptive capacity to adjust our operating model and reimagine how we best serve our local community.

This means letting go of some assumptions of what an art gallery does and focusing not just on the preservation and presentation of collections, but on the programming and connections that provide relevance to our audiences.

## 4. Objectives

### Strategic Priority Mapping

The goals articulated in the City’s plans are essential markers in all planning at the RMG. We’ve highlighted the two primary City plans we follow, and also support the Diversity and Inclusion Plan, Public Art Master Plan, and Oshawa Accessibility Plan.

RMG Priorities	Oshawa Strategic Goals	Culture Counts
Engage diverse audiences in new and familiar ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enrich Our Community Through Culture</li> <li>- Enrich Our Community Through Diversity</li> <li>- An Active, Healthy and Safe Community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Broaden and Evolve the City’s Role in Arts, Culture and Heritage</li> <li>- Build a Strong, Vital and Connected Arts, Culture and Heritage Sector</li> <li>- Provide Access and Promote Inclusion in Oshawa’s Cultural Life</li> </ul>
Foster community connection and partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop and Leverage Relationships</li> <li>- Enrich our Community Through Diversity</li> <li>- Deliberate Community Engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Build a Strong, Vital and Connected Art, Culture and Heritage Sector</li> <li>- Strengthen Communication in the Arts, Culture and Heritage Sector</li> </ul>
Reimagine the gallery, making space for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enrich Our Community Through Culture</li> <li>- Safe and Reliable Infrastructure</li> <li>- An Active, Healthy and Safe Community</li> <li>- Proactive Environmental Management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create Vibrant Spaces and Places</li> <li>- Grow Culture-led Economic Development</li> <li>- Provide Access and Promote Inclusion in Oshawa’s Cultural Life</li> </ul>
Continue to foster a culture of care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Accountable Leadership</li> <li>- Our Corporate Culture Demands Excellence and Respect</li> <li>- Develop and Leverage Relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide Access and Promote Inclusion in Oshawa’s Cultural Life</li> <li>- Build a Strong, Vital and Connected Art, Culture and Heritage Sector</li> </ul>
Achieve organizational resiliency and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Financial Stewardship</li> <li>- Build and Further Diversify Our Economy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Grow Culture-led Economic Development</li> <li>- Create Vibrant Spaces and Places</li> </ul>



## 2024 Overview

The RMG has a leading role in Oshawa and Durham as an agent of social change working towards an equitable future. We want to have an important civic impact and provide the citizens of Oshawa with fun, meaningful, arts-inspired opportunities. In 2024, we will continue recover from the pandemic with an aspiration to evolve into a stronger, more relevant organization for our shared community.

Our organizational focus for 2024 is continued action towards achieving our strategic priorities within our current strategic plan. We will also begin to develop our strategic plan for 2025-2027 building on lessons learned and community feedback since our reopening. We are excited to do more of what was successful onsite and expand our digital offerings. Thanks to a substantial grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage, we have been able to add interactive elements to our digital collections pages and look forward to further improving them next year.

One major priority will be marking Oshawa's centennial through programming focused on our permanent collections, Oshawa stories, and hopefully the completion of Phase 2 in our backyard pending funding approval. Our history and collection tell a unique part of Oshawa's history. We instill a sense of civic pride, and can leverage this to help shift perceptions of Oshawa. We will focus on our local and regional artists and community first, and working with the City and partners to drive tourism and regeneration. While our primary community is local, the RMG is a cultural attraction and destination.

We will continue to work to strengthen our organizational resiliency and sustainability, being mindful of capacity as we build on the momentum of our project funding grants from Ontario Trillium Foundation and The Department of Canadian Heritage. These grants help us achieve our goals, but do not provide sustainable operating funding.

Increasing our agency generated revenue from venue rentals, shop, and learning programs will be key to our recovery as we annually reduce the amount drawn from our Board restricted reserve.

The RMG's team culture focuses on care, accountability, and belonging. These values are the basis of everything we do. We believe the RMG has played, and will continue to play, an essential role for its community and for the artists we work with and support.

*The CEO holds ultimate accountability for the achievement of our strategies and supporting actions. Each department who holds responsibility is identified in the action plan that follows.*

Agency Objective	Strategic Priority 1	<i>Engage diverse audiences in new and familiar ways</i>
<b>Relevant City Strategic Goals</b>	<p><b>“Our Plan for Success” City of Oshawa Strategic Plan 2020-2023</b></p> <p><i>4.1 Economic Prosperity &amp; Financial Stewardship</i> Build and Further Diversity Our Economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategies 1, 5, 6, 11</li> </ul> <p><i>4.3: Social Equity</i> Enrich Our Community Through Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategies 1 - 5</li> </ul> <p>An Active, Healthy and Safe Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategies 1, 7, 8, 9</li> </ul> <p><i>4.4: Cultural Vitality – Enrich Our Community through Culture</i> Enrich Our Community Through Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategies 1, 2, 4, 5</li> </ul>	<p><b>Culture Counts Plan</b></p> <p><i>2. Grow Culture-Led Economic Development</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leverage Cultural Resources to Support Downtown Revitalization</li> <li>- Expand Cultural Tourism Locally and Regionally</li> <li>- Work Collaboratively with Oshawa’s Educational Institutions</li> </ul> <p><i>3. Increase and Strengthen Community within and about the Arts, Culture and Heritage Sector</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strengthen Communication</li> <li>- Increase Community Awareness</li> </ul> <p><i>4. Build a Strong, Vital and Connected Arts, Culture and Heritage Sector</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase Opportunities for Cultural Programming of all ages</li> </ul> <p><i>6. Provide Access and Promote Inclusion in Oshawa’s Cultural Life</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respond to cultural needs of all ages</li> <li>- Address the Cultural Aspirations of Diverse Communities</li> </ul>

Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Actions/Outcome	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
Ensure an equity-based, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lens within our team, collection, curation, programs, and exhibitions	Curatorial	Art Gallery of Algoma, Yukon Arts Centre, College Art Galleries of Saskatchewan	Support national tour of RMG exhibition by artist Couzyn can Heuvelen	Q1-Q4	Confirmed	# of visitors	1 x national exhibition tour
	Learning		Present artist Raechel Wastesicoot responding to P11 works with an Indigenous lens	Q1-Q2	Confirmed	Qualitative audience feedback	6 x new performing artists engaged
	Visitor Engagement	Durham Black Artists Collective	Solo exhibition of Durham-based photographic artist Christina Leslie exploring themes of immigration, marginalization, and her West Indian heritage	Q3-Q4	Confirmed	Evaluation with artists	10% increase in visitor figures
	Marketing + Communications	DRIFF	Ensure diversity of performers and partners for RMG Fridays series	Q1-Q4	Under development	Increased recognition of local and regional artists	
		Oshawa Tourism	Recruit Indigenous and French-speaking part-time arts learning facilitators	Q1	Under development		

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Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Actions/Outcome	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
Expand memberships, visitorship, and volunteer opportunities	Visitor Engagement	Volunteer Ontario	Expand opportunities for volunteers to support events and visitor engagement	Q1	Under development	Number of volunteers recruited	25 new volunteers
	Development	Local/regional businesses as preferred partners	Expand number of preferred partners	Q1-Q2	Under development	Number and location of preferred partners	3 new preferred partners
		Oshawa Tourism	Support Oshawa Tourism Advisory Group and Strategic Plan incl Convergence and other initiatives	Q1-Q4	Confirmed	Number of new members	65% retention rate for members
		Keela	Utilize new CRM to retain and attract new members	Q1-Q2	Confirmed	Increased awareness	100 new members

Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Actions/Outcome	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
Enhance storytelling and communications to reach broad audiences	Marketing + Communications	Adler Consultants	Implement ongoing audience survey to gain feedback from onsite visitors	Q1	Under development	# of responses to survey	25% of visitors respond to survey
	Visitor Engagement		Invest in digital ads and search engine optimization (SEO) to reach broader audiences	Q1-Q4	Confirmed	# of followers	15% increase in social media followers on Instagram (largest platform for the RMG)
			Pilot new strategies for engagement via social media	Q1-Q2	Confirmed		
Integrate a hybrid and digital physical future	Curatorial	Puncture Design	Expand digital collections project to include instructional videos for interactives	Q1	Confirmed	# of unique website visits	10% increase in onsite participation
	Marketing + Communications	Department of Canadian Heritage	Continue to improve website navigation to provide better user experience	Q1-Q4	Under development	Qualitative feedback received through audience surveys	25% of visitors respond to survey

Agency Objective	Strategic Priority 2	<i>Foster community connections and partnerships</i>
<b>Relevant City Strategic Goals</b>	<p><b>“Our Plan for Success” City of Oshawa Strategic Plan 2020-2023</b></p> <p><i>4.2 Accountable Leadership</i>            Deliberate Community Engagement            - Strategies 1-3            Develop and Leverage Partnerships            - Strategy 1</p> <p><i>4.3: Social Equity</i>            Enrich Our Community Through Diversity            - Strategies 1 - 5            An Active, Healthy and Safe Community            - Strategies 7, 9</p> <p><i>4.4: Cultural Vitality – Enrich Our Community through Culture</i>            Enrich Our Community Through Culture            - Strategies 1, 2, 4, 5</p>	<p><b>Culture Counts Plan</b></p> <p><i>2. Grow Culture-Led Economic Development</i>            - Leverage Cultural Resources to Support Downtown Revitalization            - Work Collaboratively with Oshawa’s Educational Institutions</p> <p><i>3. Increase and Strengthen Community within and about the Arts, Culture and Heritage Sector</i>            - Strengthen Communication            - Increase Community Awareness</p> <p><i>4. Build a Strong, Vital and Connected Arts, Culture and Heritage Sector</i>            - Build and Sustain Partnerships</p> <p><i>5. Create Vibrant Places and Spaces</i>            - Build on Current Strengths to Support            - Increase spaces and facilities for activities</p> <p><i>6. Provide Access and Promote Inclusion in Oshawa’s Cultural Life</i>            - Respond to cultural needs of all ages            - Address the Cultural Aspirations of Diverse Communities</p>

Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Actions/Outcome	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
Deepen connections and supports for artists	Curatorial	RBC Foundation	Solo-exhibition of Northumberland County based artist Tony Romano	Q1-Q2	Confirmed	# of local and regional artists from equity-deserving groups supported	5 new artists engaged in exhibition opportunities
	Learning and Engagement	Durham College	Extended residency and exhibition periods for emerging artists	Q1-Q4	Confirmed		Evaluations from artists to gauge support of curatorial staff
		Ontario Arts Council		Q2	Confirmed		
		Canada Council for the Arts	Prize for a graduating student artist for DC exhibition	Q1-Q4	Under development	Development of new artworks	
Durham College	Professional development opportunities for artists in response to their needs						
Strengthen existing and establish new community partnerships both on and offsite (actions refer to active)	Curatorial  Learning + Engagement  Visitor Engagement	Ongoing Active partnerships – 31  New partnerships with Hillsdale Terraces LTC	Nurture existing relationships by ensuring regular communications on activities and opportunities; invitations to community events	Q1-Q4	Confirmed	# of new partnerships developed  # of partnerships deepened	31 x partnerships deepened and maintained  4 x new partnerships

Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Actions/Outcome	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
community partnerships, not an exhaustive list of our ongoing partnerships not resulting in a project in 2023)	Marketing + Communications	Northumberland Art Group DDSB Continuing Education TBC	Focused development of partnership with the Gap Committee and Back Door Mission	Q1-Q4	Confirmed		
			New partnerships developed	Q1-Q4	Under development		
Collaborate with the arts and culture sector in Oshawa, Durham Region, and beyond	CEO  Visitor Engagement	Region of Durham  Numerous arts and culture organizations/ individuals across Durham	Support city-wide events in Oshawa including Peony Festival, Bright & Merry, Convergence, and the Centennial Celebrations	Q1-Q4	Confirmed	Oshawa event participation	4 x city events
			Completion of mapping study of arts/culture sector across Durham Region	Q1-Q2	Confirmed	Action plan developed with Region of Durham	1 x completed mapping study and next steps identified



Agency Objective	Strategic Priority 3	<i>Reimagine the gallery, making space for all</i>	
<b>Relevant City Strategic Goals</b>	<p><b>“Our Plan for Success” City of Oshawa Strategic Plan 2020-2023</b></p> <p><i>4.1 Economic Prosperity &amp; Financial Stewardship</i> Build and Further Diversify Our Economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategy 6</li> </ul> <p><i>4.3: Social Equity</i> Enrich Our Community Through Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategies 1 - 5</li> </ul> <p>An Active, Healthy and Safe Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategies 1, 7, 9</li> </ul> <p><i>4.4: Cultural Vitality – Enrich Our Community through Culture</i> Enrich Our Community Through Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategies 1, 2, 4, 5</li> </ul> <p><i>4.5 Environmental Responsibility</i> Proactive Environmental Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategies 1, 3, 4</li> </ul> <p>Resilient Food System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategy 1</li> </ul>	<p><b>Culture Counts Plan</b></p> <p><i>2. Grow Culture-Led Economic Development</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leverage Cultural Resources to Support Downtown Revitalization</li> <li>- Work Collaboratively with Oshawa’s Educational Institutions</li> </ul> <p><i>3. Increase and Strengthen Community within and about the Arts, Culture and Heritage Sector</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strengthen Communication</li> <li>- Increase Community Awareness</li> </ul> <p><i>4. Build a Strong, Vital and Connected Arts, Culture and Heritage Sector</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Build and Sustain Partnerships</li> <li>- Increase opportunities for cultural programming</li> </ul> <p><i>5. Create Vibrant Places and Spaces</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Build on Current Strengths to Support</li> <li>- Increase spaces and facilities for activities</li> </ul> <p><i>6. Provide Access and Promote Inclusion in Oshawa’s Cultural Life</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respond to cultural needs of all ages</li> <li>- Address the Cultural Aspirations of Diverse Communities</li> </ul>	

Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Actions/Outcome	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
Allocate gallery and building space for community gathering	Curatorial  Visitor Engagement  Learning + Engagement	GAP Committee	Make Lookout and other spaces in the building accessible as meeting and gathering spaces for community groups including the City, Region, and other partners	Q1-Q4	Confirmed	Use of space and lack of empty space	5 x new partners using the space
		Region of Durham				People feeling a sense of belonging and welcome	1 x new program partner
		Youth Refuge Centre	Provide space monthly to groups/individuals experiencing homeless or precariously housed	Q1-Q4	Under development	Drop-in programs with no barriers	15% increase in drop-in program attendance
		Oshawa Youth Council					
		City of Oshawa	Continue OPG Sundays and learning programs to encourage new families to visit	Q1-Q4	Confirmed		
			Develop and expand after-school program for youth	Q1-Q4	Confirmed		
Thoughtfully consider and promote the RMG's role and presence in	Visitor Engagement  Marketing + Communications	City of Oshawa  Oshawa Tourism	Participate in city-wide initiatives and events downtown, including those delivered by partner groups such as Oshawa Tourism	Q1-Q4	Confirmed	Number of events participating in	3 x city-wide initiatives

Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Actions/Outcome	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
Downtown Oshawa		Oshawa Chamber of Commerce	Partner on presentation of Convergence Festival to lead on visual arts component and secure more funding  Represent the RMG and participate in planning for the public art master plan and creative wayfinding downtown	Q2-Q3  Q1-Q4	Under development  Confirmed	Community exhibition attendance  Creative ways to navigate downtown	1 x public exhibition and 1 x public event  Contribution to wayfinding and creative placemaking
Transform the gallery's outdoor space through creative and welcoming placekeeping opportunities	CEO  Facilities  Visitor Engagement	LeuWebb Projects  Brook McIlroy Architects  Boszko + Verity  Backyard Advisory Council Members  CLOCA	Completed phase 2 of the backyard project that includes components to commemorate Oshawa's centennial, slide, and third canopy  Add new elements to the front entrance including artist-designed signage and bike racks	Q1-Q3  Q2	Under development  Under development	Advisory Council feedback integrated into design  Project achieved on time, to budget, and attracting new investment	Completed project by June 2024
Develop a plan to ensure the gallery's community	Visitor Engagement  Facilities	Accessibility advisors	Take stock of how people are currently engaging in space through survey	Q1	Under development	Feedback received on accessibility	1 x space renewed

Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Actions/Outcome	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
gathering spaces are approachable and accessible	Curatorial  Learning + Engagement		sent to our ongoing partners  Continue to achieve goals within our Access Plan	Q3  Q1-Q4	Confirmed	Continued additions of accommodation to programs and exhibitions	1 x survey report received and action plan developed

Agency Objective	Strategic Priority 4	<i>Continue to foster a culture of care</i>
<b>Relevant City Strategic Goals</b>	<p><b>“Our Plan for Success” City of Oshawa Strategic Plan 2020-2023</b></p> <p><i>4.2 Accountable Leadership</i> Deliberate Community Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategy 1</li> </ul> <p>Our Corporate Culture Demands Excellence and Respect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategies 1-5</li> </ul> <p>Develop and Leverage Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategy 1</li> </ul> <p><i>4.3: Social Equity</i> Enrich Our Community Through Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategies 1 - 5</li> </ul> <p><i>4.4: Cultural Vitality – Enrich Our Community through Culture</i> Enrich Our Community Through Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategies 1, 2, 4, 5</li> </ul>	<p><b>Culture Counts Plan</b></p> <p><i>3. Increase and Strengthen Community within and about the Arts, Culture and Heritage Sector</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strengthen Communication</li> <li>- Increase Community Awareness</li> </ul> <p><i>4. Build a Strong, Vital and Connected Arts, Culture and Heritage Sector</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Build and Sustain Partnerships</li> <li>- Expand Financial Resources</li> </ul> <p><i>6. Provide Access and Promote Inclusion in Oshawa’s Cultural Life</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respond to cultural needs of all ages</li> <li>- Address the Cultural Aspirations of Diverse Communities</li> </ul>

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Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Actions/Outcome	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
Maintain a culture of care at the workplace	CEO	Indigenous Curatorial Collective	Maintain membership with ICC to provide support to IBPOC identified staff	Q1-Q4	Confirmed	Positive outcomes from quarterly staff surveys	90% staff retention
	Director, Finance + Operations		Equitable Life	Permanent 4 day workweek in the summer	Q3	Confirmed	Staff retention and ease of recruitment
	Senior Curator	City of Oshawa	Realign priorities and programming to ensure organizational capacity and to avoid burnout	Q1	Under development	Salary increases for staff	prioritizing key positions and pay equity
	Board of Directors		Work towards salary increases for staff to meet industry standards and redress historic imbalances	Q1-Q4	Under development		Organization working within capacity
Extend our culture of care within our broader community of artists, partners, and audiences	Curatorial	Ongoing partners	Continued evaluation/survey for partners and artists	Q1-Q2	Confirmed	Surveys completed by partners and artists	60% of surveys completed to inform change
	Learning + Engagement		Training for Front of House staff, including contract guards, to establish standard welcome	Q1	Confirmed	Increased sense of welcome for visitors	
	Visitor Engagement		Practice our workplace values with everyone	Q1-Q4	Confirmed		

Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Actions/Outcome	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
Commit to supporting equitable and just initiatives	CEO	ICC	Continue monthly staff-led conversations on equity	Q1-Q4	Confirmed	An equitable approach to all of the RMG's work	Continued refinement of internal processes
	Curatorial	Board of Directors	Continue to embed equity actions into annual Operations Plan	Q1-Q4	Confirmed	Supporting organizational culture of social justice as an integral part of our work	Public and community awareness of our plans and policies
	Learning + Engagement		Annual review of all policies with an equity lens	Q3	Confirmed		
	Visitor Engagement		Share an update on our commitments and actions on our website	Q3	Confirmed	A supportive, brave space for all	
	Marketing + Communications		Prioritize diversification within all HR practices including recruitment and onboarding	Q1-Q4	Confirmed		

Agency Objective	Strategic Priority 5	<i>Achieve Organizational resiliency and sustainability</i>	
<b>Relevant City Strategic Goals</b>	<p><b>“Our Plan for Success” City of Oshawa Strategic Plan 2020-2023</b></p> <p><i>4.1 Economic Prosperity and Financial Stewardship</i> Build and Further Diversify Our Economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategies 1, 6, 11</li> </ul> <p>Responsible Taxation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategies 3, 4, 5</li> </ul> <p><i>4.3: Social Equity</i> An Active, Healthy and Safe Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategies 7, 8</li> </ul> <p><i>4.4: Cultural Vitality – Enrich Our Community through Culture</i> Enrich Our Community Through Culture Strategies 1, 4</p>	<p><b>Culture Counts Plan</b></p> <p><i>1. Broaden and Evolve the City’s Role in Arts, Culture and Heritage</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase and Communicate the City’s Financial Support</li> </ul> <p><i>2. Grow Culture-Led Economic Development</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leverage Cultural Resources to Support Downtown Revitalization</li> </ul> <p><i>3. Increase and Strengthen Community within and about the Arts, Culture and Heritage Sector</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strengthen Communication</li> <li>- Increase Community Awareness</li> </ul> <p><i>4. Build a Strong, Vital and Connected Arts, Culture and Heritage Sector</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expand Financial Resources</li> </ul>	



Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Actions/Outcome	Timing	Status	KPI	Target	
Further develop strategic funding opportunities and diverse revenue streams	CEO	Fundraising Committee	Focus on prospect development, establishing a donor pipeline, and ensuring sponsors for all major exhibitions and learning initiatives	Q1-Q4	Under development	Established systems and processes	50% increase in number of prospects; 20% increase in foundation + corporate giving from 2023	
	Event and Venue Coordinator	Artisans and vendors				Completed actions		
	Marketing + Communications Manager, Membership + Shop	Contract caterers	Actively promote new venue rental package and renovated Arthurs space to generate revenue	Q1-Q2	Confirmed	Clear, enticing offer for potential clients	70% increase in number of bookings	
				Expand offerings in the shop to build revenue through artisans/streams that sell	Q1-Q2	Under development	Rates that maximize revenue	50% increase in venue rental revenue
				Ensure presence of equity deserving artisans and vendors in the Shop	Q1-Q4	Confirmed	New vendors and artisans in the shop	25% increase in shop sales
				Integrate our digital systems: accounting, POS, CRM, and registration to create efficiencies and understand our audience interactions	Q1	Confirmed		Full integration of systems for efficiency and less manual entry/human error

Strategy	Responsibility	Supporting Partners	Actions/Outcome	Timing	Status	KPI	Target
Match organizational ambitions with financial and human resources	CEO	Board of Directors	Continue to work with three-year budget plan	Q3-Q4	Confirmed	Rolling three-year budget plan	Net zero three-year plan, no deficit at end of FY24  Realistic budget and programming plans
	Director, Finance + Operations		Reassess programming plans and staff complement for ongoing sustainability; radically reimagine	Q1-Q2	Under development	Sustainable operating baseline established	
			Work with staff team to assess and plan for personal and organizational capacity	Q1-Q2	Confirmed	Staff working to capacity, not beyond	

## 5. Resource Requirements

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We understand the guidance from the City to request a maximum 2% increase; in 2024 this would amount to \$17,263 for a total of \$880,377. As operating and programming costs continue to increase and with inflation at its highest rate in over thirty years, we are respectfully requesting an increase at a higher rate over the next three years.

To fulfill our programming objectives and address the real financial challenges facing our organization, we are requesting the following:

Request Year	Amount Requested	Percentage Increase
2024	\$992,581	15%
2025	\$1,042,210	5%
2026	\$1,073,476	3%

These funds will help us to:

- Address lower than average employee compensation. It is a systemic issue in the charitable arts sector, but even among our peers for key positions such as Senior Curator, the RMG is paying 15% below industry standards.
- Continue to compensate artists appropriately; this is our first priority in current budget planning.
- Incorporate the costs of maintaining the aging infrastructure in our building, including the additional funds for our chiller maintenance previously presented to the City's Leadership Team (appended to this document for transparency).
- Meet the demand of the highest inflation rate in over thirty years.
- Bridge the gap of slow recovery of earned revenue streams following the COVID-19 pandemic. The RMG is drawing annually on our Board restricted funds to also help address this revenue gap.

The RMG has actively taken steps to establish sustainable, fiscally responsible operations:

- Since 2015 the RMG has been actively repaying a deficit of \$213,309. From 2017 that repayment has been aggressive with approximately \$28,000 repaid annually or 2% of our annual operating budget. The deficit should be retired by year-end 2023.
- To assist with sustainability of the RMG, leadership and the Board of Directors established a draw rate in 2021 from our endowment and invested funds to provide a reliable source of annual income. Prior to this, the RMG would draw on any available investment income, which created uncertainty when planning programming or committing to organizational changes.

- A Fundraising Committee was established to support the work of the CEO and membership staff, to increase and diversify our revenues.
- Using Board restricted funds, the RMG financed the renovation of our venue rental/restaurant space Arthur's and the purchase of new furniture to increase venue rentals and associated revenues.

The RMG consistently receives operating support from granting agencies such as the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council, which only accounts for 10% of our grant revenue. While we have been successful in receiving emergency COVID-19 relief funding from the arts councils and Department of Canadian Heritage, these supports are no longer available. We continue to leverage City support to expand our funding opportunities nationally and in turn, ability to deliver impactful community work and projects.

Arts and culture are a key driver of economic development, a key goal of Oshawa City Council's current strategic plan. We actively collaborate with City staff and organizational partners to contribute to economic growth including the arts; education and life-long learning; moving towards social equity; and nurturing community assets like the RMG.

## 6. Conclusion

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The City of Oshawa is *dedicated to serving our community*, and as per the community vision Oshawa will be a *prosperous, collaborative, vibrant, inclusive and green city where people and businesses are proud to live, work, learn and play*. We believe art cultivates connected and caring communities. Our vision aligns with City Council and civil servants' vision for Oshawa.

The RMG is a civic gem, a point of pride for Oshawa residents, and a gallery worthy of regional and national recognition. We advocate regionally demonstrating Oshawa's leadership in Durham. We use art as a way to achieve social change. While we support artists and community creativity, we are also dedicated to supporting vulnerable populations including those suffering from homelessness and serving those communities. As economic disparity widens, we believe we have an active role in providing a place to connect, where everyone can feel a sense of belonging.

The RMG proud to be in Oshawa, and we actively contribute to:

- Economic prosperity and financial stewardship
  - o through our contributions to downtown revitalization efforts, tourism partnerships, and support of local businesses;

- **Accountable leadership**
  - through our commitment to nurturing a culture of care and investment in artists we work with and our own staff team;
  
- **Social equity**
  - through our deep commitment to anti-racist, anti-oppressive, equitable and socially just programming, hiring, internal policies and practices, and diverse partnership work;
  
- **Cultural vitality**
  - through expanding our digital and in-person offerings, providing our space to others for use, and continuing to be accessible through free admission and affordable art classes, workshops, and camps; and
  
- **Environmental responsibility**
  - through the mindful development of the backyard greenspace in consultation with a diverse advisory circle, Indigenous partners, and the Central Lake of Ontario Conservancy Agency.

On behalf of all of the members, volunteers, staff, visitors, participants, and Board of Directors, our sincere thanks for the continued and tremendous support from the City of Oshawa that fund our operations as well as support our facility in order to care for Oshawa's world class art collection.

## Appendix 1

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### **Briefing Note**

### **Chiller Maintenance Costs and Request for Ongoing Increased Support August 31, 2023**

#### *Background and Context*

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The Robert McLaughlin Gallery (RMG) works in partnership with the City of Oshawa (the City) on the care of the building at 72 Queen Street. As part of our lease agreement, the RMG is responsible for maintenance and the City is responsible for capital improvements to the building and its systems. The RMG staff work collaboratively with Facility Management Services (FMS) to ensure that we are maintaining the operational systems of the building in accordance with the terms of the lease.

Over the last several years, the HVAC systems in the building have shown evidence of necessary major repairs. The City completed a project to address heating and humidity fluctuations in the gallery which included \$50,000 for chiller repairs in 2022.

The age of our building and systems necessitates an increase in funding support from the City for maintenance in particular for our aging chillers and associated equipment. The effective running of these systems is vital for building health, and for the care of our permanent collection and artworks on loan in order for the RMG to retain Category A status for museums and galleries. This enables us to host important exhibitions, artists, and artworks for the community.

#### *Continued Chiller Issues and Costs*

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In 2023, the RMG has completed the following repairs to Chiller 1:

- Repaired the solenoids
- Fixed electrical issues causing the screen to go blank
- Addressed oil level issues
- Repaired the chiller water coil
- Refilled the depleted glycol
- Completed the VFD repair
- Engaged Automated Logic to resolve issues in not receiving system alerts

The inefficient running of the chillers has also resulted in higher hydro costs. The RMG budgets additional funds annually anticipated repairs in addition to our service contracts; however, this has been insufficient in the last three years. The one-time funding for chiller

repairs in 2022 was essential and what the RMG is demonstrating with the support of FMS staff is that this continued increase is necessary.

The breakdown of the increase to our budgeted expenses is as follows:

- \$18,842 for HTS Engineering to repair the chillers. This does not include a current quote of \$5,500 for the Chiller 2 Compression Fan Failure.
- \$10,308 for Oshawa PUC Networks for increased hydro as a result of ineffective chillers
- \$1,419 for Automated Logic
- **\$30,568** in unanticipated, unbudgeted costs related to the chiller maintenance. This is a 9% increase to our overall facilities budget.

The RMG is happy to provide our financial records related to these expenses upon request.

### *Request for Support*

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Annually, the RMG budgets within the City's guidelines of a 2% increase, however, this is no longer sufficient to maintain these capital systems effectively. The RMG understands that covering these costs for the facility in 2023 is unlikely; however, it has resulted in cancelling or suspending projects and programming at the end of Q3 and Q4.

The RMG requests \$30,000 as an additional annual increase to ensure the gallery can effectively maintain the aging capital systems in the building before their planned replacement by FMS and the City, anticipated in 2028.

**The Corporation of the City of Oshawa**  
**2024 Operating Budget**  
**The Robert McLaughlin Gallery**

Description	2023 Projected Actuals	2023 Approved Budget	2024 Proposed Budget	2024-2023 Variance \$'s	2024-2023 Variance %
Personnel Costs	1,036,832	1,051,622	1,000,281	(51,341)	(4.9)
Program and Office Supplies	30,401	40,306	41,615	1,309	3.2
Professional Services	620,086	527,271	482,567	(44,704)	(8.5)
Maintenance and Repairs	213,935	359,858	179,263	(180,595)	(50.2)
Utilities	192,603	185,360	202,353	16,993	9.2
Agency Generated Revenue	(1,230,742)	(1,301,303)	(913,499)	387,804	(29.8)
City of Oshawa Grants	(863,115)	(863,114)	(992,581)	(129,467)	15.0
<b>Total Robert McLaughlin Gallery</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(0)</b>	

Variance Explanations:

Personnel Costs: 2023 includes wages and payroll expenses related to project funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage Museum Assistance Program (MAP) and Fed Dev Ontario. 2024 reflects necessary increases to wages and payroll as outlined in our Business Plan. Both years include funding for summer positions from Young Canada Works and Canada Summer Jobs. MAP position ending March 2024.

Professional Services: 2023 increased expenses related to MAP project expenses. Funding ends in March 2024.

Maintenance Repairs: 2023 unexpected expenses for HVAC (chillers); 2023 budget included expenses for the Backyard and Arthurs redevelopment which are being amortized.

Utilities: Expected inflationary increases for 2024.

Agency Generated Revenues: 2023 includes MAP project funding, ends in March 2024. 2024 includes expected gradual increases to learning, venue rentals, shop, and membership following pandemic recovery.