



St. Lawrence Centre Redevelopment - Public Engagement Review

Date: March 19, 2021

To: St. Lawrence Centre Redevelopment Committee

From: President and Chief Executive Officer

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the launch of the public consultation for the reimagining of the St Lawrence Centre for the Arts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The President and Chief Executive Officer recommends that the Board of Directors of TO Live receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact other than what is outlined in this report.

DECISION HISTORY

At its November 13, 2020 meeting, the Board of Directors of TO Live received a report from the President and Chief Executive Officer of TO Live updating the Board on consultant activity for the reimagining of the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.CT18.8>

At its September 3, 2020 meeting, the Board of Directors of TO Live received a report from the President and Chief Executive Officer of TO Live updating the Board on the consultant activity and the proposed public consultation process for the reimagining of the St. Lawrence Centre.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.CT14.3>

At its January 23, 2020 meeting, the Executive Committee recommended that City Council support the replacement concept for the St. Lawrence Centre. At its January 29, 2020 meeting, City Council adopted the items without amendments and without debate.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.EX12.6>

COMMENTS

In January of 2020, City Council endorsed the replacement of the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts with a new re-imagined centre as a state-of-the-art cultural and civic hub for the City's creative communities and the community at large and directed TO Live and CreateTO to engage in a facilitated, open consultation process with key stakeholders in the cultural community, the local St. Lawrence Market neighbourhood and implicated City division and agencies to develop a building program which reimagines the St. Lawrence Centre as a new cultural and civic hub.

This public consultation process was put on pause as a result of COVID-19.

In September 2020, Dr. David Mowat and Saäd Rafi submitted their report COVID-19 Impacts and Opportunities to the City of Toronto. The report contains a series of recommendations to focus the City's recovery and rebuilding efforts. The St. Lawrence Centre was noted as an opportunity to assist the City in achieving the policy objectives outlined in the report:

"It was suggested in consultations that the City consider the candidacy and timing of the renewal of the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, which presents an opportunity to create a hub for arts and cultural performance in downtown Toronto. Given its key location, the project should apply an equity lens to the place-making opportunities; after-hours access to equity seeking groups; use of state-of-the-art technology to support the next generation of creative talent in Toronto, thereby driving economic and cultural growth."

Also of note, the report suggests that an equity and resilience lens should be applied to infrastructure projects. The report reads: *"Various governments have recognized that investments in infrastructure will be critical for Toronto's and Canada's recovery to COVID-19. Any stimulus funding for infrastructure should support Toronto's effort to build back better and prioritize investments that support key priorities – all through an equity and resilience lens."*

March 2021, after a full year of empty theatres, TO Live and Create TO are preparing a reengagement with the public. The engagement will explore the potential, the inspiration and the path to a post pandemic creative space that captures the needs and aspirations of our diverse and resilient communities.

Prior to the hiatus, TO Live and Create TO had procured the consultants KerrSmith to lead the public consultation and develop a detailed Engagement Plan that outlines the project in four phases which include the following:

- Phase 1: Vision and Discovery; understand key stakeholders, launch website and send survey to the public
- Phase 2: Solution Development; review insights from Phase 1
- Phase 3: Concepts and Preliminary Design Functional Program, undertake Test Fit, Evaluate Site access
- Phase 4: Design Brief Production and Supporting Documents

TO Live and Create TO are now adding to the front end of the process, an addition which we have calling "Phase 0". Phase 0 will involve a survey of the current research and publications referencing a post-Covid performing arts sector and will include the TO Live Creative Currencies program (digital commissions from celebrated artists). This phase will provide a platform for key stakeholders to explore creative spaces in our post-pandemic world through a lens of inclusion, diversity, equity and access (IDEA). This exploration and dialogue should be both informative and inspirational and deliver a brief of priorities and principles that will provide a springboard for the Phase 2 consultation which focuses on the development of a building program to inform a reimagining of the STLC. Both phases will provide for a seamless public consultation process that will provide a rich dialogue to inform and shape the future of cultural spaces in the City.

The public consultation is intended to answer the long-term goal of providing an accessible, uniquely flexible civic cultural centre with ample public spaces that will serve the broad cultural sector and serve the neighbourhood and communities of Toronto.

As directed by the City Manager, TO Live and Create TO will report to the Board of Directors of TO Live and the Board of Directors of Create TO no later than February 2022 to include "a project plan and schedule to deliver a new St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, for subsequent consideration and approval by City Council as soon as possible thereafter".

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Clyde Wagner
President and CEO

ATTACHMENTS
