

From: [Derek Spooner](#)
To: [Budget Committee](#)
Cc: [Wendy Rading](#); [Shana Hillman \(Shana@eastendarts.ca\)](#); [Susan Nagy](#); [Christina Giannelia](#); [Marlene McKintosh](#); [Laurie-Shawn Borzovoy](#); [Derek Spooner](#)
Subject: LASOs Budget Deputation & Question Response
Date: Tuesday, January 25, 2022 6:43:39 PM
Attachments: [LASO Budget Deputation 2022 - City of Toronto - Jan 25 2022.pdf](#)
[LASO 2022 Budget Deputation - Question Response - Jan 25 2022.pdf](#)

Dear Members of the Budget Committee,

It was a sincere pleasure to have the opportunity to present to you on the upcoming City budget this afternoon. We appreciate your time and thoughtful questions.

Please find attached both a copy of our joint Local Arts Service Organizations (LASOs) Deputation (submitted this morning to the Budget Committee), as well as the responses to Council's questions arising from this afternoon's deputation (attached in PDF format).

Reach out should you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Derek Spooner

cc: Wendy Rading, Shana Hillman, Ashley Watson, Christina Giannelia, Marlene McKintosh and Laurie-Shawn Borzovoy

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Derek Spooner
Executive Director
(he / him, they / them)



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Please Note: Scarborough Arts staff will be working from home starting Monday March 16th, 2020 until further notice. We will all be available via email, however, we will not be answering the office phone.

The land in which Scarborough Arts is located has been the home of Indigenous people and Nations long before colonial documentation of time, and is specifically the land of the Huron-Wendat, Anishnabek, the Chippewa, Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Haudenosaunee.

We as an organization and people living and working on these lands have a responsibility to advocate for the rights and wellbeing of Indigenous people, always.

For more information on what this looks like and entails please visit our Land Acknowledgment page [here](#).



Tuesday, January 25th, 2022

LASO 2022 City of Toronto Budget Deputation: The Value of Community Arts in the City of Toronto and the People Who Call it Home

Good afternoon, members of the Budget Committee. I am Laurie-Shawn Borzovoy, Communications Strategist, Creative Director, Writer and Chair of the Board of UrbanArts. And, I am here today speaking on behalf of the six **Local Arts Service Organizations (LASOs) of Toronto - Arts Etobicoke, East End Arts, Lakeshore Arts, North York Arts, Scarborough Arts, and UrbanArts.**

Thank you for acknowledging the importance of arts and culture with the enhancement of \$1.83 million to Economic Development and Culture in the 2022 Budget. While we are pleased to see an increase in arts and culture funding being committed to the city, the LASOs - that serve hard hit and underserved communities outside the downtown core - **will not** see an increase in 2022.

Today, I will outline how the LASOs continue to serve communities outside the downtown core, our impact, and the commitments and actions we want to see from the City in the years to come.

The LASOs in brief:

- The LASOs have a shared mission to provide free, accessible and quality programming to the communities we serve, every day.
- We continue to provide programming throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to high needs and hard hit communities; our programs and initiatives are effectively responding to the increased needs of our constituencies.
 - For the LASOs, this has meant building and delivering programming that continues to address immediate community needs (from food and art supply delivery to online programs addressing isolation, social justice, food security and mental health), and we continue to adapt our current roster of community arts programs and services based on identified or presenting needs.
- As we focus on community arts sector recovery, we are experiencing an increased need and demand from our communities for programming that prioritizes:
 - Community building
 - Equity and social justice
 - Mental health and wellness
 - Youth, adults and seniors
 - Neighbourhood pride
 - And, fair artist and facilitator employment
- Since the start of the pandemic, the LASOs have seen new requests from various City departments, greater demands on our resources, and continue to act as a critical anchor in fulfilling City objectives (as outlined in the [Economic Development and Culture Divisional Strategy](#); [Toronto Office of Recovery and Rebuild](#); [10-Year Public Art Strategy](#)). However this increased demand has not meant increased funding from the City.



LASOs Impact:

The six LASOs continue to support the rebuilding and recovery efforts outlined in the TORR report and the 2021 Toronto Vital Signs report, as well as many other strategic priorities of the City including:

- Cultivating strategic community, business and arts-based partnerships
- Serving key equity-deserving neighbourhoods outside the downtown core and where arts and cultural funding is **not** being invested to the degree that it is within the downtown core.
- Increasing community programs in equity-deserving communities by responding directly to the needs and interests of community members
- Addressing issues of access in our neighbourhoods and reducing barriers to participation
- Continuing to create and support free programming in high needs and equity-deserving neighbourhoods outside the downtown core
- Increasing support and opportunities for artists and cultural sector workers, and directly addressing precarious employment in the sector
 - As noted in the 2021 vital signs report, “**A November 2020 survey of more than 1,200 artists stated that 12% were no longer working in the sector.**”
- The LASO’s directly support a policy outcome noted in the 2021 Toronto Foundation Vital Signs report to, “**Support existing efforts to expand programming outside of downtown and into lower-income neighbourhoods.**”
- The LASO’s serve over **80%** of Toronto’s wards
- The LASOs continue to **exceed** all investments by the City. In 2021, the LASO’s received **\$1.8M** from the City of Toronto and collectively generated an additional **\$2.5M** for a gross revenue totaling more than **\$4.3M**.
- The LASOs serve **83%** of the population of Toronto or a total of **2.7M people** and 80% of all Toronto wards while municipal funding remains concentrated on the **17%** in the downtown core. This means that the 5 downtown Wards receive double the TAC funding than the other 20 Wards combined.
 - **For Reference: 5 Downtown Ward breakdown:**
 - 4 - Parkdale-High Park (\$885K)
 - 9 - Davenport (\$2.6M)
 - 10 - Spadina-Fort York (\$7M)
 - 11 - University-Rosedale (\$2M)
 - 13 - Toronto Centre (\$4.9M)
- And, as per the TAC 2020 Stats, that per capita amount of funded artists and projects across the City is far from equitable. **In mid-2020, per capita population investment in Toronto’s downtown Wards was \$15.61, while investment outside the downtown core was \$2.49.**
- In terms of pay equity for artists, according to TAC, downtown artists are paid, on a per capita basis, **285% more than artists who reside outside the downtown core. \$299.48**, according to TAC, while artists in the suburbs earn **\$105.97** per capita - a **variance of \$193.51 on average** per capita.

LASOs ask:

1. Commitment to **increased investment** to the LASO portfolio in the years ahead, to support the needs of the communities outside the downtown core and to address inequities noted above.



- A commitment to cease shuffling funds within the portfolio in order to achieve service equity.
 - A commitment to achieving **equity through increase** to the LASOs to bring service levels in the east, north, etc. up to meet population and community demand without penalizing other LASOs.
 - A commitment to bring the per capita investment in communities outside the downtown in line with that within the downtown core
2. Commit to working with the LASOs to **develop a new and responsive Community Cultural Review** which includes specific targets for funding, arts space and equity that will be sufficient to propel communities outside Toronto’s downtown core through the next decade.
 3. Commit to **deliver on the 2021 Vital Signs Report recommendations for funders** in the Arts, Culture and Recreation sectors. Commit to delivering on the 2021 Vital Signs report recommendations for funders when planning continued investment, which include:
 - Consider wages for artists when funding arts organizations. Artists are the backbone of the sector, and yet CERB represented a rare moment of financial stability for many.
 - Support initiatives to advance greater diversity and anti-racism in the sector so that all communities feel welcome to participate.
 - Support existing efforts to expand programming outside of downtown and into lower-income neighbourhoods.
 - Build from scratch or retrofit additional arts and recreation facilities, especially in underserved communities and, in the meantime, ensure that low-income communities have access to existing spaces.

We look forward to seeing the City’s roadmap for increased investment in the LASO portfolio, and working together to achieve the above stated commitments to community arts in Toronto. Efforts to develop a revitalized Community Development Review will be central to this work, which will replace the Community Arts Action Plan, which expired in 2017. We trust that our combined efforts will enhance the arts and cultural landscape in Toronto for years to come.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

LASO Executive Directors:
Wendy Rading, Arts Etobicoke
Shana Hillman, East End Arts
Ashley Watson, Lakeshore Arts
Christina Giannelia, North York Arts
Derek Spooner, Scarborough Arts
Marlene McKintosh, UrbanArts



Tuesday January 25, 2022
1:30-4:30pm

**LASO 2022 City of Toronto Budget Deputation:
The Value of Community Arts in the City of Toronto and
the People Who Call it Home**

Responding to Budget Committee Deputation Questions

- 1. Status of planning process between the LASOs and City of Toronto Staff (Economic Development and Culture Division, Arts Services) with regards to investment in the growth of the LASO portfolio and collaborating on a Community Cultural Development Review (CCDR):** Art Services staff have been very clear about equalizing funding amongst the LASOs. They have made a commitment to work with the LASOs and many other key community arts and arts service organizations across the GTA to develop an updated Community Cultural Development Review (CCDR). Arts Services has begun this process and has sourced consultants (Process <https://weareprocess.ca>) to work with the sector to accomplish this consultation and review. We have had regular meetings with Arts Services Staff over the last year to discuss the LASO grant application and process. Communication with Arts Services has been consistent.

After careful consideration, the LASOs requested that funding remain unaltered for each organization in 2022 (e.g., maintain 2021 funding allocations, confirmed by Arts Services) until the CCDR is completed. It is our hope that in 2023, the results of the CCDR will inform equity through increased investment to the LASO portfolio. Reshuffling of funds is not effective, as it destabilizes the LASOs ability to deliver consistent, fully staffed programs within each of our extensive catchment areas and reduces our ability to leverage for additional revenue elsewhere.

For clarity, our deputation refers to equalization of funds within the LASO portfolio as a whole, while recognizing the larger systemic inequities that exist among the arts and cultural sector's local geographies. In a recent email from Arts Services on January 20th, 2022, we were informed that we can expect to see the findings and recommendations of the CCDR in mid-2022, and that, through continued collaboration with the LASOs, EDC will revisit and implement the planned LASO portfolio allocations in early 2023 (LASO grant allocations currently happen annually in March/April).



2. Where does the LASO funding come from?

- a. **City of Toronto - LASO Operational Funding:** For clarity, the LASOs are rarely eligible for funding via TAC and, when we are eligible, it is only for specific project grants. We do not qualify for TAC operating funding as we are operationally funded at arm's-length by the Economic Development and Culture Division, Arts Services, City of Toronto.
- b. **Other Funding Sources:**
 - i. **Fundraising:** donations (one-time, annual, monthly), corporate donations, corporate sponsorships, major gifts, fundraising events, planned giving, pledges, etc.
 - ii. **Grants/Foundation:** grants (Federal and Provincial), foundations (corporate, family, and private), etc.
 - iii. **Earned Revenue:** memberships, art sales and consignments (a percentage of which supports local artists and members), registration fees, fee for service contracts/consulting/social enterprise activities, program partnerships, venue rentals, and merchandise sales, among others.

Sincerely,

LASO Executive Directors:

Wendy Rading, Arts Etobicoke

Shana Hillman, East End Arts

Ashley Watson, Lakeshore Arts

Christina Giannelia, North York Arts

Derek Spooner, Scarborough Arts

Marlene McKintosh, UrbanArts

cc: Laurie-Shawn Borzovoy, Chair, UrbanArts / Delegate to City Budget Deputations, January 25, 2022 (1:30-4:30pm) on behalf of all six Local Arts Service Organizations (LASOs)