



Meaford Hall

Arts & Cultural Centre

Strategic Marketing Plan 2016-2020



Council's 2014-2018 Strategic Priorities:

The Meaford Hall Arts & Culture Strategic Marketing Plan 2016-2020 was developed in support of Council's 2014-2018 Strategic Priorities:



Action Items

Celebrate Heritage:

- A. Develop a strategy for the enhanced use of our community spaces to foster a sense of unity throughout the Municipality.
- B. Ongoing promotion of the Municipality of Meaford's history and heritage assets.

Promote Arts and Culture:

- A. Evaluation of the recommendations from the 2015-2025 Recreation and Culture Strategic Master Plan for strategic implementation during the annual budget process.
- B. Improve the accessibility of all municipal facilities.
- C. Improve programming and services offered.

- D. Support the opportunity for expanded library services and the determination of location.
- E. Finalize a business and operating plan for Meaford Hall to achieve a reduced tax supported operating subsidy and assess capital needs including a renovated balcony.

2015-2025 Recreation & Culture Strategic Master Plan:

The 2015-2025 Recreation & Culture Strategic Master Plan recognizes the importance of maximizing the potential of Meaford Hall and the growth of culture within the Municipality of Meaford.

Appendix 1 summarizes the culture recommendations of the 2015-2025 Recreation & Culture Strategic Master Plan.

Meaford Hall is often described as a cultural and historic gem and is cultural flagship for the Municipality of Meaford. Meaford Hall delivers services based on a community development model of operation. It has developed a plan to progressively expand the range of activities to increase utilization and enhance capacity through outreach and collaborative partnership opportunities. This includes creative programming initiatives while ensuring access to the facility by local organizations and community stakeholders.

Meaford Hall at a Glance:

Meaford Hall Arts & Cultural Centre is a beautifully restored and renovated century old landmark constructed in 1908 in historic downtown Municipality of Meaford.

In 2006, Meaford Hall reopened following an extensive six (6) million dollar renovation initiative. The Municipality borrowed approximately \$3.2 million in September 2008 based on a 20 year repayment debt schedule of \$259,982 per year.

As a four season venue, Meaford Hall plays host to a variety of events including live theatre, music, films, dance and entertainment as well as community, corporate and social events. For the past hundred years, Meaford Hall has echoed with music, drama, and debate, serving as the political, social and cultural heart of Meaford.

Meaford Hall collaborates with multiple community partners not limited to the Meaford Hall & Culture Foundation, Meaford Community Theatre, Meaford Chamber of Commerce, Meaford BIA, and many local service clubs. Outreach in the community includes local schools, daycares, and Community Living.

Current Outreach:

Total Exposures/Visits to Meaford Hall in 2015 (as of November 23, 2015): **47,000 exposures (anticipate 55,000 total for 2015)**

Active Patron Base: 2,500 repeat customers / patrons / members

Average Viewings Annually: 6 performances per year

- 49% of attendees to Meaford Hall performances and activities are from within the Municipality of Meaford
- 51% of attendees travel from our neighbouring communities:
 - 26% from Owen Sound, Town of The Blue Mountains, Collingwood, Stayner and Wasaga Beach areas
 - 25% from other locales (Waterloo-Kitchener and Greater Toronto Area)

Audiences travel from as far as 100km dependent on caliber of performance.

It is projected Meaford Hall will grow a further 15% in overall revenue through additional patron base over the next 5 years.

Current Financial Position:

	2015 APPROVED BUDGET	2016 PROJECTED BUDGET
Program Expenditures	\$ 606,150	\$ 597, 675
Programming Revenues	(\$ 460,000)	(\$ 496,500)
Program Variance (excl. facility operations & Debenture Debt):	\$ 146,150	\$ 101,175
Facility Operations Expenditures	\$ 172,800	\$ 180,225
Long Term Debenture Debt	\$ 260,000*	\$ 260,000*
Total Tax Supported Subsidy	\$ 578,950	\$ 541,400
Projected Reduction in Tax Supported Net Levy from 2015		(\$ 37,550)

*In 2006, Meaford Hall reopened following an extensive six (6) million dollar renovation initiative. The Municipality borrowed approximately \$3.2 million in September 2008 based on a 20 year repayment debt schedule of \$259,982 per year.

Mission:

Meaford Hall will be recognized as the choice venue for performing arts, cultural and heritage enrichment, artistic expression, lifelong learning and a preferred location for conferences and meeting within the Southern Georgian Bay Region; a community gathering place that stimulates and supports the cultural, social, recreational and economic needs of the community.

Mandate:

Meaford Hall will:

- Present first class concerts, professional and amateur theatre productions, entertainment and exhibitions;
- Provide versatile and flexible rental space for community and commercial uses;
- Provide an attractive, accessible and affordable environment for corporate, social and community events;
- Profile and facilitate museum, heritage and culturally enriching events;
- Facilitate recreation and leisure programming and activities;
- Encourage and host activities that serve as a catalyst in the economic revitalization of the community.

Projected Five Year Financial Goal:

The projected five year financial goal is to reduce the Municipal Program Supported Municipal Levy by \$100K over 5 years

Projected Net Municipal Levy					
YEAR	PROGRAM	FACILITY OPERATIONS	SUB-TOTAL	DEBENTURE DEBT	TOTAL
2015	\$146,150	\$172,800	\$318,950	\$260,000	\$578,950
2016	\$101,175	\$184,350	\$285,525	\$260,000	\$545,525
2017	\$88,000	\$185,150	\$273,150	\$260,000	\$533,150
2018	\$76,000	\$190,300	\$266,300	\$260,000	\$526,300
2019	\$64,000	\$200,725	\$264,725	\$260,000	\$524,725
2020	\$52,000	\$201,450	\$253,450	\$260,000	\$513,450
Variance:	-\$94,150	\$28,650	-\$65,500	\$0	-\$65,500

Marketing Plan:

The reduction of annual tax supported operating subsidy will be achieved through implementation of the following strategies:

STRATEGY 1	INCREASE PROFILE & GROW CAPACITY
STRATEGY 2	PROGRAMMING GROWTH AND EXPANSION
STRATEGY 3	STRATEGIC MARKETING & PROMOTION AND REVENUE GROWTH
STRATEGY 4	EFFICIENCIES IN OPERATIONS AND FACILITY MANAGEMENT

STRATEGY 1	INCREASE PROFILE & GROW CAPACITY
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OBJECTIVE 1	Grow RENTAL Client Base: Community & Private Sector Organizations / Agencies	
ACTION STEPS		TIMEFRAME
Establish & support a Georgian Bay Cultural Alliance Group with Municipalities of Parry Sound & Midland to enhance capabilities to attract greater caliber of artists, promoters and broaden spectrum of patrons.		Year 1-3
Encourage continued use of Meaford Hall to existing clientele (User Group Retention).		Year 1-5
Promote diversity of Cultural Centre as a host venue for variety of functions/events - facilitation and hosting capabilities for training workshops/conferences, ceremonies, weddings, celebrations and special events.		Year 1-5
Co-produce events to enable and facilitate community programs and functions.		Year 2-4
Support completion of balcony project (Cultural Spaces Grant; Partnership opportunities; premium seating with enhanced theatre/concert experience.)		Year 2-4
Actively solicit and engage commercial promoters to bring variety of performances to Meaford Hall. (Genres / Cover Artists / etc.).		Year 2-5
Solicit performing arts schools to utilize and potentially relocate to Meaford Hall.		Year 3-5
Support a permanent in-house summer/seasonal theatre company. (Anchor Partner)		Year 3-5

STRATEGY 1	INCREASE PROFILE & GROW CAPACITY
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OBJECTIVE 2	Grow PATRON Base & Capacity: Visitors & Guests (admissions)	
ACTION STEPS		TIMEFRAME
Continue to support and strengthen affiliation and collaboration with partners including Grey County Tourism, GTTA (Georgian Triangle Tourism Association) and Blue Mountain Village Association (BMVA) / APT (Apple Pie Trail).		Year 1-5
Develop and promote bundling opportunities (programs and discounts on tickets by genre series - Blues, Theatre, Rock, Country, Jazz etc)		Year 1-5
Continue to promote and foster community and regional pride in Meaford Hall as the “premier arts & cultural facility in Southern Georgian Bay”.		Year 1-5
Promote discount offers and target market to: Probus Club (active seniors groups); seniors residences; condominium associations, youth groups and schools to attract new clientele.		Year 2
Explore online advertising to reach potential patrons in the markets including Greater Brampton area and Kitchener-Waterloo Regions.		Year 2-3
Market and position Meaford Hall as a regional/provincial education/training, workshop and conference facility, including developing packaging with accommodation and other hospitality providers.		Year 1-3
Establish contracts and relationships with tour bus companies and investigate bundling opportunities with other partner events/attractions.		Year 2-3

STRATEGY 2	PROGRAMMING GROWTH AND EXPANSION
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OBJECTIVE 1	Promotion of 10th Anniversary of Meaford Hall in 2016 (since restoration in 2006)	
ACTION STEPS		TIMEFRAME
Create and incorporate a special 10 th Anniversary logo on all marketing media and promotions		Year 1
Earmark special event functions specific to 2016 in celebration of 10 th Anniversary		Year 1
Promote and profile Meaford Hall's 10 year anniversary during Canada Day Celebrations in Market Square to recognize and celebrate milestone achievement.		Year 1
Opportunity for major function at Market Square in August to celebration 10 th Anniversary leading up to MIFF's 10 th Anniversary in 2016.		Year 1

OBJECTIVE 2	Expand summer camp programs and year round culture and recreation programming opportunities in collaboration with Supervisor of Recreation & Special Events and Museum Services Coordinator.	
ACTION STEPS		TIMEFRAME
Collaborate with Meaford Museum, Meaford Library		Year 1-2
Grow recreation programming at Meaford Hall		Year 1-2
Promote Meaford Hall as a community centre & community gathering place (atmosphere)		Year 1-2

STRATEGY 2	PROGRAMMING GROWTH AND EXPANSION
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OBJECTIVE 3	Expand on variety and frequency of entertainment genres.	
ACTION STEPS		TIMEFRAME
Introduce monthly “Meaford Jam Nights” to promote local Artists & Performers.		Year 1-2
Establish “Meaford at the Movies” film series at Meaford Hall to expand films offered.		Year 1-2
Promote and use Meaford Hall as an alternative venue to expand and align programming with events of a national, provincial, cultural, and/or sports significance.		Year 1-2

OBJECTIVE 4	Review and establish base Return on Investment (R.O.I.) criteria for engagement and host of high profile performers	
ACTION STEPS		TIMEFRAME
Review protocols and establish/update ROI analysis template		Year 1-5
Enhance relationship with Promoters and agencies to attract profile performers/talent.		Year 1-5

STRATEGY 2	PROGRAMMING GROWTH AND EXPANSION
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OBJECTIVE 5	Work in partnership with MHCF (Meaford Hall & Culture Foundation) to support various programming and event initiatives.	
ACTION STEPS		TIMEFRAME
Celebration of 10 th Anniversary of Meaford Hall since major Renovation / Restoration in conjunction with 10 th Anniversary of MIFF (Meaford International Film Festival) - 2016		Year 1-2
Promotion of 2016 events highlighting 10 years of active cultural growth within the community.		Year 1-2
Collaboration of efforts to achieve balcony renovation		Year 1-2

OBJECTIVE 6	Encourage and support local arts and culture providers to expand programming to Meaford Hall as rentals, anchor tenants, or co-sponsored series	
ACTION STEPS		TIMEFRAME
Network and engage community colleges & cultural institutions to expand curriculum		Year 1-2
Determine feasibility of expanding curriculum and establishing partnership support in the arts.		Year 1-2
Engage key stakeholders (Meaford Chamber of Commerce; BIA; Meaford Community Theatre; Kids in the Meaford Hall; Sandcastle Theatre; Blue Mountain Village Association, etc.) to develop and collaborate on new program & event initiatives.		Year 1-5

STRATEGY 3	STRATEGIC MARKETING & PROMOTION AND REVENUE GROWTH
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OBJECTIVE 1	Promotion of 10th Anniversary of Meaford Hall since major restoration (2006)	
ACTION STEPS		TIMEFRAME
Ensure 10 th Anniversary slogan/logo is included in all promotions (January-December).		2016
Increase promotion of milestone in Community Recreation Guide and all supplementary marketing materials, pamphlets, brochures, posters, etc.		2016
Promote all 2016 events in “Celebration of 10 Years of Community Dedication to Arts and Culture”		2016
Develop a special anniversary display at the Meaford Museum on the history of Meaford Hall in celebration of 10 years.		
Promote and celebrate Meaford Hall’s 10 year anniversary during Canada Day Celebrations in Market Square to recognize and celebrate milestone achievement.		2016

OBJECTIVE 2	Support and promote offsite/3rd party event ticketing as potential revenue stream.	
ACTION STEPS		TIMEFRAME
Actively promote service to local and regional groups and event hosts.		Year 1-5

OBJECTIVE 3	Increase bar sales with opera house A.G.C.O. license.	
ACTION STEPS		TIMEFRAME
Market & promote licensed venue for weddings, gatherings, special occasions, and corporate workshops/seminars		Year 1-5
Establish upper mezzanine bar service where/when appropriate		Year 1-5

STRATEGY 3	STRATEGIC MARKETING & PROMOTION AND REVENUE GROWTH
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OBJECTIVE 4	Review rates and fees to be market competitive with comparable facilities.	
ACTION STEPS		TIMEFRAME
Survey comparable facilities / services / venues and recommend market adjustments		Year 1-5

OBJECTIVE 5	Review advertising rates with potential for bundling options within Parks, Recreation & Culture Department.	
ACTION STEPS		TIMEFRAME
Work in collaboration with Supervisor of Recreation Programs & Events and Coordinator, Graphic Design and Marketing		Year 1-5

OBJECTIVE 6	Investigate and apply for program specific grant, sponsorship and bursary opportunities.	
ACTION STEPS		TIMEFRAME
Research all potential sources of cultural funding (Regional / Provincial / Federal / Other)		Year 1-5
Enhance grant writing capabilities/skills		Year 1-5

STRATEGY 3	STRATEGIC MARKETING & PROMOTION AND REVENUE GROWTH
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OBJECTIVE 7	Assess existing marketing medium and initiatives to ensure effective target marketing with highest ROI (materials/media) in promotion of hospitality and rental opportunities.	
ACTION STEPS		TIMEFRAME
Implement effective statistical tracking methods to acquire empirical data to determine trending patterns to support decisions & programming directions.		Year 1

OBJECTIVE 8	Increase frequency of marketing e-blasts and enhancement of Meaford Hall website including social media venues and presence.	
ACTION STEPS		TIMEFRAME
Clarification of roles & responsibilities through alignment of organizational structure		Year 1
Creation of easy flow templates and submission timelines		Year 1
Messaging to be fresh, creative and intriguing		Year 1

STRATEGY 4	EFFICIENCIES IN OPERATIONS AND FACILITY MANAGEMENT
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OBJECTIVE 1	Review organizational alignment and ensure best practices in provision of services and allocation of resources.	
ACTION STEPS		TIMEFRAME
Review organizational structure as it relates to Meaford Hall Operations		Year 1
Implement recommendations		Year 1

OBJECTIVE 2	Explore potential outsourcing of services and contract opportunities to reduce operating expenditures.	
ACTION STEPS		TIMEFRAME
Determine potential services with high probability for outsourcing and savings		Year 1
Develop RFPs for public issue and potential award		Year 1
Continuous evaluation		Year 1-5

OBJECTIVE 3	Ensure efficient collaboration of efforts within Parks, Recreation & Culture Department	
ACTION STEPS		TIMEFRAME
Clarification of roles & responsibilities and effective alignment of resources		Year 1-5
Collaboration and Communication		Year 1-5

STRATEGY 4	EFFICIENCIES IN OPERATIONS AND FACILITY MANAGEMENT
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OBJECTIVE 4	Ensure measures are in place to monitor and track program recovery support provided to other municipal departments and council (Usage of facilities – inter-functional transfers).	
ACTION STEPS		TIMEFRAME
Establish base lease rates for 3 rd party office & meeting space requirements & track.		Year 1
Track annual assignment of municipal allocation and provision of meeting space through Finance Department		Year 1-5

Schedule 01: Excerpt From 2015-2025 Recreation & Culture Strategic Master Plan

Recommendation(s)	Implementation Timeframe		
	Short-term 2015-2016	Medium-term 2017-2021	Long-term 2022-2025
Cultural Facilities			
63. Continue to invest in the Meaford Public Library as it is an important County asset.			
64. Proceed with planned capital improvements to Meaford Hall. Major investments to be prioritized include the renovation of the balcony area and related seating.			
65. Invest in a facility booking system for Meaford Hall to better track and monitor shifts in annual utilization over time.			
66. Proceed with planned capital improvements to the Meaford Museum and continue efforts to optimize storage capacity at the facility.			
67. Implement landscape and streetscape enhancements to the museum site per the recommendations of the 2014 Waterfront Strategy and Master Plan.			
Cultural Programs & Services			
68. The Supervisor of Recreation Programs, the Museum Services Coordinator and the Manager of Arts & Cultural Services should continue to work collaboratively to develop arts and cultural programming offer in Meaford.			
69. Review the composition of the Heritage Advisory Committee to include the Museum Services Coordinator in the capacity of a staff advisory role to the Committee.			
70. Develop and adopt a Municipal Cultural Policy for the Municipality of Meaford.			

Recommendation(s)	Implementation Timeframe		
	Short-term 2015-2016	Medium-term 2017-2021	Long-term 2022-2025
71. Develop a Municipal Register of Properties of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest for the Municipality of Meaford.			
72. Redirect a dedicated portion of municipal funding for the Community Grant Fund to establish a Cultural Grant funding stream.			
73. Develop a formal grant application and criteria-based approval process for the Cultural Grant Fund.			
74. Revise and update the Municipality of Meaford's Special Events Policy.			
75. Plan and initiate an annual/seasonal Cultural Forum with cultural groups/leaders as a means of fostering consistent dialogue and collaboration for the development of new cultural initiatives for the community.			
76. Develop a system to allow community groups to contribute seasonally to the Community Recreation Guide (see related recommendation 57).			
77. As part of the Municipality's efforts to progressively enhance the Community Recreation Guide, explore the modest restructuring of the booklet to provide a designated section for culture, complete with a list of facilities and rental information as well as seasonal roster of activities and programs hosted at these facilities.			
78. Work progressively to develop the 'cultural brand' of Meaford. This should involve effective positioning within the Meaford [Visitor] Guide as well as the exploring the potential to incorporate the brand within community wayfinding signage.			
79. Ensure a digital version of the Meaford [Visitor] Guide is provided within the visitor portal of the municipal website to allow for the maximum profile of this tool.			

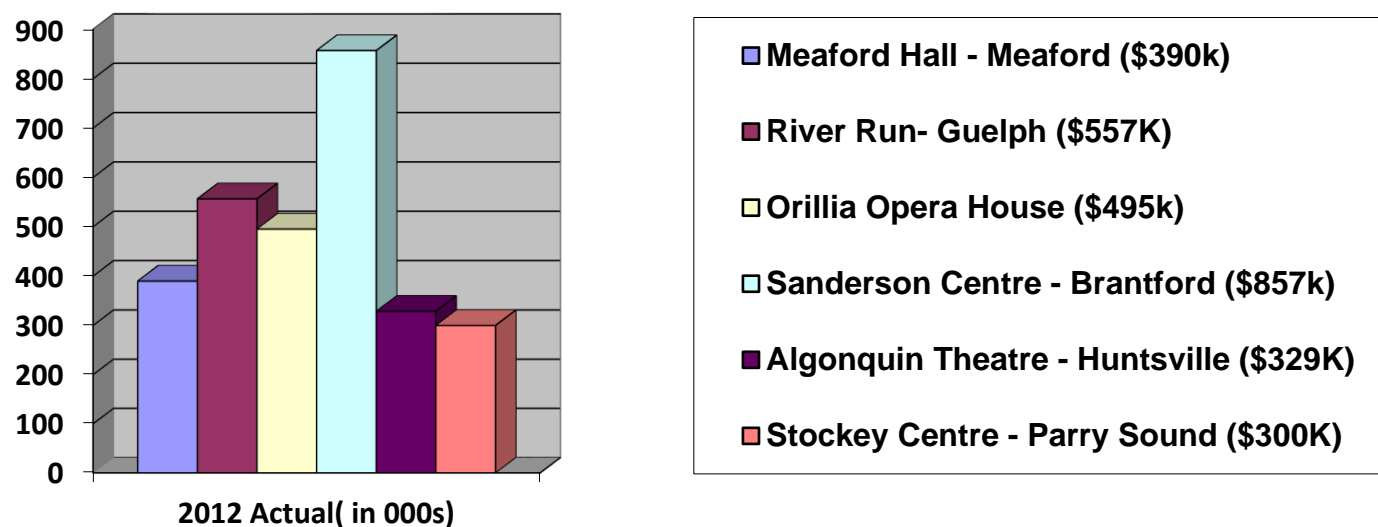
Recommendation(s)	Implementation Timeframe		
	Short-term 2015-2016	Medium-term 2017-2021	Long-term 2022-2025
80. In the short to medium-term, seek to progressively enhance the tourism portal of the Municipal website ('Set Your Sights on Meaford') to improve the showcase the thematic tourist offer of the municipality. Information and site pages should focus on tourism strengths of the municipality, including: 'The Outdoors' as well as 'Arts and Culture' and 'Culinary Escapes & Adventures' (wineries, agri-tourism etc.).			
81. Utilize existing municipal databases on local tourism assets including those identified in the Culture and Recreation asset databases developed for this project to develop a Visitor Information Map to be hosted on the Municipal tourism website ('Set Your Sights on Meaford').			
82. Continue to progressively explore partnership opportunities with community and regional groups for the development cultural programming in Meaford as an on-going requirement through the annual implementation of the Cultural Forum.			
83. Continue plans to expand local summer camps and program options for children and older youth to include dance, theatre, craft and other cultural activities.			
84. Develop year-round introductory cultural programs for youth, adults and seniors. The Municipality should seek to develop partnerships with local artists and/or groups to implement these programs specifically where skills are required for instructional teaching.			
85. Meaford Museum should continue to work with local health care providers to develop historic scrapbooking programs for Alzheimer's patients.			
86. Explore the opportunity to develop an Artist-in-Residence program at Meaford Hall in partnership with Grey County Artists. This may include short-term artist-run community programs, presentations, workshops and other special projects. The Municipality will need to consider available funding opportunities for the development of this kind of program.			

Recommendation(s)	Implementation Timeframe		
	Short-term 2015-2016	Medium-term 2017-2021	Long-term 2022-2025
87. Explore the opportunity to develop mobile library programming for the rural area			
88. Utilize the Cultural Forum to regularly engage local event organizers in discussions on planned activities and opportunities for greater collaboration and assistance for event hosting, development and marketing.			
89. Annually assess the events in Meaford based on a product life cycle approach and identify those ones which have the potential to grow to facilitate a greater regional or out-of-region draw. Progressively investigate and partner for the development and marketing of these events.			
90. Investigate and promote the use of event tracking resources and funding available from RTO7 for events in Meaford; working with event organizers to identify and implement affordable methodologies in keeping with their fiscal and operating capacity.			
91. Continue to diversify and strengthen existing major festivals and events.			
92. Over the long-term, seek to develop linked local events as a means of packaging experiences for the tourist market. This may involve coordinating and promoting local activities with seasonal sporting events/tournaments in Collingwood and the Town of the Blue Mountains.			
93. Collaboratively expand and develop public cultural education events such as Culture Days and Doors Open in Meaford. In the long-term this may evolve into the development of a regional Cultural Passport program encourages residents from other communities to participate in multiple Culture Day events hosted across Grey County.			
94. Assess the economic impact of Meaford's cultural sector as growth and investment occur over time.			

Supporting & Appendices

TABLE 1 COMPARISON OF SIMILAR CULTURAL FACILITIES

Annual Tax Subsidy of Municipal Cultural Facilities



Source: Ontario Presenting Network CCI Municipal Support Comparison 2012 (most current data available by 3rd party source)

Supporting & Appendices

TABLE 2 OPERATIONAL COMPARISON TO ROXY THEATRE, OWEN SOUND, ON:

FACILITY	Roxy Theatre, Owen Sound, ON	Meaford Hall Arts & Cultural Centre
DESCRIPTION	Former movie theatre converted to live theatre opera house venue with bar area, Green Room, set design area and mezzanine.	Community cultural centre with art galleries, meeting spaces, Terrace Room with kitchen facilities, Outdoor Terrace / patio, Bar area, opera house with balcony,
SEATING CAPACITY	400 seats	240 seats (+ 60 balcony seats)
OWNER/OPERATOR	Volunteer Board of Directors	Municipality of Meaford
MORTGAGE / LOAN	No mortgage	\$260K debenture loan
PROGRAM STAFF COMPLIMENT	3 full time staff 3 part time/seasonal staff Volunteers	2.5 full time staff 2 part time/seasonal staff
CONTRACT STAFF	1 Sound/Audio Tech.	1 Audio Tech / 1 Sound Tech
OPERATIONS STAFF COMPLIMENT	All Volunteers Volunteer Stakeholders	50% of 1 F/T Staff, Volunteer Ushers, Paid bartenders, paid cleaning staff
ANCHOR TENANT	In House Theatre Company (Owen Sound Little Theatre Co.)	None
ANNUAL BUDGET (+/-)	Projected Annual Breakeven Est. Surplus 2015: \$1,500.00	Projected Operating Deficit 2015: \$390K (excludes debenture debt) \$149K (program subsidy only)

Supporting & Appendices

TABLE 3 ANALYSIS OF CURRENT MARKET

Source: Draft Recreation and Culture Strategic Master Plan for Municipality of Meaford 2015

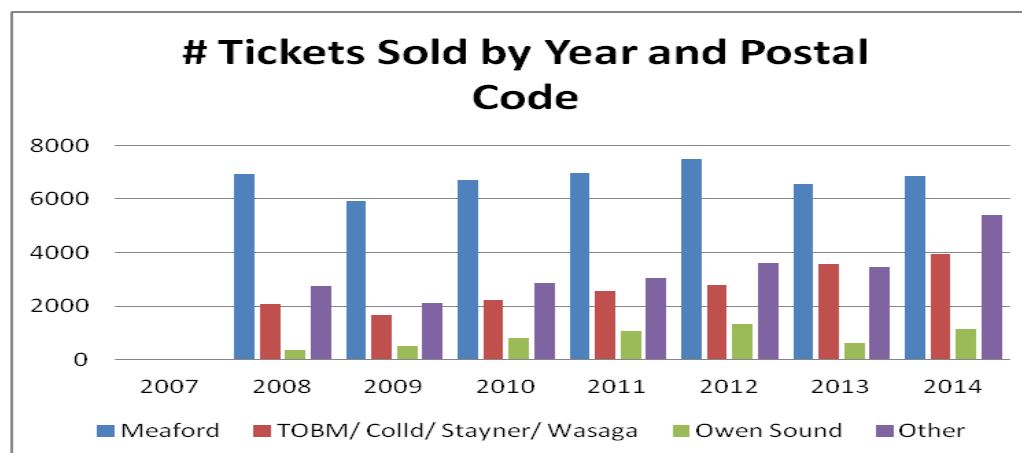
The population of Meaford is expected to grow from 11,200 to 11,800 in the next 10 years. (Compounded growth rate of .83%) and the growth rate of Grey County is expected to reach 116,300 from the current 104,500 over the next 10 years.

In addition to the full time residents of Meaford there are seasonal swells of part time residents both in summer and in winter of approximately 3,000 additional residents.

Municipality of Meaford Demographics:

- Largest population of Meaford residents are 45 to 65+ years of age. (This must be considered when developing new programming initiatives.)
- The average after-tax income for households in Meaford is \$62,600/yr (slightly higher than the average for Grey County at just \$61,000/yr).
- Single family households make up about 30% of our residents. (Average income is less than \$40,000/yr. Have less disposable income for cultural programs.)

The Marketing Strategy must address the needs of both income groups by offering a wide variety of programming and ticket price options, as well as increasing the youth based programming for culture at affordable prices.



Source: TM Record Count, Ticket Data by Patron (First Performance between Jan1-Dec31)