



## EDINA ART CENTER ANALYSIS



Sutton + Associates  
Cultural Facilities Development

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# Edina Art Center Analysis

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# Edina Art Center Analysis

## INTRODUCTION

Over the past three decades, art centers have proliferated in first, second and third ring suburban cities surrounding major metropolitan areas across the country. As part of a broader effort to more clearly establish unique identities and more directly provide cultural amenities, cities like Edina have built arts facilities and launched arts initiatives intended to make them increasingly competitive and attractive to businesses and residents of all ages.

The Edina Art Center (EAC) is a highly cherished community asset that has evolved into an important cultural amenity respected by its peers throughout the Greater Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. EAC does however face challenges in staying competitive with other community art centers in the area that have made significant investments in their cultural facilities and in evolving a more professionalized model for operations. Further, EAC's singular focus on the visual arts leaves a broad spectrum of potential programming and service to the community out of the equation. This report identifies the challenges EAC faces and observes the unique opportunities that could allow it to play an expanded role in Edina as a true center for a broader array of cultural activities.

### **Brief History of Edina Art Center**

In 1976 the City of Edina purchased a residence located one mile west of Southdale Shopping Center and just south of the Crosstown Highway on the western edge of what is now Kenneth Rosland Park. Through the efforts of elected officials, City staff and hundreds of volunteers, the residence was renovated and transformed into studios and workshop areas and opened its doors as the Edina Art Center in the fall of 1977.

Since that time, EAC has operated as a semi-autonomous department of the Edina Parks and Recreation Department with both facility maintenance and ongoing operating support provided through the City's Enterprise and Construction Funds. Occasional capital improvement and additions to the facility including new galleries, studios and extensive equipping of EAC's ceramics studios have been funded primarily through the City's Construction Fund with some support from generous patrons and donated funds from the Edina Community Foundation.

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## **Present Circumstances**

EAC's current facility has approximately 10,150 square feet situated on three levels. Circulation in the facility is awkward and programmatic growth opportunities are highly limited if not non-existent. The building is not competitive with other centers in the area and appears to have substantial ADA issues as well as significant deferred maintenance. Beyond the lack of additional quality programmable space there is practically no storage space available on site. Further, although EAC is easily accessed off France Avenue and the Crosstown Highway, it is not central to Edina's population and it's somewhat "out of the way" location limits easy access to Edina residents negatively impacting participation in EAC programs as well as gift shop sales. While EAC remains highly active and its program revenues are holding relatively well, growth in participation, sales and fundraising seems highly unlikely at the present facility.

The EAC remains under the direction of Edina Parks & Recreation, which provides high level oversight and an important connection to the City's Administration and its budgeting process.

## **Overview of Scope**

The City of Edina has recently taken on an extensive analysis of the operations of its unique enterprises including its golf courses, hockey rinks, event centers, aquatic center and the Edina Art Center. With specific expertise related to the development and operation of cultural facilities, Sutton + Associates, Inc. has been asked to provide an analysis that examines the Edina Art Center's organizational structure, mission, programs and operations and identifies comparable organizations. The analysis also examines current EAC marketing practices and the likely impact of demographic trends on future participation. The findings of this analysis will be related to the Edina City Council in a Joint Session on October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2012 along with specific recommendations relevant to EAC's organizational structure, operations and best practices for sustaining EAC in the way in which it can best serve the residents of the City of Edina.

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## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Edina Art Center operates as a program of the City's Parks and Recreation Department and, as with the City's golf courses, hockey rinks, aquatic center and the Edinborough event center, earnings are balanced against operating expenses through the City's Liquor Fund and Construction Fund.

The Edina Art Center Board is, by City Ordinance (Section 1508), a formalized advisory board of the Edina City Council. Comprised of 11 volunteer members (including one student), Board members are appointed for limited three-year terms by the Mayor with approval from the Edina City Council. Board officers include a Board Chair and Vice Chair. Committees of the EAC board include; Ways & Means Committee, Film Festival Committee, Long range Planning Committee, Juried Show Committee, Short Term Planning Task Force, and Edina Public Art Committee. EAC Board meetings are held monthly on the fourth Thursday of each month at 4:30 pm in Studio 14 at EAC. Board Agendas and Meeting Minutes are distributed electronically and posted on-line at the City of Edina website, [www.CityofEdina.com](http://www.CityofEdina.com) for public viewing.

EAC's current structure allows tax-deductible contributions to be received and utilized to support specific capital or program initiatives by philanthropic donors. However, significant growth in contributed income is unlikely due to a number of key reasons including the nature of EAC's Board as advisory to City Council and not entrepreneurially and independently oriented towards fundraising.

### Alternative Structures

Alternative organizational structures for operating EAC include the creation of an independent non-profit entity, with its own self-appointed board of directors. Such an entity would be required to meet IRS rules for public support, including philanthropic revenue from donations from individuals, corporations, foundations and public sector grants in order to avoid classification as a "private foundation."

The non-profit entity could have full or partial responsibility for funding and operating EAC. If the City wanted the new nonprofit 501(c)(3) to be fully independent, and fully responsible for the operation and support of EAC, the

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City could transfer all real and personal property, and all other assets and liabilities of EAC to a new entity. The new entity would be responsible for maintaining EAC facilities, planning and operating the program, hiring staff, and raising money to support all of the above. While many such free standing non-profit organizations are in operation there is little precedent for successfully transitioning existing City programs into independent businesses and many if not most of the arts centers created in urban ring suburbs in recent decades remain municipal programs with limited philanthropic support.

In the alternative, the City could transfer less than all of the assets and responsibilities to the new entity, and retain responsibility for some ongoing support. For example, the City could retain the real property, including responsibility for maintenance, repair and replacement, and transfer the personal property and operational responsibilities to the new entity. The new entity would be responsible for programming, staffing and fundraising to support the program and staff, but the City would contribute the facility.

Another alternative would be for the City to retain ownership and responsibility for the facilities, program and staff, but create an independent "Friends of" organization as a separate 501(c)(3) with the sole purpose of raising funds to support EAC. Over time, such an entity could potentially cultivate leadership and procure philanthropic support from a variety of sources. In order to be successful, such an entity would need to be supported administratively and staffed with personnel experienced in fundraising. The "Friends of" entity could be fully independent or the City could participate in it by having overlapping board members (City Council Member or Officer of the City).

### **Advantages and Disadvantages of Alternative Structures**

Whatever is determined to be the organizational future of EAC, it is important to consider the pros and cons of making a shift to an alternative structure. While the perceived advantage of switching to an independent non-profit entity may appear attractive it is important to acknowledge that it has been possible to make a tax-deductible contribution to the EAC all along either directly through the City or through the Edina Community Foundation.

Building philanthropic support for EAC would mean a great deal more than simply changing its structure and would require some significant value added

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through enhanced programmatic opportunities and perhaps a more dynamic and contemporary facility better located to serve a broader cross-section of the Edina Community.

Further, and most importantly, it would require volunteer leadership galvanized to contribute with their hearts and minds as well as their personal pocket books. The peer-to-peer level individual fundraising to support the EAC would likely produce the most near-term results. Attracting institutional and corporate support would require a professional ongoing fundraising effort, require start-up funding to support staffing and administrative costs, and take patience in a highly competitive fundraising environment.

A relatively simple solution to enhance fundraising on behalf of EAC may be simply to create a "Friends of EAC Fund" at the Edina Community Foundation. While EAC has several very modest funds at the Foundation already, the creation of a new one with the designated objective of enhancing service to the community could benefit from the existing structure of the Foundation. This approach could allow a fledgling fundraising effort to grow with proper oversight and assurance that the Community's interest would be served through contributed donations.

## Edina Art Center Analysis

<b>Structural Options</b>									
<b>Type of Organization:</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Controlled by</b>	<b>Funding</b>						
<b>Advisory Board of the City of Edina. (Existing)</b>	<p>"The Edina Art Center Board is, by City Ordinance (Section 1508), a formalized board of the Edina City Council. Comprised of 11 volunteer members (including one student), Board members are appointed for limited three-year terms by the Mayor with approval from the Edina City Council."</p> <p><a href="http://www.edinamn.gov/index.php?section=boards_artcenter">http://www.edinamn.gov/index.php?section=boards_artcenter</a></p>	City Council, with advice of Board of Directors appointed by the City Council	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">General Fund (Property Taxes.</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Fundraising</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Gifts.</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Fees for services</td></tr> </table>	General Fund (Property Taxes.	Fundraising	Gifts.	Fees for services		
General Fund (Property Taxes.									
Fundraising									
Gifts.									
Fees for services									
<b>Advisory Board of the City of Edina plus Supporting Entity</b>	<p>"Friends of" model. Separate 501(c)(3) with sole purpose being raising funds for support of the Arts Center.</p> <p>Must have ongoing participation by the City. Satisfied by having at least overlapping board member (City Council Member or Officer of the City).</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;"><u>Arts Center</u> is controlled by the City, with advice of Advisory Board</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;"><u>Supporting Entity</u> is controlled by Board appointed in whole or part by the City Council</td></tr> </table>	<u>Arts Center</u> is controlled by the City, with advice of Advisory Board	<u>Supporting Entity</u> is controlled by Board appointed in whole or part by the City Council	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">General Fund (Property Taxes.</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Fundraising</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Gifts.</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Fees for services</td></tr> </table>	General Fund (Property Taxes.	Fundraising	Gifts.	Fees for services
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General Fund (Property Taxes.									
Fundraising									
Gifts.									
Fees for services									
<b>Independent 501(c)(3)</b>	<p>Independent entity, with its own board of directors</p> <p>Must meet IRS rules for public support (minimum revenue from donations from public (individuals, corporations, foundations, city grants) in order to avoid classification as a "private foundation."</p> <p>Real and personal property transfer from City to 501(c)(3)</p>	Independent Board of Directors	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">City grants</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Fundraising</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Gifts.</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Fees for services</td></tr> </table>	City grants	Fundraising	Gifts.	Fees for services		
City grants									
Fundraising									
Gifts.									
Fees for services									

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## Recommendations Related to Organizational Structure

It is clear that EAC is not oriented to be successful as an independent entity. Any attempt to sever its operations from the Edina Parks and Recreation Departments enterprise activities would likely lead to closure of the facility and disbanding of EAC programs. The challenges of making an organizational transition along with the significant obstacles to growth at the current facility suggest a very low chance of success for an alternative organizational structure. Further issues include an extremely competitive fundraising environment and the inability to offer a broader array of programs or expanded services at the current location.

On the staffing level, we recommend changing from the current awkward and extended part time organization to a professionalized staffing plan with more full time employees fully committed to EAC's success. Without this, EAC is unlikely to be able to efficiently continue current programming much less respond to growing demands in the Edina community to support a broader array of arts activities.

In our view it is critical to allow new staff leadership to reshape and professionalize current operations before further considering major changes. The creation of a semi-independent, "*Friends of the EAC*" type entity could yield some philanthropic support over time but it must be clear from the outset that the Board of such an entity must be oriented to "give as well as get" in order to be successful, and that it will take time and an investment in staffing to yield significant results.

With respect to the EAC organization we recommend that the City of Edina take the following steps;

1. Take no action to alter current structure of EAC at present,
2. Appoint EAC Director,
3. Encourage Director to take steps to reshape staff to more efficiently and professionally to address day to day operational tasks,

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4. Encourage Director to broaden entrepreneurial initiatives to raise awareness of EAC in the community,
5. Allow six to nine months for organization to “gel” under new leadership and with a strengthened and stabilized organization, establish a “*Friends of the Edina Art Center Fund*” at the Edina Community Foundation,
6. Explore with potential funders possibilities that could leverage philanthropy and what it would take to secure their support,
7. Revisit discussion with EAC Board as to level of interest and commitment to assuming a fundraising focus.

## PROGRAMS & SERVICES

### Current Program Offerings

The Edina Art Center is currently focused primarily on education programs in the visual arts including the following media;

- Pottery and Clay Sculpture
- Painting & Drawing
- Water media
- Mosaics
- Digital Media & Photography
- Jewelry
- Crafting
- Specialty/Holiday-themed Activities
  - Henna Tattoo Art
  - Pumpkin Decorating for Halloween
  - Christmas/Hanukkah/Solstice craft workshops

Class offerings for adults span the entirety of this list of media. Within each media program, there are often a variety of class levels, ranging from classes for the true beginner to those appropriate for advanced students. The pottery,

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painting, drawing, and water media programs are particularly diverse, and include many specialized classes. For example, the painting offerings range from figure painting to abstract landscapes; the drawing offerings include pastel chalk classes, drawing portraits from photographs, and botanical drawing. EAC also offers open studio time for adults interested in working individually on their water media, drawing and painting, or jewelry projects.

Class offerings for children are generally taught at an introductory level and geared towards elementary and middle school aged students, as adult classes are open to ages 15 and up. Many of the class offerings for children are interdisciplinary survey classes intended to introduce students to a variety of art media. Classes for the youngest age groups are more thematically driven (ex. Backyard Art, the Animal World, Clay for Kids), and use mixed media crafting to engage these young students. EAC also hosts an after-school Art Academy, separated by age groups, for students looking to explore their artistic interests and talents.

Of these offerings, Pottery and Clay Sculpture is by far and away the biggest draw at EAC, consistently bringing in the greatest amount of earned income and attracting the greatest number of young people to EAC programs. Along with excellent instructional leadership, innovative class offerings and continuing investment in the ceramics area and both indoor and outdoor kilns, EAC hosts one of the most highly respected pottery/ceramics programs in the state. While Painting & Drawing classes remain a mainstay at EAC and are taught by highly respected instructors, there has been less dynamic change in this area and some fall off in participation in these classes as of late. It is fair to say that deferred improvements to the painting and drawing studios including improved ventilation, lack of adequate student lockers, and the growing presence of the digital world in image-making presents an increasing challenge to these types of programs. Nonetheless, these programs are vital to the life of EAC and, as with many other programmatic offerings, interest will wax and wane but the basic programs should remain rooted in disciplines related to a fine arts education.

### **Programming Models at Comparable Art Centers**

Programming models at visual art centers like EAC are remarkably similar and in some cases their program catalogs could almost be interchangeable. Classes that are in demand in one place are replicated elsewhere and instructors that

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are popular can show up on the rosters of a number of different centers. Should EAC choose to retain its focus strictly on the visual arts there is little else it could or should do differently. Without significant investment in changes to the facility and additional equipment there are no other artistic disciplines the facility can properly serve.

## **Weaknesses and Strengths in Marketing and Advertising**

It is important to note that throughout much of the recent economic downturn, most art centers have seen decreased enrollment and in some cases have substantially reduced their class offerings and even the number of days that they are open. Further, as the field has grown it has also become increasingly competitive. Since EAC's founding in 1977 a number of new art centers have opened, many with program models similar to those at EAC. Additionally, several communities in the surrounding area have made significant investments in modern facilities with new state of the art studios that are well equipped, media specific and attractive to both students and instructors.

While EAC retains a very loyal following of students and a cadre of some of the best instructors in the area, growth has fallen off in a number of class offerings and EAC would benefit from increased marketing efforts. Beyond significantly increasing the distribution of seasonal class catalogs there are numerous opportunities to broaden marketing efforts some of which are easy and low cost and some that will require a substantial further investment in print, distribution, social media, and event presence.

EAC could explore with the City's administration opportunities to more broadly distribute to residents class catalogs and flyers and take steps throughout the community to build its presence. Classes and exhibits at the Edina Senior Center are a great example of the broader role EAC plays in the community and efforts should be made to build upon this and expand awareness. While the EAC website functions well and is nicely organized it does not reflect a particularly dynamic artistic enterprise and efforts could be considered to heighten the aesthetic of the site.

EAC could significantly broaden community awareness by increasing its presence at community events including the Parade, the Art Fair, Car Show, etc. and to distribute information about EAC programs whenever and wherever

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appropriate. EAC could also actively seek to expand both its direct mail and e-mail list by more actively collecting data both at the Center and events.

Increasingly, businesses are communicating with their customers by e-mail and social media and EAC should very actively seek to build its network and communicate regularly. EAC could use raffles and drawings to encourage people to provide their digital contact information and permit easier, flexible and timely communications.

### **Suggested Changes to Current Program Offerings**

Until new leadership has been empowered and a more vigorous marketing effort put in place it seems unwise to eliminate programming. While some current offerings are considerably less popular than others there is the broader role of EAC as an educational organization to consider. Nonetheless, it is clear that without significant investment in hardware, software and new instructors the Digital Media & Photography area of programming is unlikely to grow or thrive.

Until very recently record keeping at EAC has been haphazard at best. Work habits of past leadership did not emphasize a strong commitment to data base management and systems were not in place. Without data to track trends in enrollment, staff leadership will need to make judgments on class offerings based upon current performance and success of new and hybrid classes at peer level organizations.

The demographic profile of Edina and the recent work of the Arts and Culture Planning committee suggest the potential for a broader artistic program for EAC and significantly increased participation should the City consider alternative facility options.

### **Gift Shop & Gallery**

As with many gift shops and galleries in community art centers, the shop at EAC combines the function of providing participants in classes with an affordable array of art supplies and artists with an opportunity for sales at a reduced commission venue. The EAC Gift Shop features the work of approximately 250 local and regional artists and offers shoppers the opportunity to purchase unique one of a kind gifts.

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While gift shops at large museums in major marketplaces can contribute significantly to the bottom line, they have the advantage of millions of local and out of town visitors. Professional independent galleries that make a profit are a rarity these days and the art market is really only thriving at the very top of the food chain dominated by international auction houses and galleries located primarily in London and New York.

The EAC gift shop/gallery offers art supplies, original handmade craft items and artwork offered to both members and the general public. Class participants receive a discount on purchases. For sales of art work EAC keeps 35% of the purchase price and 65% goes to the artist. Staffing for the shop includes two part time employees as well as ongoing support from staff at the front desk. Combined sales for the EAC gift shop and Gallery in both 2010 and 2011 totaled approximately \$44k with cost of goods at approximately 60% of sales. Accounting for the several part time staff whose principal focus is the shop and the ongoing attention of other front desk employees the EAC gift shop is marginally a break-even operation.

As with any retail operation, location and local competition are key factors but online sales offering deep discounting and the availability of next day delivery are increasingly a factor as well. Also, with the recent (4-5 years) arrival of Blick Art Materials on France less than 2 miles away, sales of art supplies have decreased despite the member discount. While the EAC shop does serve important mission specific objectives it is unlikely that there is significant opportunity for growth in sales given its location and limited traffic at the current site

## EAC MISSION STATEMENT

### Mission Statement Assessment

The current mission statement of the Edina Art Center is:

*"The Edina Art Center mission is to provide facilities, programs and services that meet and reflect the needs of our residents and neighbors for participation, education, and enjoyment in the arts with emphasis on fine arts".*

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Key Question: Is the Edina Art Center's Mission Statement accurate and fitting given current community and City objectives? In our view EAC's current mission statement is outdated and does not reflect the aspirations of EAC leadership and the City of Edina. It would be wise to update the mission statement to reflect the desired changes of the EAC in the upcoming years.

## Writing a Good Mission Statement

A good mission statement will address the following three questions:

- *What are the opportunities or needs the organization addresses?* (The purpose)
- *What the organization does to address these needs?* (The business)
- *What principles or beliefs guide the organization's work?* (The values)

Example: The mission of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America is to make a positive difference in the lives of children and youth, primarily through a professionally-supported, one-to-one relationship with a caring adult, and to assist them in achieving their highest potential as they grow to become confident, competent, and caring individuals, by providing committed volunteers, national leadership and standards of excellence.

- *The Purpose:* to make a positive difference in the lives of children and youth so that they'll achieve their highest potential.
- *The Business:* providing and supporting committed volunteers who have one-to-one relationships with children and youth
- *The Values:* individuals who are confident, competent, and caring; leadership and standards of excellence

A good mission statement will also address:

- *Key market* – who is the target client/customer?
- *Contribution* – what products or services are provided?
- *Distinction* – what makes the products or services unique?

Ex. McDonalds - "To provide the fast food customer food prepared in the same high-quality manner world-wide that is tasty, reasonably-priced & delivered consistently in a low-key décor and friendly atmosphere.

*Key Market:* The fast food customer world-wide

*Contribution:* tasty and reasonably-priced food prepared in a high-quality manner

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*Distinction:* delivered consistently (world-wide) in a low-key décor and friendly atmosphere.

Mission Statements should be free of jargon and concise enough to be understood by all. It should be broad enough to allow for some creative growth, but not leave too much open to interpretation. The mission statement should be able to serve as a framework for evaluating current activities.

### **New Mission Statement Possibilities**

Discussion of a new mission statement has already begun between members of the Edina Art Center Board. As of September 6, 2012, the latest proposal for a new mission statement was:

*A great city deserves great art. The mission of the Edina Art Center is to ignite and inspire artistic expression, exploration and appreciation.*

While this new effort at better defining the mission of EAC is headed in a positive direction it does not yet fully reflect broader aspirations for the arts emerging in Edina nor a specific commitment to be of service to a broader cross section of residents.

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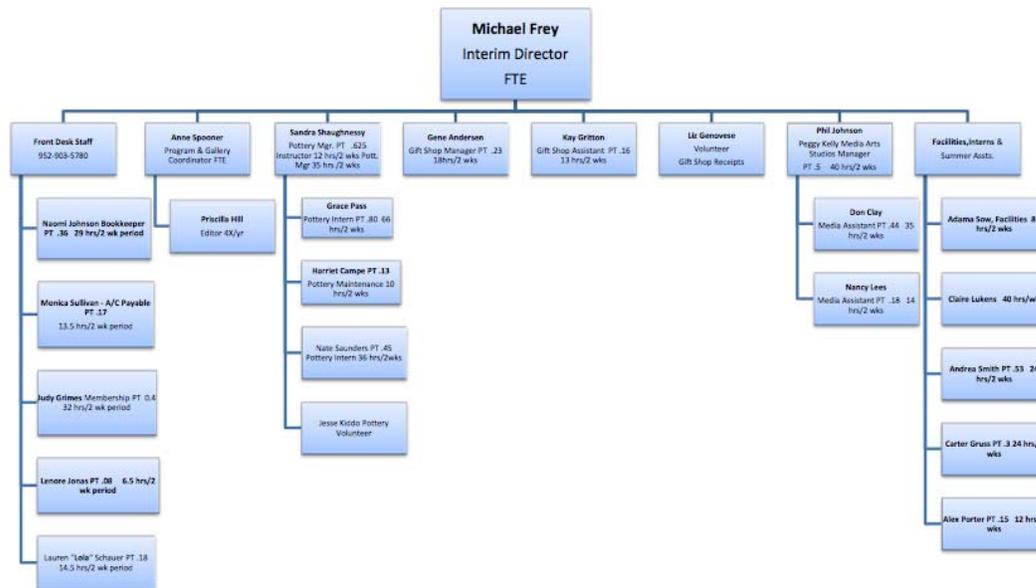
## OPERATIONS

### Observation of Current State of Operations

EAC is currently led by an Interim Director following the long tenure of Diana Hedges as Executive Director. The current staffing structure at EAC has evolved into a somewhat over extended network of many part time and a few full time employees making day to day management overly complicated and somewhat cumbersome. A number of the EAC employees have been with the center for many years and while there is a strong sense of institutional memory there is also reluctance on the part of some to change and evolve forward.

### Organizational Chart

The current EAC Organizational Chart below gives a picture of an extended and somewhat cumbersome structure.



Edina Art Center Organization Chart June 2012

Beyond the 2 full time and 17 to 22 part time employees, EAC engages more than 51 specialized instructors on a part-time basis, dependent on individual

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artistic disciplines and class schedules. The City has wisely recently moved to make instructors employees rather than contractors.

Committed leadership is essential to the success of EAC. We have been impressed by the current Interim Director's handling of day-to-day operations and willingness to go far beyond a traditional 40-hour work week to meet the management needs of EAC. An Executive Director of EAC should have strong support from working colleagues in the City administration as well as the respect of their peers at other art centers in the area. While having an awareness of EAC's history and organizational habits, it is important that the Executive Director demonstrate a clear understanding of the need for EAC to proactively make changes that are in the best interests of the organization and responsive to the growing expectations in the Edina community for cultural activities.

The Director should have an entrepreneurial perspective on meeting challenges, optimizing new opportunities and progressively building an organization designed to enhancing programs to benefit Edina residents. Further, the Director should be committed to collaboration and building strong connections to other arts and community based organizations in Edina and throughout the Greater Twin Cities Metropolitan Area

Recent changes in staff leadership provide an opportunity to rethink the basic organization of EAC but true change will be difficult to effect without shifting away from the current model of many part time hourly employees less vested in the overall success of the EAC and towards a full time professional staff with specific administrative expertise. The Executive Director should be fully empowered to make necessary staffing changes to accomplish this goal within the appropriate budgeting processes of the City.

Working with a professionalized and smaller full time staff is likely to bring considerable upside to the operation of EAC. Although not likely to bring near term cost savings to the City, it will allow for consideration of a broader programming spectrum and a more efficient delivery of programs and services to the Edina community.

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### **Income Sources in Comparison to other Art Centers**

Presently the broad array of class offerings at EAC remains solely focused on the visual arts and does not reach as deep into the community as would be possible in an up to date facility with additional programming possibilities. A carefully considered stretch by EAC into the performing arts could yield increased participation and extend the mission of EAC into the lives of many more residents of Edina.

As at the Bloomington Art Center, a combination of artistic disciplines could increase revenues and substantially broaden service to the community. The recent success of the Edina Film Festival demonstrates the capacity of EAC to grow its programming, expand revenues and increase its presence.

For the most part, classes remain both price sensitive and carefully scrutinized by participants against offerings elsewhere available to a highly mobile user group. The current base income at EAC of more than \$400k per year derived from class offerings is highly envied by some centers in the area and should be considered as an institutional asset that could be built upon but should not be disrupted by radical changes to operations.

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## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

### Introduction Comparable Art Centers

As prescribed by this assignment, the following have been identified as art centers that are comparable in some measure to the Edina Art Center. The chosen art centers serve (mainly) suburban middle and upper-middle class communities, and share a goal of enriching their respective communities by providing access to arts programming and education. The differences between these art centers, however, are especially apparent in their organizational structures, sources of funding, and programmatic offerings (i.e. visual arts/performing arts/both).

Some of these organizations are models of successful community art centers that Edina Art Center may consider using as inspiration for future changes or expansions – Minnetonka Center for the Arts, in particular, is one such organization that has been an established leadership presence in the community art sector. Others, like the Hopkins Center for the Arts or Bloomington Theatre and Art Center, are more like the EAC in the sense that they have passed the earliest stages of establishment, but are still looking for growth opportunities that can carry them into the next phase of their existence.

What is abundantly clear from a look at other arts centers is the degree to which each is uniquely tailored to its community, tuned to programming possibilities in their respective facility and limited by resources made available to subsidize programming. Each type of arts organization has different standards and goals with respect to earned and contributed income percentages and number of program participants. While there is no standard metric for performance, mission deliverables or funding ratios, EAC does rates highly with respect to percentage of earned income (70%) as compared to others arts organizations which may range from 20% to 80% earned income. While EAC has a relatively high participation rate in its programs, its facility, location and programming model (visual arts only) limit significant growth.

### Site Visits

EAC Board members, staff and consultants visited and met with key organizational leaders at the following three comparable centers.

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## **Minnetonka Center for the Arts**

From its inception more than fifty years ago, the Minnetonka Center for the Arts' purpose has been to help a diverse group make art a part of everyday life. After outgrowing a series of rented spaces MCA purchased a former elementary school in Wayzata and transformed it into studios, a gallery and an art store. Overtime MCA added a painting studio, ceramics studio and sculpture studio with a metal pouring foundry.

In 1997, when a feasibility study showed that even extensive renovations could not bring the facility up to current building code or improve its functionality a capital campaign was launched to build a new \$6.3 million building on the same site as the old one. The new building is a state of the art visual art center operating as a 501(c)(3) organization. Operating funds are derived from a combination of earned and contributed income from a broad variety of sources including public funds through the Minnesota State Arts Board. Earned income at 70% is at a ratio approximately equivalent to that of EAC.

## **Hopkins Center for the Arts**

Hopkins Center for the Arts is largely geared towards renting to private performing arts groups and presenting a performing arts series but it does have an impressive gallery space for rotating exhibitions. Organizationally it is in transition – having recently developed a “Friends of” model (a city-owned segment augmented through funds generated from a separate 501(c)(3) that exists to support the HCA), it is still figuring out the best way to organize its staff in order to support these various needs.

While the subsidy provided by the City is offset by contributions garnered through a “Friends of” type entity all administrative staffing expenses are still within the City's budget for their center. Net benefit to the Hopkins Center must be figured relational to the cost of staffing to write and submit grants, host events and publicize “Friends of” activities. At present the development of a truly independent enterprise is hoped for but not yet realized. Estimated annual City subsidy ranges from \$150k to \$225k depending on net revenues from other activities.

# Edina Art Center Analysis

## **Bloomington Theatre and Art Center**

Owned by the City of Bloomington, the Bloomington Theatre and Art Center (BTAC) is operated through a partnership which emerged through a merger of the Bloomington Civic Theatre (BCT) and Bloomington Art Center (BAC) in 2009. The facility features two impressive performance spaces, galleries and visual arts classrooms.

The merger created a strong 501(c)(3) organization with a pre-existing audience base for its productions and a professional staff to drive additional programming and do fundraising. While more recognized for its performing arts activities, BTAC does offer a number of visual arts classes and its impressive gallery space can feature one or two local artists on a rotating schedule. In addition to providing free space to the primary Bloomington arts organizations that make their home at BTAC, the City also awards operating grants to these organizations to help subsidize their programs at BTAC.

Having augmented its operating approach with the shift to a 501(c)(3), Bloomington's biggest challenge has been differentiating its new brand and gaining traction with fundraising. All in all it is estimated the Bloomington's annual subsidy of the art center is close to a million dollars a year when facility costs, dedicated city staff and grants to tenant organizations are factored in.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Across the country, along with other community assets like great school systems and terrific sports and recreational programs and facilities, the arts are progressively viewed by elected officials, administrators and city planners as key to defining and leveraging their communities.

In our view the Edina Art Center is in a unique position to redefine itself to meet the needs and expectations of a population that increasingly view the arts as important community amenities that define Edina as a great place to live, work and raise a family.

## Edina Art Center Analysis

We recommend that the City maintain its commitment to EAC and encourage leadership to explore ways to expand its role in the community to better reflect growing aspirations for cultural activities in Edina.

We believe that EAC could play a vital role in future development and recommend that its leadership should be at the table as broader community initiatives are explored.

Further, we recommend that EAC work directly with the Edina Community Foundation to proactively attract philanthropic support that will allow it to serve residents of all ages with expanded offerings in both the visual and the performing arts.

As with all civic efforts, strong and consistent leadership is critical to success. We believe that the City will benefit from a transition from interim staff leadership to EAC Director.

The continued involvement and commitment of the EAC Board could assist City leadership to appropriately respond to increasing community aspirations for the arts in Edina and assure that EAC is a strong community asset with increased relevancy to the residents of Edina.

As with any business, location is a key factor particularly for service organizations like EAC. Where best to provide Edina residents with cultural and educational programs should be carefully considered before making significant further investments in the current location.

The opportunity to encourage development in a core area of Edina could be substantively leveraged if a new 21<sup>st</sup> century, multi-disciplinary art center facility were to be central to it.

# Edina Art Center Analysis

## COMPARABLE ART CENTERS – CASE STUDIES

### **Minnetonka Center for the Arts**

**Size:** 31,000 sq. ft. **Location:** Wayzata,

**Organizational Structure:** Private

501(c)(3)



**Mission:** the belief that the visual arts are indispensable to a healthy community; it is the mission of the Minnetonka Center for the Arts to provide teaching excellence, quality exhibitions and cultural enrichment for people of all ages, interests and abilities.

**Programming Mix:** Year-round programming for young children, teens, and adults. Teens are distinguished as a special group with certain classes targeted at their interests. Summer day-camps for kids and teens. Partnerships with Walker Art Center and Ridgedale Mall.

### **Community Demographics (Minnetonka & Wayzata):**

Populations: 50,000 (M) & 3,700 (W)

Median Age: 45 (M) & 48 (W)

M: 90% white, W: 92.5% white

M: 25% of households have children under 18, 52% are married

W: 14% of households have children under 18, 42% are married

Median household income: \$81,000 (M) and \$64,000 (W)

Education: M = 98% HS degree or higher; W = 99% HS degree or higher

### **Budget (2010)**

Total Revenue: \$1,179,679

- Revenue from Contributions & Grants: \$316,625
- Revenue from Program Fees: \$827,610

From Fundraising Events, specifically: \$29,653

Revenue from Membership: \$56,285

**Number of Paid Employees:** 40 (11 full-time, including 7 admins, 2 registrars, 2 studio managers)

# Edina Art Center Analysis

## **Bloomington Theatre and Art Center**

**Location:** Bloomington, MN.

**Organizational Structure:** City-owned, public/private operating partnership



**Mission Statement:** We exist to enrich the cultural fabric of the communities we serve by providing high quality performing arts, visual arts, and arts education programs, and by welcoming and nurturing talent.

**Programming Mix:** Big focus on presenting work and encouraging audience appreciation. Partnership with Bloomington Civic Theatre. Adult and youth workshop courses in a variety of fine arts disciplines (clay, painting, drawing, glass, fiber, photography, etc.). Very focused class topics, like Shade and Light Drawing. Offering theatre/drama classes for kids in collaboration with BCT. Outreach activities for kids (working with charter schools, Boy/Girl Scouts, etc.).

### **Community Demographics:**

Population: 83,000

Median age: 43

80% white

Median Household Income: \$57,800

Educated: about 66% have at least some college, if not a bachelor's degree or beyond

Household types: Single (32%), Married w/o children (36%). 23% of households have children under 18.

### **Budget (2010)**

Total Revenue: \$1,355,493 (Includes Bloomington Civic Theatre ticket sales)

- Revenue from Contributions & Grants: \$520,514
- From Fundraising Events, specifically: \$6,723
- From Gifts, Private Grants, etc.: \$204,336
- Govt. Grants: \$297,335
- Revenue from Membership: \$12,120
- Revenue from Program Fees: \$834,169
- Number of Paid Employees: 21 (8 full-time)

# Edina Art Center Analysis

## **Hopkins Center for the Arts**

**Size:** 36,000 sq ft. **Location:** Downtown Hopkins, MN

**Organizational Structure:** City-owned, city-operated, 501c3 tenants, "Friends of" fundraising support organization.



**Mission:** The Arts Center builds community through the arts by fostering creative expression and providing artistic and educational opportunities for people of all ages.

**Programming:** Theatre Performances, concerts, films, exhibitions, lectures, literary arts, and classes in fine arts. Arts Center also houses Stages Theatre Company and space rentals from Hopkins Public Schools and there is a significant focus on exhibitions and gallery showings. Classes are mostly for adults, and are focused on painting and take-home project-based classes (ex. Knit yourself a scarf, make a jewelry box). On the whole, the Hopkins Center for the Arts seems more about presenting the arts and creating exposure, rather than teaching the arts. Also offer space rentals.

## **Community Demographics:**

Population: 17,600

Median Age: 34 70% white, 13.5% African-American, 8.5% Asian

25% of households have children under 18; 43% of households are single people

Median Household Income: \$47,000; Per Capita Income: \$29,400

Education: 93% have HS degree or higher, 39% have Bachelor's degree or higher

## **Budget (2012, estimated)**

TOTAL BUDGET INCOME: \$758,626

Earned Income: \$510,653

- Tenant Leases: \$245,053
- Tickets & Facility Fees: \$164,000

Contributed Revenue (Transferred from the "Friends of" 501c3): \$100,053

City Support: \$147,920 (likely + \$80k)

# Edina Art Center Analysis

## The Phipps Center for the Arts

**Size:** 64,000 sq. ft    **Location:** Hudson, WI  
**Approx. Operational Budget:** \$1.2 million  
**Organizational Structure:** Private 501(c)(3)  
ownership & operation



**Mission:** Two identifiable areas of focus:  
presentation of art (in galleries, exhibits, performances, etc.) and art education  
(year-round class offerings for both children and adults).

**Programming Mix:** Classes offered for both children and adults, but summer programming is almost exclusively for children. The selection for kids' summer camps is outstanding - over 50 to choose from, ranging from one day-long class to ones that last for a week as well as separate classes for both children and teens. The Phipps has ongoing partnerships with local hospitals and is a major player in producing the annual Spirit of St. Croix Days. Gallery exhibits include both members and non-members. Bench Project - permanent installations of usable art project benches made by community members/groups.

### **Community Demographics:**

Population: 12,700. Hudson area: 34,000  
Median Age: 33  
98% white  
Median Income: \$51,000. Per capita income: \$27,000  
31% of all households have children under 18, 29% of all households are single people  
75% have at least some college, if not a bachelor's degree or beyond

### **Budget (2010)**

Total Revenue: \$1,094,204

- Revenue from Contributions & Grants: \$440,080
- From Personal Gifts: \$434,550
- Revenue from Program Fees: \$595,503

Number of Paid Employees: 12

# Edina Art Center Analysis

## **Eden Prairie Art Center**

**Size:** 5,400 sq. ft.    **Location:** Eden Prairie, MN

**Organizational Structure:** Part of the City of Eden Prairie Park & Rec Dept., city-owned & operated

**Mission:** The mission of the Eden Prairie Art Center is to enhance the quality of life and foster creativity in our community by providing access to the arts for people of all ages and abilities.



**Programming Mix:** Offers open studio time 3 days a week. Rent-An-Artist Program offers one-on-one instruction options. Programming gets very age specific: separate classes for toddlers, preschool, kindergarten, grade school, teens, adults, seniors. Also offers family classes. Part of the Park & Rec Program, allows for relationships with Eden Prairie Players, Community Band, and "Art on City Walls" Project, if desired.

### **Community Demographics:**

Population: 60,800

Median Age: 38

81% white, 9% Asian

39% of households have children under 18; 24% of households are single people

Median Household Income: \$89,500; Per Capita Income: \$49,250

Education: 97% have HS degree or higher, 60% have Bachelor's degree or higher

### **Budget:**

1,000 participants annually

2011 Budget: \$173,198

2012 Budget: \$212,662

2013 Projected Budget: \$218,778

2013 Total Park & Rec Budget: \$2,281,975 (Art Center gets just under 10% of the entire Park & Rec budget)

# Edina Art Center Analysis

## White Bear Center for the Arts

**Location:** White Bear Lake

**Organizational Structure:**

501(c)(3)

**Mission Statement:** The mission of White Bear

Center for the Arts is to provide a gateway to diverse arts experiences. We will: Educate new and established artists; Cultivate the understanding of art in its many forms; Celebrate the joys of arts. We value: Creative process; Openness; Transformative experience.



**Programming Mix:** Classes for Adults, Teens, and Kids. Very thorough mixture of class offerings. Even offer a "create your own class" offering - kind of like a private lesson: if you want to learn something but can't make the scheduled class time or the offered classes don't address your topic adequately, you can find an instructor and get studio time with them (they require you to get at least 4 people to do the class). Examples of create your own classes - sewing, mosaics, printmaking, art history, etc. Offer a lot of community conversations with artists, easy art contests (ex. sand castle contest in the summer), and a community "Iron Pour" event. Partnership with Stepping Stone Theatre to offer kids' drama courses. [430 current members, 30% are White Bear residents]

### **Community Demographics:**

Population: 23,800 Median Age: 41 90% white 27% of households have children under 18; 34% of households are single people

Median Household Income: \$57,000

Education: 94% have HS degree or higher, 31% have Bachelor's degree or higher

### **Budget (2010)**

Total Revenue: \$1,377,622

- Revenue from Contributions and Grants: \$1,220,798
- From Fundraising, specifically: \$54,094
- From Gifts, Private Grants, etc: \$1,147,293
- Revenue from Program Fees: \$170,459
- Revenue from Membership: \$19,401

Number of Paid Employees: 6

# Edina Art Center Analysis



## **Maple Grove Arts Center**

**Location:** Suburban Maple Grove, MN

**Organizational Structure:** 501(c)(3)

**Mission Statement:** To provide fine art, musical and theatrical exploration and appreciation opportunities.

**Programming Mix:** Fewer class options than most other organizations. Classes for kids and adults, but mostly for kids and teens. Variety of classes offered in both visual arts and performing arts disciplines. Also offer free open studio dates for the community.

### **Community Demographics:**

Population: 61,600

Median Age: 38

86% white

40% of households have children under 18; 19% of all households are single people

Median Household Income: \$93,000

Education: 97% have HS degree or higher; 49% have Bachelor's degree or higher

### **Budget (2009):**

Total Revenue: \$4,796

- Revenue from Contributions & Grants: \$3,397
- Revenue from Program Fees: \$476
- Revenue from Membership: \$125

# Edina Art Center Analysis

## Evanston Art Center

**Location:** Evanston, IL

**Size:** 17,000 sq ft

**Organizational Structure:** 501(c)(3) organization

**Mission:** The Evanston Art Center is dedicated to fostering the appreciation and expression of the arts among diverse audiences. The Art Center offers extensive and innovative instruction in broad areas of artistic endeavor through classes, exhibitions, interactive arts activities, and community outreach initiatives



**Programming:** They have a Mix of youth, teen, adult, and family classes. Some of the adult classes are more unique - woodcutting techniques, fashion design, figure drawing, metal smithing. Also offering youth summer camps. 10 wk/sessions for adult classes, 5 wks for kids. Seasonal arts & crafts expos. Community Outreach programs for both youth and seniors (artists-in-residence programs at local schools, partnership with Loyola University, Summer Reading program with Public Libraries, sending Art Center employees into nursing homes to work with residents). Also exhibit some pieces in a gallery.

### **Community Demographics:**

Population: 74,500

Median Age: 34

66% white, 18% black, 9% Hispanic, 8.5% Asian

26% of households have children under 18; 38% of households are single people

Median Household Income: \$68,000

Education: 93% have HS degree or higher, 66% have Bachelor's degree or higher

# Edina Art Center Analysis

## Edina Art Center



**Size:** 10,150 sq. ft. **Location:** Edina

**Organizational Structure:** City Owned,  
Operated by City of Edina Parks and Recreation Department

**Current Mission:** *"The Edina Art Center mission is to provide facilities, programs and services that meet and reflect the needs of our residents and neighbors for participation, education, and enjoyment in the arts with emphasis on fine arts".*

**Programming Mix:** Year-round programming visual arts offering for all ages including; Pottery and Clay Sculpture, Painting & Drawing, Water media, Mosaics, Digital Media & Photography, Jewelry, Crafting and Specialty/Holiday-themed Activities

### **Community Demographics (Edina):**

Populations: approx. 48,000

Median Age: 45 (M) & 48 (W)

Ethnicity: 88% white,

Persons under 5 years, 5.4%

Persons under 18 years, 24.2%

Persons 65 years and over, 20.7%

Female persons, 53.4%

50.4% Median household income: approx. \$80,000

Education: Bachelor's degree or higher; 63%

### **Budget (2011)**

Total Revenue: \$640,043

- Revenue from Contributions & Grants: \$13,536
- Memberships: \$25,730
- Revenue from Program Fees: \$425,776

**Number of Paid Employees:** Currently 2 full-time and 17 to 22 part-time administrative employees as well as more than 51 part-time instructors