



The Weight of Clay, Installation Detail, 2023. Art Gallery of Burlington. Photo credit: Jimmy Limit

ART GALLERY OF BURLINGTON

*The Power of Place:
Reimagining the AGB for the Next Century*

**Future Needs Feasibility Study
Volume 1: Facility Program**

May 2025



Lord Cultural Resources is a global professional practice dedicated to making the world a better place through culture.

We assist people, communities and organizations to realize and enhance cultural meaning and expression.

We distinguish ourselves through a comprehensive and integrated full-service offering built on a foundation of key competencies: visioning, planning and implementation.

We value and believe in cultural expression as essential for all people. We conduct ourselves with respect for collaboration, local adaptation and cultural diversity, embodying the highest standards of integrity, ethics and professional practice.

We help clients clarify their goals; we provide them with the tools to achieve those goals; and we leave a legacy as a result of training and collaboration.

Our Toronto office is located within the traditional territory of many nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples. Toronto is home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples.

We encourage you to acknowledge the presence of the people who came before, wherever you are.





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Acknowledgements

The consultant team would like to acknowledge and thank the many individuals and community partners whose insights, time and ideas helped shape the contents of these findings report.

We are firstly grateful to **Emma Sankey, Executive Director** for her vision and leadership in advancing this planning initiative.

We also thank the various Art Gallery of Burlington (AGB) Task Force, Board members and Staff who participated in the various workshops and design meetings throughout the process:

- **Vickram Agarwal**, Board Director
- **Susan Busby**, Past Board Chair
- **Suzanne Carte**, Artistic Director & Curator
- **Tim Commisso**, Facility Planning & Development Taskforce Member
- **Sophia Finelli**, Administrative Assistant
- **Jessica Generalovic**, Executive Assistant & Office Manager
- **Rollin King**, Facility Operator
- **Tracy King**, Board Director
- **Dan Lawrie**, Board Vice Chair
- **Jasmine Mander**, Associate Curator
- **Olikha Mawji**, Director of Finance and Operations
- **Patricia Roy**, Facilities Planning & Development Taskforce Member
- **Darren Sanger-Smith**, Facilities Planning & Development Taskforce Member
- **Emma Sankey**, Executive Director
- **Peter Van Kessel**, Facility Planning & Development Taskforce Member
- **Stephanie Vegh**, Head of Learning
- **Natasa Veljovic**, Board Chair

Next, we want to thank the members of the Indigenous community who gave their time and shared their feelings and insights.

- **Michelle Longlade**, Burlington Resident and Education Consultant
- **Alexis Nanibush-Pamajewong**, Curator at Evergreen Brickworks
- **Stephen Paquette**, Mayor's Indigenous Sharing Circle
- **Derek Sands**, Media and Design Innovation
- **Catherine Tamaro**, Artist for 2025 AGB exhibition
- **Marvin Terry**, Local Artist
- **Matt Terry**, Director of Media Marketing

We also thank the members from Arts Burlington and the various Guilds who participated in the stakeholder information interviews:

- **Sue Cunningham**, Burlington Potters Guild
- **Paul Gerroir**, Latow Photographers Guild

- **Annette Gerard**, Latow Photographers Guild
- **Lawson Hunter**, Burlington Handweavers and Spinners Guild
- **Tim Laspa**, Burlington Fine Arts Association
- **Mary Helen Osner**, Burlington Hooking and Craft Guild
- **Andrea Perabo**, Burlington Sculptors and Carvers Guild
- **Irena Skoczny Gratton**, Burlington Fine Arts Association
- **Susan Stasiuk**, Burlington Handweavers and Spinners Guild
- **Leslie Sutherland**, Burlington Hooking and Craft Guild

Finally, the consulting team would like to thank the numerous external stakeholders and opinion leaders who shared their insights during the interview process.

- **Jamie Tellier**, Director of Community Planning, City of Burlington
- **Mark Steffler**, Corporate Strategic Lead Burlington Lands Partnership
- **Ron Steinginga**, Director, Realty Services, City of Burlington
- **Ken Pirhonen**, Manager of Facility Assets, City of Burlington
- **Kimberly Watson**, Director, Brant Museum
- **Maureen Healey**, Executive Director, Tourism Burlington + Burlington Economic Development
- **Emilie Cote**, Director of Recreation, Community and Culture, City of Burlington
- **Lucy White**, Interim Executive Director, Burlington Performing Arts Centre
- **Gord Thompson**, Sheridan College
- **Brian Dean**, Executive Director, Burlington Downtown Business Association
- **Lita Barrie**, CEO, Burlington Public Library

The consulting team consisted of the following professionals, and have all contributed to this report:

- **Sean Stanwick**, Director Facility Planning, Lord Cultural Resources
- **Natalie MacLean-Boissonneault**, Senior Consultant, Lord Cultural Resources
- **Budhaditya Mukhuty**, Research Consultant, Lord Cultural Resources
- **Dov Goldstein**, Managing Partner Lord Cultural Resources
- **Gail Lord**, Co-Founder, Advisor, Lord Cultural Resources
- **Calvin Brook**, Principal-in-Charge, Brook McIlroy Architects
- **Dani Kastelein**, Indigenous Design Studio, Brook McIlroy Architects



Glossary of Terms

Art Gallery of Burlington (AGB): The Art Gallery of Burlington, the subject institution of this study.

Arts Burlington: The committee that represents the six guilds that utilize studios at the AGB. It functions as a liaison with the AGB acting as an umbrella group for all the guilds.

Arts Guilds: Six guilds and associations who meet frequently throughout the year and utilize studio facilities at the AGB for art creation and the exchange and development of ideas and skills. Artists must be a member of the AGB to join the various Guilds.

ASHRAE: American Society for Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers.

Brook McIlroy Architects (BMA): The architectural firm retained for this study to complete the feasibility level concept design.

Class A Standard: Refers to a museum and gallery standard for environmental conditioning including the specification of acceptable humidity and temperature levels and associated fluctuations. The Class A standard is based on the ASHRAE (American Society for Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers) Applications Handbook, Chapter 21.

Design Day: The attendance that an institution might expect on an average busy day.

Design Object: The largest artifact, specimen or work of art that will be frequently moved on a regular basis and accommodated not only in galleries and storage rooms, but also in corridors, elevators, and loading areas in the collection zones – anywhere that collections may be moved, displayed, studied, or treated. It is not necessarily the largest object that will ever be moved.

Design Year: The year for which the facility program anticipates and accommodates space and facility needs.

Concept Design: Illustrates an initial big picture design direction for the project. It is not a final design but instead shows the overall design intent based on the findings to date.

Facility Program: A strategic document that quantifies the physical and spatial needs of the gallery and its collections, as well as technical performance standards for the building.

Feasibility Study: The Future Needs Feasibility Study for the AGB, including current and future needs, quality of the existing facilities, and facilities renovation and expansion requirements to support the larger institutional and programming goals.

FF&E: Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment including movable furniture, fixtures, or other equipment that have no permanent connection to the structure of a building or utilities.

Functional Area: Name of recommended space, internal and external, as listed in the space program.

Gross Building Area (GSF): Total of all space allocations in the building program or space list, multiplied by a percentage factor to allow for thickness of walls, mechanical/electrical service areas, and both horizontal and vertical circulation space. The proportion of net to gross area is typically 1.4 to 1.6 depending on design.

Growth Rate: The rate at which a collection either grows or contracts. Expressed as either a percentage relative to the total collection, or number of items added each year.

Hours: General hours of operation, public or private access. PH = Public Hours. EH = Extended Hours

Lord Cultural Resources (LCR): The gallery programming / lead consultant for this project.

Net Area (NSF): Total of all assignable areas allocated on the space list in the facility program, excluding thickness of walls, mechanical/electrical service areas, and circulation.

Operations / Business Plan: A data-driven analysis that estimates the operational and financial implications including projections of attendance, revenue, and operating expenses.

Quantity (Qty): The number of rooms required per the program performing the same function.

Occupancy (Occy): The suggested functional occupancy (# people) in each space. This is not to be equated to "capacity" which is a factor of the building code and should be confirmed by the project architect.

Peak Attendance / Peak Hour: The highest number of visitors a gallery can expect to receive within a specific timeframe, such as an hour, day, week, or month.

Room Data Sheet: A detailed, museum-focused, information sheets for each room in the space program.

RH: Relative Humidity.

Sharing Circle: A ceremony of storytelling and deep listening where participants (including Indigenous and non-Indigenous) gather in a circle and share their thoughts, feelings, and experiences with one another in an open format.

Stakeholder: An individual with knowledge in a specific area of importance or relevance to the project that is called upon to gather information and input, usually in the format of a one-on-one interview.

Zone (Gallery Zone): Categorization of a space or spaces according to its primary function and typical users.

Study Overview

The Facility Plan and Business Operational Plan reports represent the consolidated deliverable for the Future Needs Feasibility Study (Feasibility Study) for the Art Gallery of Burlington. The prime objective of this study was to explore the physical feasibility and operational implications for an expanded gallery on the existing AGB site in Burlington Ontario as well as confirming if the existing site was the most ideal location. Deliverables include an overarching opportunity and impact narrative, a comprehensive quantification of facility space needs, a proof-of-concept design with magnitude capital costing estimates, and a business operational plan including dynamic modelling for projections of attendance, revenue and expenses. A separate appendix is also included, containing Room Data Sheets - detailed, museum-focused information for each space in the program.

The report is presented in **Two Primary Volumes:**

Volume 1: Facility Program

A public document providing a comprehensive vision, outlines mission-based goals, physical space needs for a new gallery, as well as concept-level architectural plans and capital costing.

Volume 2: Business Operational Plan

An internal document providing projections of attendance, revenue, and expenses for the first five years of operation after opening a new facility on the existing gallery site.



Document Review

Review of the existing AGB facility, site and other relevant documents



Visioning Workshop

Exploration and confirmation of overarching directions and assumptions



Stakeholder Engagement

Discussions with the Guilds, Indigenous members and external Stakeholders



Comparable Institutions

Research into comparable institutions for benchmarking data



Working Sessions

Facility planning, concept design and operational assumptions

Scope of Work

The scope of work for the entire study consisted of three primary phases.

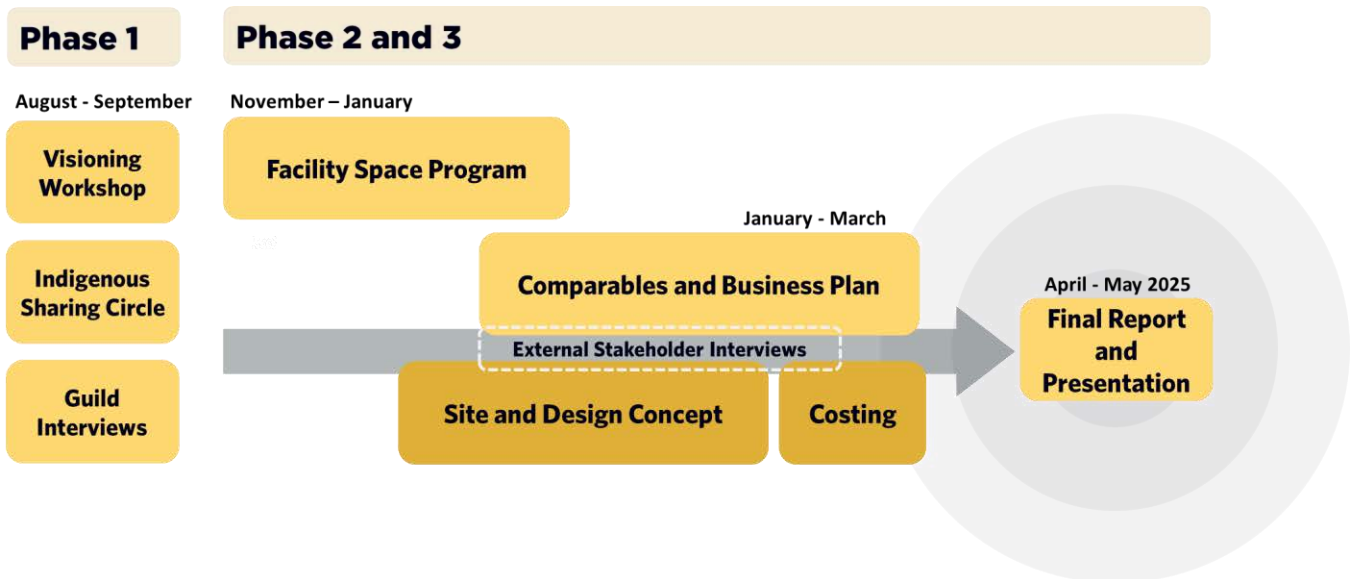
Phase 1 focused on confirming project priorities and facility assumptions. This included a site tour, group interviews with members of the six Arts Burlington Guilds, an Indigenous Sharing Circle, and a Vision Assumptions workshop with the AGB Leadership, Task Force and Staff to explore facility needs. Findings were documented in the Vision Findings Workshop Report (November 2024).

Phases 2 and 3 ran in parallel, covering functional space programming, concept design, and an operational business plan. Four programming and design sessions with the AGB Task Force explored space needs and redevelopment options, leading to a proof-of-concept design test fit.¹ A preliminary capital cost estimate was also prepared.

The business plan provides a data-driven analysis of facility size, staffing, attendance, revenue, and expenses for the first five years post-construction. It includes benchmarking data from comparable projects and select interviews. An editable financial model allows AGB staff to test different scenarios as assumptions evolve or change over time.

A broad stakeholder engagement process was integrated throughout. Fourteen individual interviews were conducted with community members, including representatives from the City of Burlington, Halton District School Board, cultural organizations, and academic institutions.²

The entire project was completed between August 2024 and May 2025.



¹ Refer to Chapter 7 Concept Design for additional information regarding the design concept.

² Refer to Chapter 4 Stakeholder Engagement for an aggregate summary of the interview findings.



Chapter 1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In August 2024, the AGB retained Lord Cultural Resources and Brook McIlroy Architects to begin a planning and programming feasibility study for an expanded AGB. Spanning approximately 9 months, the study began with project visioning, a Sharing Circle with members of the Indigenous community, and stakeholder engagement with members of the Arts Burlington Guilds and the wider Burlington community. The consulting team also completed a high-level site and facility assessment, a detailed facility program, a high-level proof-of-concept design, order of magnitude capital costing, and finally attendance, operating revenue, and expense projections for the operation of a new expanded AGB.

Project Opportunity - Towards a Bold New Future

The AGB is a leading public art gallery and creative hub on the shore of Lake Ontario. Established in 1978, it serves as both an exhibition space and a community art center, fostering artistic expression and cultural engagement. Spanning approximately 45,000 square feet, the AGB features exhibit galleries, hands-on craft and maker studios supporting artists, guilds, and public programs. Home to one of Canada’s largest contemporary ceramics collections, the gallery also offers dynamic exhibitions, workshops, and educational initiatives for all ages. In 2025, the AGB marks its 50th anniversary with a community-curated exhibition, celebrating its legacy of artistic excellence and public engagement.

The AGB’s influence extends beyond its physical space, anchored by its renowned Canadian contemporary ceramics collection and its role as a dynamic community hub for makers and artists. Evolving to meet shifting visitor expectations, address infrastructure needs, and expand its advocacy for Indigenous communities, Executive Director Emma Sankey and her team are reimagining the AGB in **a new and expanded purpose-built facility, to be a more inclusive and accessible space for social engagement and critical dialogue.**

Expanding exhibition space is a key strategic direction, allowing the AGB to showcase more of its collection and bring a greater diversity of artistic expression to the community. Additional gallery space will enhance visitor experiences, provide new platforms for artists, and reinforce the AGB’s role as a cultural destination.

An additional key priority is **reconsidering its relationship with the Guilds**, while continuing the gallery’s unique focus on craft and hands-on making. Situated on the Clay Belt, the AGB is uniquely positioned to connect visitors to material-based traditions and intergenerational creativity.

The following redevelopment goals have helped shape the planning process:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>1. Enable the AGB to expand its role as a leading art institution that exhibits and collects significant works while fostering craft education, community representation, and civic engagement.</p> | <p>2. Reframe and strengthen relationships across the Burlington community, including arts and culture organizations, the Halton Indigenous community, and others - now and into the future.</p> | <p>3. Be a catalyst for research, innovation and collaboration, by creating an ecosystem where artists, makers, educators and entrepreneurs can converge to exchange ideas and insights</p> |
|---|---|--|

Stakeholder Engagement

The planning process has been highly collaborative and included input from the Indigenous community, current Arts Burlington Guild members, City of Burlington representatives, and various external opinion Leaders.

Indigenous Community Members participated in a Sharing Circle at the AGB, engaging in storytelling and deep listening to shape the gallery's future. They highlighted the cultural significance of clay and the spiral as a key motif, symbolizing creation and the passage of time.

- ✓ *Participants envisioned a facility that harmonizes with nature, incorporating elevated structures, views of the landscape, and incorporating culturally significant materials like copper.*
- ✓ *They also sought a more transparent design to break down perceived barriers, fostering a stronger connection between indoor and outdoor spaces; elements seen as essential to the AGB's evolution.*

External Stakeholders (including civic and cultural) with knowledge of the AGB and its broader context emphasized the following:

- ✓ *A flexible, multi-use design will accommodate evolving programs, ensuring accessibility and long-term operational efficiency.*
- ✓ *Strengthening cultural engagement, education, and financial sustainability will enhance the AGB's role in the larger Burlington community.*
- ✓ *Redevelopment will support larger City initiatives for increased density in the area while also maintaining the AGB's cultural significance.*

Finally, current **Arts Burlington Guild Members** participated in interviews to share insights on current challenges and future opportunities. Over two days, 10 participants joined virtual sessions to discuss their perspectives including the following insights:

- ✓ *Participants welcomed the opportunity to deepen collaboration with the AGB, other Guilds, and external community partners.*
- ✓ *Many emphasized the Guilds' historical significance and their ongoing role as a vital community resource.*
- ✓ *Post-pandemic shifts have brought younger members and increased remote participation.*
- ✓ *While the site is valued for its convenience, concerns remain about visibility, transparency, and the need for more exhibit and studio space.*

A Path Forward - Facility Redevelopment

The AGB is blessed with an incredibly beautiful site overlooking Lake Ontario. However, the current building has outlived its usefulness, is facing several infrastructure and maintenance liabilities, and is limiting the AGB’s ability to evolve into a 21st century cultural institution. Because of this, **the facility redevelopment plan recommends a new building (to replace the aging infrastructure), located on the existing AGB site.** In doing so, this new building embraces the power of place, engaging the outdoor spaces and ecologies of the landscape. It contextualizes the Gallery’s role as a steward, not only for the collection but for the rich histories that are the backdrop of life in Burlington.

This summary outlines the key components of the facility redevelopment strategy.

- ✓ **Same Site Redevelopment:** The plan assumes the redevelopment will occur on the existing AGB site, leveraging its location and accessibility.
- ✓ **New Purpose-Built Gallery Building:** Given the conditions of the existing building and site factors (notably the existing sewer trunk line), renovation is not recommended. A new building is required.
- ✓ **Proposed Building Size:** The plan proposes a new facility of approximately 77,000 sq. ft. (an increase of about 30,000 sq. ft.) significantly increasing the capacity for more programs, exhibits and events, while also providing much needed additional collection storage and processing capacity.
- ✓ **Single-Phase Construction:** The development will proceed in a single construction phase to streamline the process and minimize disruption.
- ✓ **Expanded Public Amenities:** Significant increases in public amenities, education programming and exhibit spaces will support the gallery’s future vision in key operational areas.
- ✓ **Preserving Craft Maker Studios:** The new facility increases the capacity and functionality of the craft studios, by increasing the total amount of studio space and offering even wider community access.

The following summary table compares the existing AGB with the proposed new facility program.

Zone	Functional Area	Existing Area (NSF)	Proposed Area (NSF)	Distribution (%)	Variance (From Existing)
A	Public Amenities, Program, and Craft Studios	24,965	33,900	59%	8,935
B	Gallery and Exhibits	4,515	10,500	18%	5,985
C	Collection Support	1,875	6,100	11%	4,225
D	Building Support	4,355	6,590	12%	2,235
Total Estimated Net Area		35,710	57,090		21,380
Estimated Gross Area (35% x NSF)		12,499	19,982		
Estimated Total Facility Area		48,209	77,072		



Roya Del Sol. We Who Have Known Many Shores. Art Gallery of Burlington. Photo Credit: Jimmy Limit



Chapter 2

IMPACT AND OPPORTUNITY

2. IMPACT AND OPPORTUNITY

This chapter outlines the unique opportunity ahead for the AGB as it charts a path forward. It highlights the institution's cultural value and the potential for this project to benefit both visitors and the broader Burlington community. The chapter begins with a summary of the AGB and its impact, followed by an overview of the broader project goals. It concludes with a short summary of the facility redevelopment plan and site, along with the rationale supporting this approach.

2.1 The Art Gallery of Burlington

The Art Gallery of Burlington (AGB) is a leading public art gallery and creative hub located on the shore of Lake Ontario in Burlington, Ontario. Established in 1975, the AGB serves as both an exhibition space and a community art center, fostering artistic expression and cultural engagement. The gallery sits on the traditional territory of Indigenous Nations, including the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and Métis peoples, and acknowledges its role in supporting diverse artistic voices.

With a facility spanning approximately 45,000 square feet, the AGB features multiple gallery spaces, eight studio areas, an exhibition courtyard, and a conservatory. Its dynamic programming includes exhibitions, workshops, and educational initiatives that cater to all ages. From hands-on art classes to specialized programs for schools and families, the gallery nurtures creativity and artistic development within the community.

The AGB houses one of the largest collections of contemporary Canadian ceramics, with over 4,000 pieces highlighting the innovation and craftsmanship of ceramic artists across the country. Finally, the AGB also provides production space to the Arts Burlington artist Guilds, each dedicated to a distinct artistic practice, including photography, weaving and spinning, rug hooking, pottery, sculpture, painting and digital arts. These guilds provide opportunities for artists to collaborate, refine their skills, and showcase their work.





Source: Art Gallery of Burlington

In 2025, the AGB celebrates its 50th anniversary with a special community-curated exhibition. Visitors and art enthusiasts will have the opportunity to vote on their favorite works from the gallery's collection, culminating in a showcase of the top selections. This milestone event underscores the gallery's longstanding commitment to artistic excellence and public engagement. As a cornerstone of Burlington's cultural landscape, the AGB continues to inspire creativity, foster learning, and bring people together through the power of art.

2.2 AGB Impact

Much of the impact that the AGB is achieving as a visitor-oriented, and regional destination can be attributed to its active exhibitions and community programming, as articulated in the most recent 2023 figures.³ A simple comparison with the previous year shows a 40% increase in attendance, 35 partner-based collaborations, and over 1,100 student visits, representing growth of over 130%.

The gallery is also deeply **committed to community wellness**, demonstrated through its ongoing therapeutic, hands-on programs like the Reclaiming Clay workshops in partnership with Joseph Brant Hospital's Mental Health programs. By extending this free initiative to hospital workers, the gallery reinforces its dedication to supporting the local health community in times of need. Art here serves as a powerful vehicle for healing, offering a space for reflection, restoration, and collective well-being.

Recognizing the strong link between nature and healing, the gallery places significant emphasis on integrating green spaces and natural elements into its design. Research has shown that access to indoor gardens, courtyards, and immersive natural features positively impacts mental, spiritual, and physical health. While the existing gallery already benefits from some of these qualities, expanding these elements would deepen its role as a sanctuary where art and nature combine to support healing.

This approach aligns with the concept of *biophilia*, introduced by E.O. Wilson⁴, which suggests that humans have an innate need to connect with nature and other life forms. Rooted in our evolutionary history, this connection fosters emotional fulfillment and overall well-being. By embracing biophilic design principles alongside its artistic mission, the AGB can further enhance its contribution to its community's health and resilience.

³ AGB 2023-2025 Strategic Plan: *Intersections*

⁴ Wilson, E.O., *Biophilia*, Harvard University Press, 1984

As shown in the following infographic, the demand for meaningful exhibits and community- and youth-related programs is growing within the community, and the AGB is proactively responding in a highly impactful way to meet those needs.

2023 at a Glance

With a commitment to be a space of inspiration to many people, we did a lot and represented numerous people through our activities. Welcoming people into our virtual and physical spaces and programs and exposing the creativity of the artists and educators we partner with is critical to our mandate. Thank you to all the people we call community including artists, staff, donors, cultural partners, volunteers, and most importantly you.

28,000+
visitors



750+
AGB
members

1,328 hours spent appreciating art in our galleries



308 artists

1136 students
toured exhibitions

57 programs

591 kids took part
in March Break and
Summer Camps

7 virtual/digital programs

35 organizations
collaborated
with the AGB



3 buses shuttled art
lovers around the
region on gallery tours



5 new artworks acquired for our permanent collection

20

Community
Art Projects

8

Exhibitions

2

Artists-In-
Residence

2

Curatorial-
Residency
Programs

2

Artist
Material
Fund events

2.3 Towards a Bold New Future

The AGB has an influence far beyond its physical footprint. Its impact stems in part from its extraordinary permanent collection of Canadian contemporary ceramics, now in its 42nd year of collecting. Just as importantly, it has built a strong reputation as a unique community hub for makers and artists across the region, fostering both professional and amateur arts practice through its studios, workshops, classes and exhibition programs. The gallery provides a vital space for creative expression and skill development, supporting artists at all stages of their careers. It is also a space for thought-provoking exhibitions led by a seasoned curatorial team. Additionally, the AGB is emerging as a committed advocate for Indigenous communities through its ongoing efforts to address systemic barriers to equality.

Like many galleries, the AGB faces challenges on multiple fronts: shifting visitor expectations, competition, aging infrastructure, and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. In response, Executive Director Emma Sankey and her team are actively reshaping the AGB as a more inclusive and accessible space for social engagement and critical dialogue. By reimagining its current facility and planning for growth, the gallery is positioning itself at the forefront of progressive change - a place where artists, educators, and patrons can come together to exchange ideas about life, social justice, and climate action.

One opportunity unique to the AGB is its evolving relationship with the six Arts Guilds, particularly around space and programming. The craft dimension remains a powerful asset, offering a unique opportunity where the act of making is celebrated. In a world increasingly dominated by technology, the need for people to work with their hands - creating, shaping, and bringing ideas to life - remains as essential as ever. This hands-on experience bridges generations, allowing for an intergenerational exchange of knowledge and creativity. Specifically, **the influence of and relationship to the land is a vital component in defining the AGB's past and future**, as seen in the primary materials of its collection - clay, pottery, and more - and its maker-based programs. Situated on the Clay Belt, Burlington offers a rare opportunity to engage with the rich tradition of craftsmanship, connecting visitors to a tangible, grounded practice that not many institutions can provide.



Studio Program: "Wheel Throwing for Beginners"
Source: Art Gallery of Burlington

This opportunity, originally identified in the *2023–2025 Strategic Plan: Intersections*, focuses on developing forward-looking facility strategies and a clear roadmap for renewal. By enhancing its physical space and presence, the AGB aims to strengthen its role within the community and open new avenues for financial and political support that will ensure long-term sustainability.

The AGB redevelopment project has been titled: ***The Power of Place: Reimagining the AGB for the Next Century***. In doing so, it outlines a transformative redevelopment.

- ✓ **"The Power of Place"** speaks to the deep connection to where the AGB lives, who it serves, and the stories that form its experience. It reflects their role as a cultural and civic anchor in Burlington.

- ✓ **“Reimagining the AGB”** demonstrates how they are looking ahead with creativity and openness, ready to evolve, grow, and meet the needs of a changing community.
- ✓ **“For the Next Century”** recognizes this isn’t about a quick fix. It’s a bold, long-term investment in culture, connection, and community designed to carry the AGB into the future.

Soft Power Influence

Central to this evolution is a renewed understanding of the gallery’s place within the city’s arts landscape and its connection to a broader cultural ecosystem. Embracing this perspective will help articulate the gallery’s distinct identity and deepen its relevance within the community. The AGB is strongly positioned to reach out and connect even more deeply with its surrounding ecosystems - locally and across disciplines - and to take full advantage of its soft power potential.

As defined by Gail Lord⁵, *soft power* is the ability of museums to influence and inspire through culture, storytelling, and values rather than force or authority. This influence is especially powerful in spaces like the AGB, where ceramics and craft connect people to the earth and to each other - through head, heart, and hands. These forms offer more than artistic expression; they represent a perfect ecosystem that supports emotional well-being, fosters intergenerational learning, and builds cultural continuity.

An expansion of the AGB would amplify its capacity to serve as a true cultural common - a place where diverse community members come together to share experiences, learn, and create. This vision aligns with Lord’s view of museums as active participants in building livable communities through soft power. More than a place to display meaningful objects, the AGB is positioned to contribute meaningfully to the well-being of its community, building trust and strengthening social bonds. Enhanced facilities would allow the gallery to scale its impact, deepening its role as a catalyst for connection, creativity, and cultural resilience.

A Natural Evolution

This direction is not actually a departure, but a natural evolution of the AGB’s existing mission and vision. The gallery’s longstanding commitment to artistic excellence, community engagement, and inclusivity already provides a strong foundation for its future direction.

⁵ Dexter Lord, G., Blankenberg, N., *Cities, Museums and Soft Power*, The AAM Press, 2015

Mission

To deliver thought-provoking exhibitions, learning opportunities and public programs that spark meaningful connections for people to learn, see, think and make; and to activate our collection of contemporary Canadian ceramics and explore the intersection of craft and contemporary art

Vision

To be known and respected as a place of intersection where creators, cultures and communities meet and share in the wealth of human creativity.

This progressive vision is grounded in four overarching value statements⁶. Together, the AGB and Consultant Team embraced the challenge of reimagining the gallery’s future, translating its ambitions into four powerful values that inspire and guide the path ahead. These values are dynamic and forward-thinking, offering a unifying framework to shape programming, interpretation, and the thoughtful use of space.



These value statements are essential for aligning the AGB’s physical space with its evolving identity, aspirations, and growing community role. They provide clarity and cohesion, ensuring that every decision - from programming to design - supports a shared vision for the future. Together, they offer a strategic foundation for meaningful change and long-term impact.

⁶ Discussed and confirmed as part of the Phase 1 Vision Workshop, November 2024.

2.4 A Path Forward

Museums and galleries worldwide are reassessing their relevance to their community. The AGB is also in a period of strategic renewal, seeking to showcase more of its extensive pottery collection while expanding its reach to broader, more diverse audiences. This includes evolving its relationships with cultural organizations and the Guilds. By addressing the evolving needs of patrons, partners, members, and the broader community in areas such as arts programming, education, and collections, the gallery is committing to creating a facility that will inspire future generations of artists and art lovers, while serving as a beacon for Burlington's growing cultural landscape.

Explored during the visioning process, a set of broader redevelopment goals were derived:

- 
Goal 1 Enable the AGB to expand its role as a leading art institution that exhibits and collects significant works while fostering craft education, community representation, and civic engagement.
- 
Goal 2 Reframe and strengthen relationships across the Burlington community, including arts and culture organizations, the Halton Indigenous community, and others — now and into the future.
- 
Goal 3 Be a catalyst for research, innovation and collaboration, by creating an ecosystem where artists, makers, educators and entrepreneurs can converge to exchange ideas and insights.

To achieve these goals, the facility redevelopment strategy must be equally forward-thinking and responsive to the evolving needs of the AGB and the broader community. The gallery's vision calls for a space that not only supports the institution's mission but also fosters innovation, engagement, and collaboration across all sectors. The following facility strategy outlines the key components required to bring this vision to life, ensuring the AGB is positioned for future growth and continued impact.

The AGB is blessed with an incredibly beautiful site overlooking Lake Ontario. However, the current building has outlived its usefulness and is limiting the AGB's ability to evolve into a 21st-century cultural institution. Because of this, **the facility redevelopment plan assumes an entirely new building to replace the aging infrastructure, constructed on the existing AGB site.** In doing so, this new building embraces the power of place, engaging the outdoor spaces and ecologies of the landscape. It contextualizes the Gallery's role as a steward, not only for the collection but for the rich histories that are the backdrop of life in Burlington.

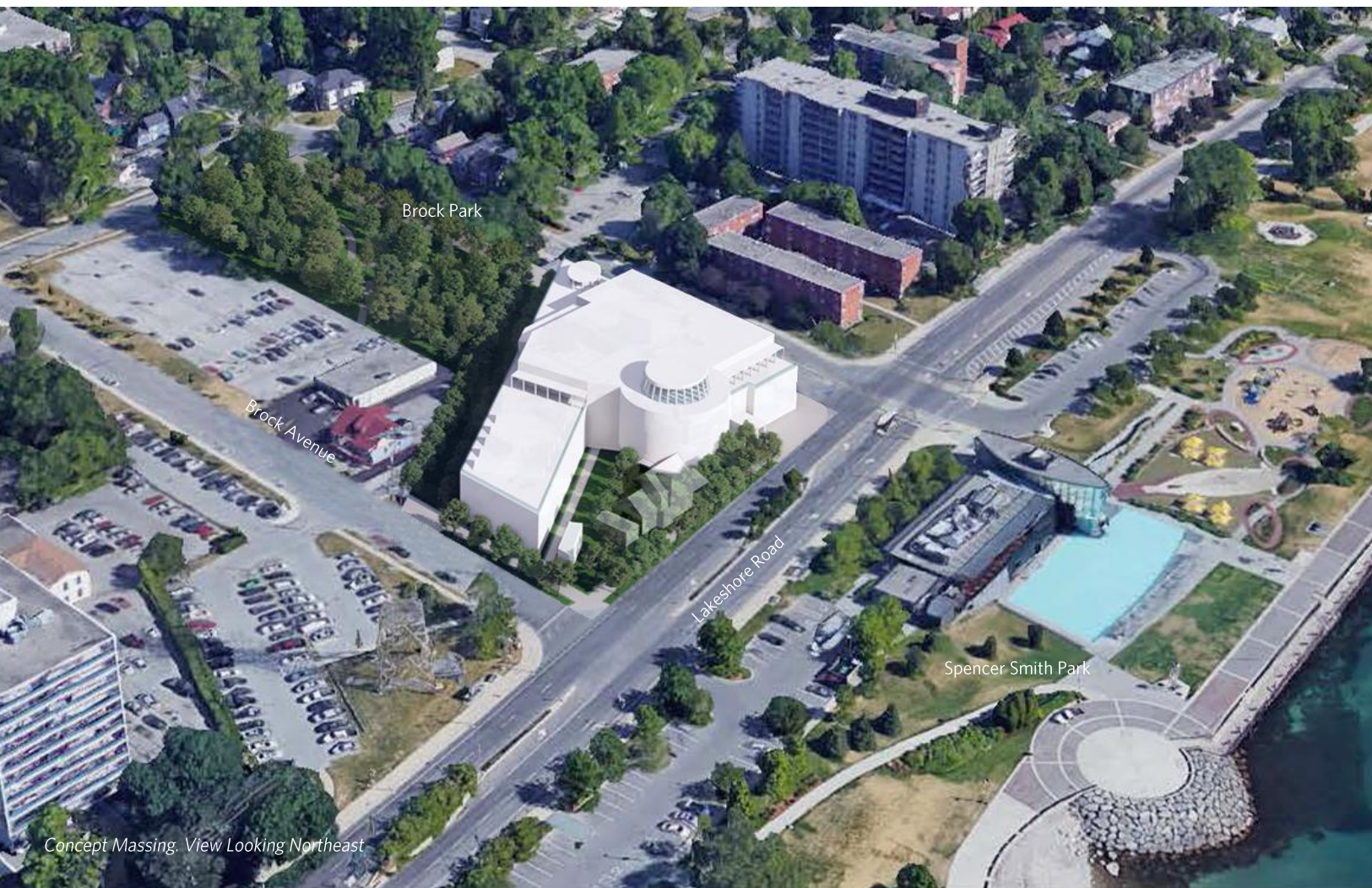
This summary outlines the key components of the facility redevelopment strategy.

- ✓ **Same Site Redevelopment:** The plan assumes the redevelopment will occur on the existing AGB site, leveraging its location and accessibility.
- ✓ **New Purpose-Built Gallery Building:** Given the conditions of the existing building and site factors (notably the existing sewer trunk line), renovation is not recommended. A new building is required.

- ✓ **Proposed Building Size:** The plan proposes a new facility of approximately 77,000 sq. ft. (an increase of about 30,000 sq. ft.) significantly increasing the capacity for more programs, exhibits and events, while also providing much needed additional collection storage and processing capacity.
- ✓ **Single-Phase Construction:** The development will proceed in a single construction phase to streamline the process and minimize disruption.
- ✓ **Expanded Public Amenities:** Significant increases in public amenities, education programming and exhibit spaces will support the gallery's future vision in key operational areas.
- ✓ **Preserving Craft Maker Studios:** The new facility increases the capacity and functionality of the craft studios, by increasing the total amount of studio space and offering even wider community access.
- ✓ **Future Property Purchase:** The future planning for the gallery does not depend on or assume acquiring any adjacent properties.

Based on the space needs program, BMA has developed the following 'proof-of-concept' design that illustrates the potential of the site to accommodate the new program and to provide exciting new relationships to both Spencer Smith Park and the waterfront as well as Brock Park.

Additional details on the redevelopment strategy can be found in *Chapter 6 Facility Space Program* and *Chapter 7 Concept Design* of this report.





Patrons and Visitors. Art Gallery of Burlington. Photo Credit: Jimmy Limit

2.5 A Case for Change

The vision, goals and strategies for implementation together constitute a strong concept encompassing the WHAT, the HOW and the WHO of the project. A rationale for **WHY** must also be included, as it has a significant implication on facility and site planning decisions going forward. The following six key justifications, presented as questions, outline why the proposed redevelopment plan is the best course of action to achieve the AGB's vision. Each justification serves as a cornerstone for the strategy, providing a solid foundation for the redevelopment plan and ensuring the AGB is well-positioned for future growth and impact. They are:

1. Why This Site?
2. Why a New Building?
3. Why This Size?
4. Why Rethink the Guild Relationship?
5. Why This Makes Economic Sense?

Why This Site?

The waterfront site is uniquely suited to support the AGB's long-term vision. With its prime location overlooking Lake Ontario, the site offers extraordinary natural beauty, panoramic views, and a powerful setting to reflect the gallery's role as both a cultural anchor and a community gathering space. Its proximity to Spencer Smith Park, the Joseph Brant Museum, the Burlington Performing Arts Centre, and downtown Burlington enhances overall cultural connectivity and places the gallery at the heart of a growing civic and tourism corridor.

Easily accessible from the Queen Elizabeth Way, the site serves both residents and out-of-town visitors, while ample parking for an expanded gallery and surrounding green space offer practical benefits and long-term development potential. The location also aligns with the *City of Burlington's 2025 Destination Stewardship Plan* and the *City of Burlington From Vision to Focus* strategy to create all-inclusive, vibrant, healthy, connected, and safe communities including downtown intensification, tourism, and sustainable urban growth.

Also, stakeholders interviewed almost unanimously agreed on the site's benefits and felt redevelopment would enrich the visitor experience and reinforce the gallery's central role in the cultural fabric of Burlington.

And, although a municipal trunk sewer line runs beneath a portion of the property, preliminary analysis indicates that redevelopment remains completely viable without the need to encroach on any existing municipal easements or rights-of-way.

TOP REASONS THIS SITE IS IDEAL:

- ✓ Ample land available for redevelopment
- ✓ Strong consensus among stakeholders in favour of this location
- ✓ Aligns with the City's goals for urban growth and redevelopment

Why a New Building?

This study recommends demolishing the existing gallery building and replacing it with a new purpose built structure. While the existing building offers valuable features, including a courtyard, conservatory, and the craft studios, it increasingly fails to meet the gallery's long-term needs. Additionally, aging HVAC systems present ongoing challenges for maintaining the proper environment for collections and exhibits. The layout also presents wayfinding challenges, making navigation difficult for visitors. Renovating the building is further complicated by the location of an underground sewer pipe, which the Halton Region reserves the right to access, potentially requiring invasive demolition for repairs. This uncertainty makes it hard to justify investing in a renovation that may be undermined by unforeseen infrastructure issues.

Originally built in 1978 for community art groups, the building has undergone expansions but still doesn't meet modern gallery standards, particularly for collection storage and handling. Additionally, its design doesn't fully leverage the site's waterfront views or provide a compelling incentive for visitors to access.

A new building would also make better use of the site, offering more efficient space, meeting modern gallery and operational standards, and providing a more cost-effective and reliable solution than renovation, which often comes with hidden challenges. It also creates an opportunity to enhance the surrounding green space and align the project with the broader waterfront redevelopment plan. Burlington is part of the cultural corridor between Niagara and Toronto, and a new contemporary building will help position the gallery as a must-see destination along that route. It will attract visitors seeking meaningful cultural experiences as part of a broader regional journey.

Finally, a new building presents a cost-effective opportunity to integrate sustainable technologies from the outset, such as geothermal heating, solar energy, and high-efficiency systems thereby reducing long-term operating costs. By targeting net-zero performance, the facility can minimize environmental impact while delivering ongoing economic benefits through energy savings and potential incentive programs.

TOP REASONS A NEW BUILDING IS BETTER:

- ✓ The current building requires costly upgrades and cannot easily meet modern gallery standards for collection care
- ✓ Renovation is risky due to the uncertainty around the underground trunk sewer pipe
- ✓ A new building would better utilize the site and enhance operational efficiencies overall

“Purpose-built for the future:
A new building will ensure long-term sustainability and
**better meet the evolving needs of the Burlington
community”**

Why This Size?

The proposed facility size reflects a future-facing response to both community needs and curatorial vision. The existing 48,000 sq. ft. building houses exhibition and studio spaces, however current limitations restrict the AGB’s ability to display its growing collection, properly store artworks, and host more diverse and inclusive programming. The proposed new facility, at approximately 77,000 sq. ft., represents a strategic 29,000 sq. ft. increase - one rooted in extensive consultation with AGB staff, artists, and stakeholders.

Existing	→	Proposed	=	Growth
48,000 gross sq. ft.	→	77,000 gross sq. ft.	=	29,000 gross sq. ft.

This expanded footprint will provide larger and more flexible exhibit galleries but also include vital spaces for community gatherings, conversations, and shared learning. AGB’s evolving curatorial direction sees the gallery as a **vessel for ancestral memory** embracing both its Indigenous roots and a forward-looking vision that makes room for diverse voices and critical cultural discourse.

A larger, more adaptable building will also allow AGB to maintain its craft roots but also shift more confidently into a presenting organization model - offering dynamic exhibitions and demand-driven programs in flexible, social spaces designed to welcome a wider range of users. Taking this kind of approach means big changes in how the gallery makes decisions about its priorities and how it operates. Most important to this transition is the way the AGB sees itself - not just as a standalone institution, but as part of a broader cultural ecosystem. This includes recognizing its role in fostering civic dialogue within an increasing population, supporting the local creative economy, and contributing to a network of cultural assets that together promote a shared understanding of Burlington’s unique sense of place. A larger facility strengthens the AGB’s ability to meet the growing demands of the Burlington community - working in tandem with other organizations to build cultural resilience and long-term community impact.

Thus, to remain resilient and relevant in the post-pandemic cultural landscape, the AGB requires a building that supports both its maker-based history and its growing civic role. The new facility is not simply about having more space - it’s about unlocking greater impact.

TOP REASONS FOR A LARGER FACILITY:

- ✓ More exhibit space is required to display the collection and attract major exhibitions
- ✓ A larger, more adaptable building will allow the AGB to transition more confidently into a presenting organization model
- ✓ Ensures long-term sustainability through improved programming capacity, revenue generation, and resilient, adaptable design

“It’s not just about more space—it’s about **unlocking greater impact**”

Why Rethink the Guild Relationship?

The Guilds have played a foundational role in shaping the AGB's creative community, and their continued presence remains essential to the gallery's identity. As the organization looks to the future, the current model of dedicated spaces for each Guild no longer supports the goals of openness, flexibility, and increased access. In response, the AGB is shifting toward a more adaptable studio environment that invites greater participation from a broader range of artists, community members, and partner organizations.

The new model replaces fixed studios with flexible, shared spaces that foster collaboration and respond to evolving community needs. Guilds can continue to host gatherings in adaptable formats, supported by a studio membership structure. Founding Guild members will be honoured through legacy recognition and preferred membership rates, celebrating their contributions while welcoming new generations of makers. This renewed approach ensures the Guilds remain a vital part of the AGB, while opening space for new voices and creative energy to thrive.

TOP REASONS TO RETHINK THE RELATIONSHIP

- ✓ Honours the Guilds' legacy while opening doors to new generations of makers.
- ✓ Creates inclusive, flexible studio spaces that support a wider range of artists and community users, while sustaining the Guilds' creative presence.
- ✓ Encourages greater collaboration, creativity, and shared learning across disciplines.
- ✓ Aligns with AGB's vision for openness, accessibility, and community-centered growth.



Why This Makes Economic Sense?

A new, purpose-built facility represents a smart long-term investment that will enhance the AGB's operational sustainability and financial resilience. A modern building allows for energy-efficient systems, the use of renewable or recycled materials, and better control over climate-sensitive areas - all of which help reduce the gallery's environmental footprint and lower utility costs. Careful space planning will support more streamlined staffing, improved workflows, and a more flexible facility that can adapt to changing needs over time.

Economically, the expanded exhibit galleries and new studios will boost attendance, allow for a new admission structure thus increasing admission revenue, and support a wider range of programming. Purpose-built event spaces will enhance rental appeal, further diversifying revenue streams. A renewed café and continued retail store operations will also contribute to sustainability through extended hours, rental opportunities, and increased visitor spending. Also, increased education and outreach programs focusing on families and youth will bolster the overall revenue potential. Together, these enhancements will strengthen the AGB's financial resilience, with earned revenue projected to increase from 37% to 50% of total revenue.

The growth of the gallery is vital to Burlington's economic development and tourism strategy. A modern, well-equipped facility will strengthen the city's position as a cultural destination, attracting visitors, supporting local businesses, and enhancing quality of life. As Burlington works to attract new employers, an improved AGB will offer a compelling amenity that helps attract talent to the city. A thoughtfully designed building not only advances the gallery's mission but also ensures its long-term sustainability as a key driver of economic and cultural vitality.

TOP ECONOMIC REASONS:

- ✓ More economical operating costs via energy-efficient systems and better space planning
- ✓ New spaces for events and programming lead to increased earned revenue
- ✓ Increased exhibit and studio capacity will boost attendance and participation

“A purpose-built facility will reduce costs, diversify revenue, and **strengthen long-term sustainability**”



Art Gallery of Burlington General Site and Context Information.



Chapter 3

VISION WORKSHOP INSIGHTS

3. VISION WORKSHOP INSIGHTS

To help the AGB make timely, informed decisions, it was necessary to build consensus regarding shared needs, priorities and expectations. To launch the facility study process, LCR and BMA facilitated an in-person, four hour “common ground” assumptions workshop at the AGB. During the workshop, members from the AGB Leadership, Staff and Board, came together to discuss the key needs, operational priorities and initial directions for future facility planning. This chapter summarizes the findings.

3.1 Workshop Framework

As the first step in the planning process, the intent of the workshop was to explore a range of subjects to establish an overarching direction for future facility planning. Wider discussion points included the following:



Session Format

Using a visual format of graphic slides with images and discussion prompts, participants first engaged in an open discussion addressing a range of visitor experience trends and techniques, with a focus on exploring how other institutions have embraced change. Following this, the group participated in a series of facilitated discussions addressing key foundational topics including priorities for the site and facility, relationship with the Guilds, wider community and cultural needs including the Indigenous community, and audience.

The aggregated findings are summarized below.

3.2 Workshop Insights

The group was presented with a range of discussion topics in the workshop, (visitor experience trends, facility priorities, audience, community needs etc.) and as expected, the conversation was quite fluid across these different subjects. The consultant team has aggregated and distilled the most salient points from these discussions and has summarized them below.



A strong sense of “place” and a connection to the waterfront are key elements in defining the AGB’s identity within the community.

The collection and activities at AGB (particularly those centered around pottery and clay) reflect its deeply rooted relationship with the land and forms a vital part of its overall ethos. A reimagined AGB can be the physical and spiritual bridge, linking visitors with the land, each other, and all that surrounds it. It will embrace art that engages our full body, spirit, and emotional selves, leaving visitors with a deeper appreciation of their place within the world. The gallery’s location on the waterfront also plays a crucial role in its appeal. It will embrace the sites’ power of place and allow visitors to pause, rest, relax and recharge. Built in harmony with the environment, the reimagined AGB can also be a catalyst for deeper conversations about environmental sustainability and responsible resource management.



By exploring ways to meet larger community needs through new and innovative spaces and collaborations, the AGB can extend its reach to include researchers, entrepreneurs, and local businesses.

Participants explored several innovative programming and partnership ideas to give the gallery a stronger community focus, beyond its maker roots. Food, and by extension opportunities for socialization, were noted as important elements in a reimagined gallery experience. Spaces that encourage visitors to stay longer (such as a café, an art lounge), and a stronger relationship with the Lake Ontario waterfront, will help the gallery play a larger role as a local (and even tourist) destination. Casting an even wider net, artist in residence studios, co-working spaces occupied by local businesses, or even a corporate partnership to include housing on the site, were all considered as means to help fill perceived gaps in the wider marketplace.

A reimagined AGB can be the **physical and spiritual bridge**, linking visitors with the land, each-other, and all that surrounds it

A permeable site will encourage public engagement and **stimulate social encounters**



Increasing transparency and permeability within the site and building will help to remove physical and perceived barriers to access.

Attracting and drawing visitors to the site is key to long-term sustainability. Enhancing the user experience through visual connections to “the act of making”, ease of movement, and integration with the surroundings will boost engagement. The current building is seen as uninviting, so features like studio views, immersive art experiences, and access to natural light will spark interest and curiosity. Stronger links to the lake and waterfront, via a rooftop terrace or an art-filled front court, can extend the experience. Additionally, changing the street’s perception as a barrier with decorative paving or signage will encourage exploration, social encounters, and community engagement.



AGB’s long term vision is to expand its audience profile by increasing major exhibitions and offering a wider range of relevant programing content that appeals to families and younger visitors.

To grow its audience, the AGB must broaden its appeal to a younger, more diverse demographic, including families, youth, and underserved populations. According to the 2021 Statistics Canada census, 32% of Burlington households have couples with children, and 9% are single-parent households. This is significant, as families and younger visitors likely seek cultural, family-based activities. At the same time, attracting children doesn’t mean negatively impacting adults who wish to access the studio spaces. Both can simultaneously coexist and benefit each other. To promote intergenerational learning opportunities and stimulate connections with new audiences, equal access to education, studios and exhibit spaces could be considered as part of the programing and planning effort.



The maker studios are a unique asset in the region, and in high demand, but long-term institutional sustainability will depend heavily on making them more accessible to more people more of the time.

Part of the long-term institutional vision is to maintain and increase public and community access to the maker and craft studios. The studios are an important community programming resource, and potentially a source for exhibit content, however, making them more accessible to more people was noted as the key to long-term sustainability. And by physically and metaphorically dissolving the real and perceived boundaries to access all its spaces, the gallery can strengthen its role as a space for creative collaboration.

Co-location between exhibits and other activities, such as Indigenous contemplative spaces or maker studios will bring **diversity and variety**



The relationship with the Guilds is an important consideration that will influence various aspects of the AGB's facility planning efforts.

The Guilds view the AGB, particularly the studios, as a key part of their creative space. Workshop participants also emphasized the importance of offering equitable access to the studio spaces for all users. This varying perspective on space "ownership" and "access" will influence the planning process, as the AGB works to balance the Guilds' needs with those of the broader community. Key considerations for facility planning include the optimal location of the studios, their integration with other spaces like exhibit or program rooms while also ensuring open access to these areas during off-hours.



Increased space for exhibits was noted as a priority, including more space for the permanent collection and community-created works.

The AGB is keen to display more of its own permanent collection, as well as content created in collaboration with community groups. Thus, including additional permanent exhibit space, and a community gallery will enable a variety of exhibit types, media, and subject matter. Experimental approaches to planning may be encouraged in service of new insights and ways of seeing, while co-location between exhibits and other activities, such as Indigenous contemplative spaces or maker studios would bring diversity and variety.

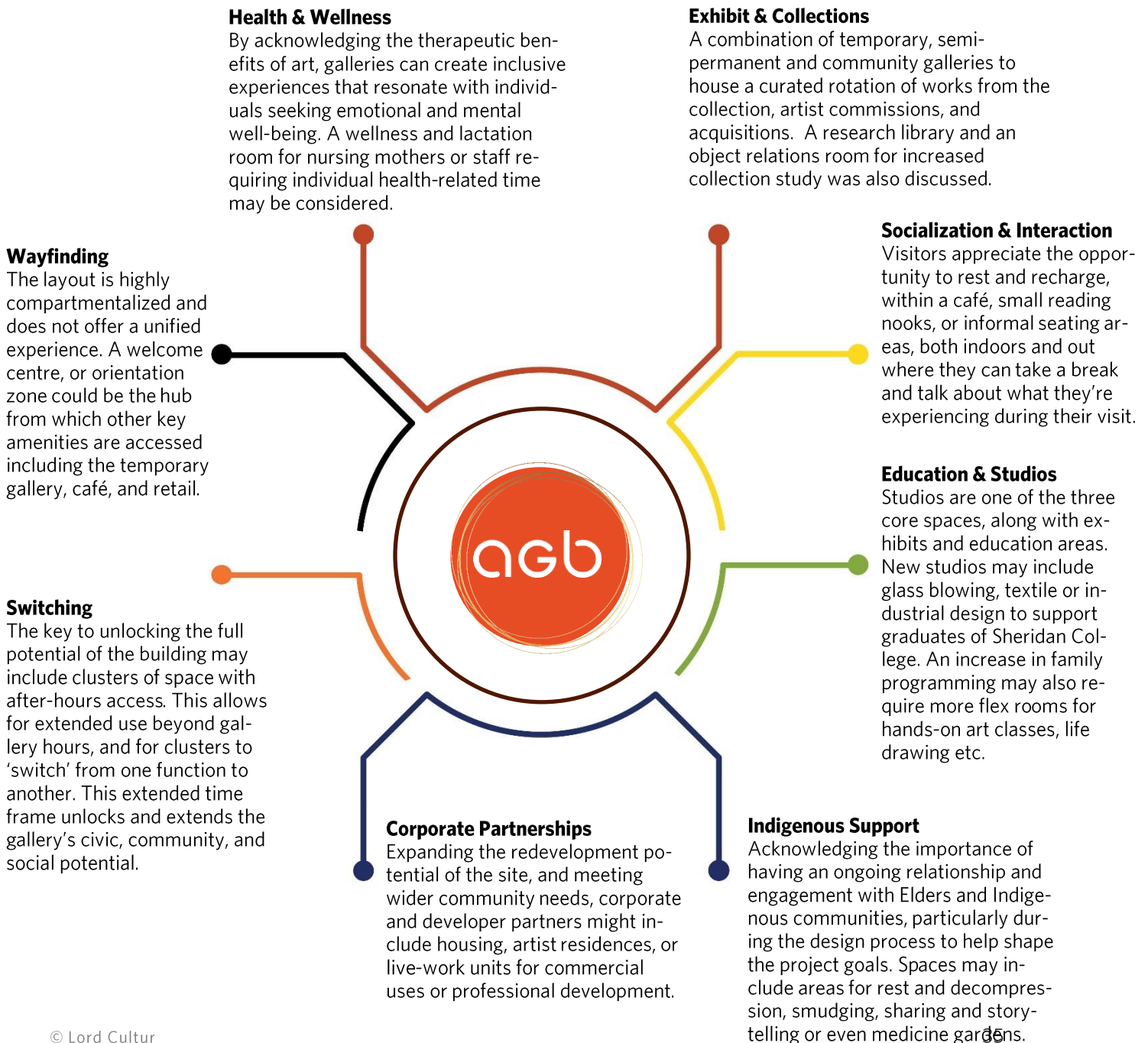


Participants expressed strong interest in exploring the therapeutic benefits of art and saw the AGB offering community-focused programs dedicated to health and wellness.

This approach is important because it highlights a growing trend in art galleries, as they consider inclusive experiences that resonate with individuals seeking emotional and mental well-being. It broadens the visitor base and positions the gallery as a space for reflection, and personal growth, aligning with modern societal values of mindfulness and self-care. Prioritizing access to fresh air and sunlight, the things we associate with being alive, the facility may include quieter lounge areas that encourage contemplation, or innovative spaces for close engagements with artworks.

3.3 Initial Facility Opportunities

Facility planning the bridge between vision and architecture. Understanding this is key because it requires an ongoing collaborative effort across teams, but also recognition that the space program is a living document that evolves and is refined in parallel with the design work. This report is a key step in a larger process that defines both the long-term aspirations for the AGB and includes initial requirements for functional spaces. As a starting point, the following facility space needs (or activities) were identified by the group and are presented below. These were further explored during the programming process, and where appropriate, included in the final space program.





Chapter 4

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT



Patrons Dinner, Artist Tony Clennell, 2023. Art Gallery of Burlington. Photo Credit: Jimmy Limit

4. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

This chapter summarizes the findings from our stakeholder engagement efforts, which included input from the Indigenous community, existing Arts Burlington guild members, representatives from the City of Burlington, and various external opinion Leaders. These insights have been crucial in shaping our understanding of the local landscape. Engaging with these groups is vital for gaining a well-rounded view of the market and community needs. By considering these diverse perspectives, we ensure that our recommendations are inclusive and aligned with the broader community's values. The findings are aggregated to show general trends and are not attributed to any one individual.

4.1 Who Did We Engage and How

Indigenous Community

Indigenous community members gathered at the AGB for a Sharing Circle facilitated by BMA, engaging in storytelling and deep listening to share their perspectives on the gallery's future. Participants highlighted the cultural significance of clay, both as a material and in its historic use by Indigenous peoples, with the spiral emerging as a key motif - symbolizing traditional coil-building techniques, creation, and the passage of time.

The group envisioned a facility that harmonizes with its natural surroundings, suggesting elevated structures that frame views of the trees, grandfather sun, grandmother moon, Lake Ontario, the sky world, and the earth below. They also emphasized strengthening the building's metaphorical connection to the waterfront and incorporating culturally significant materials such as copper.

Recognizing perceived barriers in the building's current design - some even likening it to a prison - participants stressed the need for a more open and fluid connection between indoor and outdoor spaces. This approach would help dissolve the sense of separation, creating a welcoming flow of movement and fostering a deeper sense of belonging.



Participants emphasized the importance of honoring Indigenous history and contemporary identities by incorporating Indigenous art and culturally meaningful elements into the facility's design and operations.

The spiral also emerged as a central motif, referencing broader cultural themes of creation and the flow of time.

External Stakeholders

The planning team also solicited input from external stakeholders with knowledge of the AGB, the site, as well as for broader contextual and situational awareness. These stakeholders included Staff and Councilors from the City of Burlington, representing Economic Development and Tourism, Recreation, Community and Culture, Parks, and Facility Assets. We also engaged with Staff from the Halton District School Board, Sheridan College, and other cultural institutions such as the Brant Museum, the Burlington Performing Arts Centre, and the Burlington Public Library. A total of 15 interviews were completed. The findings are organized according to primary themes.

THEME: Community Engagement and Cultural Assets

1

Community-driven engagement and culture assets shape the development of the cultural sector.

Engaging local communities and understanding their cultural needs is essential for creating spaces that resonate with the AGB's diverse audiences. Strengthening cultural assets - such as event venues and programs - through this engagement encourages sustainable growth for the AGB and enhances the cultural fabric of the region.

THEME: Facility and Operational Requirements

2

Facility planning must prioritize flexibility and adaptability to support a new and diverse programming.

New facility spaces should be adaptable, offering flexibility for various types of events and activities. By planning multi-use spaces and incorporating operational efficiency, the facility can better serve a broad audience and support evolving programming needs.

THEME: Site and Urban Planning

3

City priorities for increased density on the site could be met through more dense residential development or other strategies.

Several participants referenced the City's goals for increasing density on the site. More dense residential development is one possible approach, but several strategies exist to achieve this objective. Further study is required to determine the most effective solution.

THEME: Accessibility and Inclusivity

4

Accessibility and inclusivity should be at the forefront of the facility planning and design initiatives.

Cultural initiatives need to ensure they are accessible to all, including people with disabilities, underserved communities, and those from different socio-economic backgrounds. By integrating inclusive design and diverse programming, these spaces can become more welcoming and representative of the broader Burlington community.

THEME: Educational and Programming Focus

5

Enhanced educational programming is essential for community engagement and development.

Providing educational programming, especially in the maker arts, fosters learning and cultural appreciation. Interactive experiences for all ages, including increased studio workshops and exhibitions, encourage participation, inspire creativity, and build stronger connections between the community and cultural offerings.

THEME: Economic Impact and Sustainability

6

Cultural facilities, particularly the AGB, can contribute positively to local economies by enabling greater community access.

The AGB can provide economic benefits by creating jobs, supporting local creative businesses, and attracting tourists. Ensuring the facility is financially sustainable is key, through strategic partnerships, diverse revenue streams, and long-term investment in community-driven initiatives.

THEME: Stakeholder Engagement

7

Effective collaboration with stakeholders will enhance the overall community impact.

Collaboration with local organizations, businesses, AGB stakeholders, and studio users will foster stronger, more effective cultural encounters. By including a wide range of voices and expertise, the development process can align with community priorities, ensuring spaces are relevant, impactful, and have long-term community support.

Arts Burlington Guilds

The planning team also conducted a series of short interviews with representatives from various Arts Burlington Guilds. The intent was to solicit feedback on the current situation but also to hear needs and concerns. Over the course of two days, participants were invited to join virtual sessions to discuss their concerns and opportunities for the future. A total of 10 participants took part in the conversations. Written responses were also received by the consultant team.

To ensure consistency and effective analysis, an interview protocol was developed in collaboration with the AGB leadership. This protocol included standardized questions posed to all participants and was shared in advance. Interviews were confidentially documented, with all responses aggregated and analyzed holistically, to encourage candid responses.⁷

The findings below represent information communicated by the Guilds and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the AGB. This information is provided for reporting purposes only and should not be interpreted as recommendations.

ARTS BURLINGTON'S GUILDS

Representatives from six Guilds were consulted during the information gathering process.

- Fine Arts Association
- Handweavers and Spinners Guild
- Hooking and Craft Guild
- Latow Photographers Guild
- Potters Guild
- Sculptors and Carvers Guild



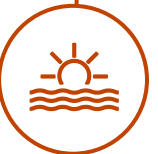
Participants valued collaboration and increased engagement with the AGB, with the other Guilds, and saw this study an important opportunity to engage with other external community partners.



Guild members saw the feasibility study as an opportunity to jointly define the future relationship with the AGB, as many felt the Guilds are an essential part of the gallery's history and a valuable community resource.



The demographics of its members are evolving, particularly post-pandemic, to reflect a decreasing average age, but also an increase in remote or more home-based participation overall.



There was almost unanimous support for the current site as being highly convenient, but many noted similar facility shortcomings, such as visibility, transparency and a need for more exhibit and studio space.

⁷ Representatives from AGB were not present at these discussions to ensure candid feedback and input.



Chapter 5

AGB COLLECTIONS

Clay is deeply embedded in the AGB's identity. On-site studios, exhibitions, and artist residencies create a **living connection** between historical works and contemporary practice.



5. AGB COLLECTIONS

Collections are the heart of all galleries. This chapter presents a quantitative overview of the AGB collections, including a summary of the collection, a review of the existing storage areas, and a projection of future space needs considering growth to the Design Year.

5.1 Existing Collections

Collections and Exhibitions

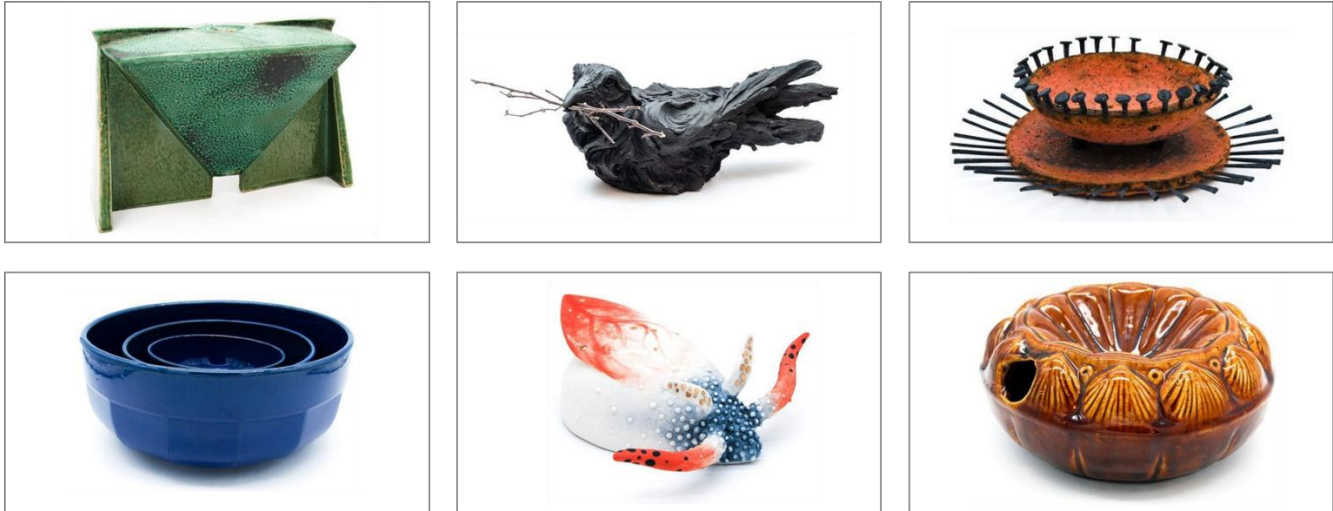
The AGB holds Canada's most extensive collection of contemporary Canadian ceramics, featuring more than 4,000 works that span functional pottery, sculptural forms, and experimental clay practices. This nationally significant collection celebrates the expressive potential of ceramics, capturing stories of place, identity, and innovation. With works by leading artists such as Walter Ostrom, Robin Hopper, and Kathy Venter, the AGB has become a vital centre for the evolution of ceramic art in Canada. The gallery's dedication to clay is deeply embedded in its identity - its on-site studios, exhibitions, and artist residencies create a living connection between historical works and contemporary practice and stimulate broader conversations about place, materiality, and storytelling.⁸

Recent programming has expanded this dialogue through powerful themes of land and water. Performances and exhibitions reflected deep relationships with environment and ancestry: For example, Akash Inbakumar's *shoreline performance* connected body and landscape; KC Adams' *Nibi onje Bimaadiziwin (Water is Life)*, performed with seven generations of women, honoured water as a sacred life force; and Caroline Monnet's work drew attention to clean water access. Meanwhile, Alize Zorlutuna translated local and ancestral waterways through the traditional art of *Ebru*, and Jagdeep Raina evoked memory and migration through stories of *Dal Lake*. These expressions found further resonance in the landscapes and natural forms explored by Sybil Atteck, Chiedza Pasipanodya, and Zorlutuna - each engaging land as a source of cultural continuity.

In a significant moment for the collection, the gallery began the process of acquiring its first living vessel by KC Adams, a relational maker whose work will be shared ceremonially with local Indigenous nations. This acquisition deepens the AGB's commitment to meaningful, living cultural practices.

In 2023, AGB mounted eight exhibitions and coordinated 20 community art projects and managed two artist residency programs. The gallery also marked a milestone with *The Weight of Clay*, a 40th anniversary of the collection that celebrated the artists, curators, and community members who have shaped the collection. This tribute acknowledged not only the physical works held by the gallery, but also the intellectual and cultural labour that continues to expand the legacy of ceramics in Canada.

⁸ Source: <https://artgalleryofburlington.com/collections/>



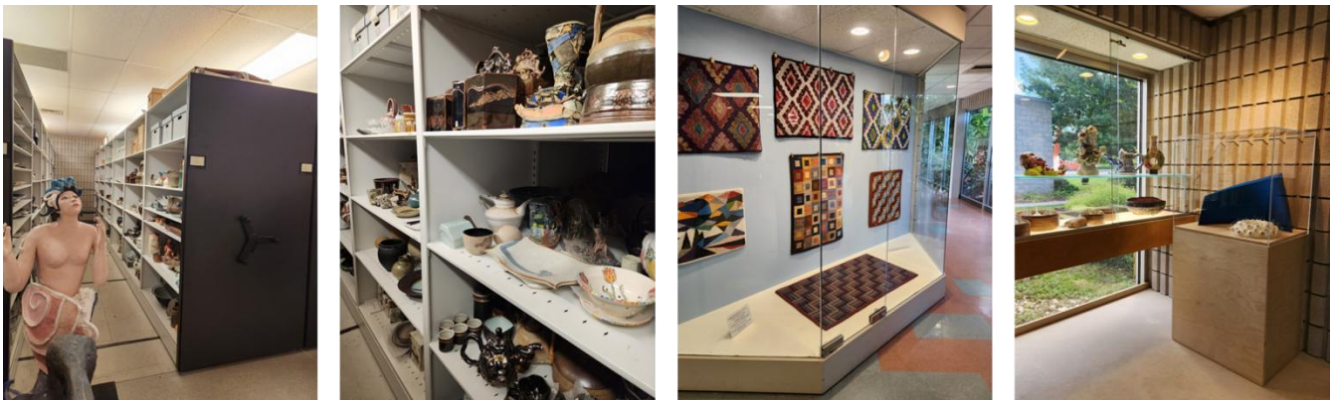
Top Left to Right: Tam Irving, Architectural Vase, 2003; Mary Philpott, Crow, 2016; Judith Graham, Cup with Spikes, c.2000
 Bottom Left to Right: William Campbell & Sons, Set of Three Nesting Casserole Dishes, 1929-1947; Daumante (Dauma) Stirbyte, Beetle, c.2019; Henry Schuler, Spitoon, 1873-1884

Existing Collection Storage

The collections are currently stored in a single room of approximately 750 sq. ft. Storage equipment includes a combination of rolling racks and open metal shelving.⁹ Space does not meet best practice for collection storage, specifically it is not climate controlled and maintaining temperature and humidity has been an ongoing challenge. Collection items are also stored in a series of glass display cases (a form of visible storage) distributed throughout the building. However, access to direct sunlight and lack of climate control in these cases limit what can be put on long-term display.

For planning purposes, the following assumptions have been made:

- 4,000 works currently in the collection
- 85% of the collection is currently in storage (remaining 15% on display in galleries, public display and visual storage)
- Therefore: 3,400 works currently in storage @ 750 sq. ft = **+/- 0.22 sq. ft. per item**



⁹ Image Source: Lord Cultural Resources

5.2 Storage Requirements

Future Growth

Understanding collection growth is important to anticipate the amount of storage space that will be needed at the Design Year. Future growth calculations should consider several metrics:

1. Historic growth rates based on past collection accessions or gift agreements.
2. Prioritized growth in specific areas to fill gaps or interpretive direction.
3. Future gifts, whether known or anticipated, from external donors or estates.
4. Ongoing of future deaccession efforts.

AGB notes that growth in the collection will be aligned with its mandate for clay-art, building specifically on their Indigenous and living vessel collections. There are no known size restrictions at present.

Specific growth rates for individual categories across the entire collection were not known. However, information provided by the AGB indicates the institution anticipates a blended growth rate of less than 1% per year (or approximately 20 items) across all categories of the collection.

Based on this percentage, **the collection would grow to approximately 4,300 items at the Design Year.**

Additionally, there are no known or special acquisitions or accessions on the horizon. AGB is considering the deaccessioning of works in the next five years, including a collection of 250 works, but this is not yet finalized.

Collection Storage Projections

Based on the assumed +/- 0.22 sq. ft / item (@ 4,300 items), a minimum vault size of approximately 1,100 sq. ft is required (including room for circulation). However, given the need to provide both additional space for future accessions and to accommodate much needed decompression, it was confirmed by the AGB project team that a **single storage room of approximately 1,500 sq. ft for mixed collections** would be appropriate. This represents an approximately doubling of the current storage room.¹⁰

At an assumed rate of 0.22 sq. ft. / item (and considering room for circulation), **the new storage vault can be assumed to accommodate approximately 5,600 works at the Design Year.**

All collection storage will be accommodated on site. No off-site storage is anticipated.

FF&E requirements should be confirmed during the design stage but will likely include a combination of rolling racks and open shelving given the nature of the collections.

See *Appendix, Section 9.4* for recommended collection technical requirements.

¹⁰ Storage calculations do not consider the impact of a possible *visible storage design feature*. As this element is not yet designed, future design teams should consider this possibility when planning the size and layout of the new storage vault.



Chapter 6

FACILITY PROGRAM

6. FACILITY PROGRAM

This chapter outlines the facility space requirements for a new art gallery building. It summarizes a range of planning and operational assumptions used to inform space requirements. A brief description of the AGB collections and the current storage conditions are outlined in the previous chapter. A detailed itemized space list including existing and proposed net areas is provided, followed by descriptive experience narratives and primary adjacency diagrams for key spaces identified in the program.

6.1 Planning Assumptions

Site and Facility

This section outlines the preliminary facility and site assumptions that have informed the planning decisions. These assumptions are the result of the highly consultative process between the various project stakeholders and should be confirmed by the client and architect teams during subsequent design development stages.

SITE		
Given the strengths of the site (location, waterfront, expansion potential) the current location is assumed to remain as the future home of the AGB.	There may be adjacent /adjunct lands available for redevelopment (subject to confirmation).	Redevelopment of the site supports the City of Burlington’s larger goals for increased density and urban growth.
FACILITY AND COLLECTIONS		
The existing facility is approximately 48,000 sf including: 4,500 sf of exhibition space, 12,400 sf of active maker studios, 7,600 sf for event and retail, a 1,300 sf conservatory, 3,000 sf for staff support, and a research library containing over 2,100 publications and volumes on request.	Consideration to renovate and expand the existing facility was ruled out early in the process, due to poor facility condition and site traits (specifically the underground trunk sewer line). The planning thus assumes a new facility will be built to replace the existing structure.	The AGB has amassed the largest collection of contemporary Canadian ceramics in the world, totaling over 4,000 works, stored on-site in approximately 750 sf of storage space. A total of 5 new items were added to the collection in 2023.
OPERATIONS		
The AGB reported an attendance of 28,000+ visitors in 2023. This represents an increase of almost 40% from the previous year. Membership is noted as 750 members. New admission charges are also assumed.	In total for 2023, AGB mounted eight exhibitions and coordinated 20 community art projects and managed two artist residency programs.	Current Guild members will continue to have access to the facility, and be granted access to the studio spaces, although the specifics of this arrangement are currently being reviewed by the AGB Leadership and Board.

Staffing

Understanding existing and projected staffing numbers is necessary for programming office and workstation assignments. The staff count (as of 2024) includes a total of 31 positions including 13 full-time, and 18 part-time / contract positions, summarized in the following table.

Artistic	Full Time	Part Time	Production	Full Time	Part Time
Artistic Director/ Curator	1		Lead Preparator		1
Associate Curator	1		Preparators		3
Head of Learning	1		Marketing		
Education Coordinator	1		Manager Communications and Development	1	
Education Studio Technician		1	Digital Content Coordinator		1
Ceramic Studio Technician		1	Head of Digital Marketing		1
Collections Manager		1	Fundraising		
Shop Manager (FT Consultant)	1		Development Coordinator	1	
Art Sales and Rental Coordinator		1	Volunteer Coordinator		1
Shop Associate		1	Development Intern		1
Facility			Administration		
Facility Operator	1		Executive Director	1	
Head of Hospitality	1		Director of Finance & Operations	1	
Lead Custodian	1		Executive Assistant & Office Manager	1	
Guest Experience Assistants		3			
Hospitality Assistant		1			
Custodial Assistant		1			
			Sub Totals	13	18
			Total	31	

An objective of the AGB is to consider operational efficiencies when assessing additional staffing requirements. Some additional staff are recommended to support growth in the collections / curatorial, marketing and fundraising roles. The recommendation therefore to meet this demand is to increase the total to **42 positions, including 23 full-time and 19 part-time** positions.¹¹

The space program responds to this by providing a combination of 10 private offices, 18 dedicated open workstations, and a collaborative open work area for flex or casual positions, all within a dedicated administrative suite. It also provides distributed, program specific offices and workstations for public programs, hospitality and events, collections and exhibit, custodial, and the retail shop (x2).

Annual Attendance

The AGB reported an annual attendance of over 28,000 in 2024. As noted in *Volume 2 Business Plan*, attendance projections for the new gallery are:

- 65,072 @ Year 1
- 55,776 @ Year 2; and
- **Stabilized attendance of 61,973 @ Year 5**

Design teams should note this figure when calculating egress and other amenity sizing requirements.

¹¹ See *Volume 2 Business Plan* for additional details. Design teams should confirm these staffing numbers prior to the design stage, as policies regarding in-person working or roles may have changed.

Target Audience



AGB’s long-term vision is to expand its audience profile by increasing major exhibitions and offering a wider range of relevant programming content that appeals to families and younger visitors.

To grow its audience, the AGB must broaden its appeal to a younger, more diverse demographic, including families, youth, and underserved populations. According to the 2021 Statistics Canada census, 32% of Burlington households have couples with children, and 9% are single-parent households. This is significant, as families and younger visitors likely seek cultural, family-based activities. At the same time, attracting children doesn’t mean negatively impacting adults who wish to access the studio spaces. Both can simultaneously coexist and benefit each other. To promote intergenerational learning opportunities and stimulate connections with new audiences, equal access to education, studios and exhibit spaces could be considered as part of the programming and planning effort.



Source: Art Gallery of Burlington

Design Year

The Design Year (or planning horizon) is *the last year in which the building will serve the capacity that is planned for*. This is important as critical facility needs, particularly collection storage, must be designed to accommodate future growth to that time, not opening day. The Design Year is typically 15-20 years from the project planning window, as anything beyond that cannot reasonably anticipate changes in collection development policies, mandate, etc.

The **Design Year for this study is assumed to be 15 years (2040)**, based on a 2025 planning start date.

Design Day Attendance

The Design Day number is *the anticipated attendance an institution might expect on an average busy day*. It is not necessarily the busiest peak day which might only occur once or twice a year. The Design Day is typically calculated to ensure that public spaces and amenities (such as queuing areas or restroom sizing), and parking are designed to accommodate the anticipated volumes. The Design Day is based on total projected attendance figures including visitors, program participants, adult learners, and visitors to special events.

The **Design Day Attendance for the AGB is projected to be approximately 350 people.**

The following assumptions have been used to calculate the Design Day figures.

- A projected stabilized attendance of (approximately) 62,000 visitors per year.
- The Design Day for most art galleries is typically a weekend day.
- 60% of visitors will likely attend on weekend days. 40% will attend on weekdays.
- Peak attendance is typically a 2-hour period when 50% of visitors will be present.

Design Day attendance calculations, along with calculations for Peak Attendance and estimated parking requirements based on the attendance figures, are summarized below.¹²

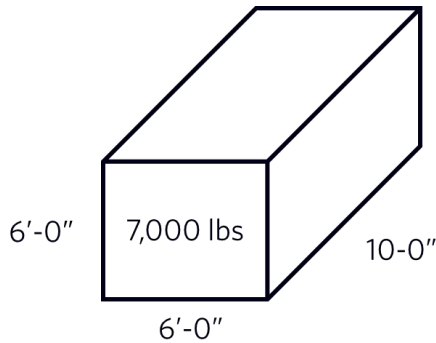
Design Day Metrics	Results	Notes
Projected Annual Attendance	62,000	
Attendance Distribution	37,200	60% will Attend on Weekend Days
Annual Weekend Days	104	Assumes 261 Week Days and 104 Weekend Days
Design Day Attendance	358	Attendance Distribution per Weekend Day
Peak Attendance		
Peak Attendance (2 hour)	179	Maximum Visitors at Peak Time, 2-hr Visit @ 50%
Peak Hour	89	Maximum Visitors per Hour at Peak Time
Peak Hour (Female)	54	Female Visitors per Peak Hour @ 60%
Peak Hour (Male)	36	Male Visitors per Peak Hour @ 40%
Parking		
Mode of Arrival	0.6	Assume 60% of Visitors Arrive by Car
Persons per Car	3	Assume 3 Persons Per Car
Estimated Parking	72	Spaces Required on Design Day

¹² Parking calculations are an estimate only and should be checked for compliance with City or Municipal requirements.

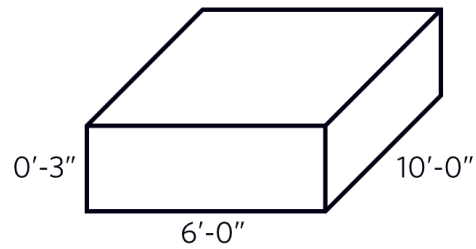
Design Object

The Design Object is *the largest artifact, work of art, or storage crate that will be moved on a regular basis and accommodated not only in galleries and storage rooms, but also in corridors, elevators and loading areas in the collection zones or anywhere that collections may be moved, displayed, studied, or treated.*¹³

- It is assumed the largest 3D object will be 6'-0" (W) x 6'-0" (H) x 10'-0" (L) with an anticipated maximum weight of 7,000 lbs.
- It is assumed that the largest 2D object will be 6'-0" (W) x 0'-3" (H) x 10'-0" (L).



3D Design Object



2D Design Object



Crates in Storage, MacKenzie Art Gallery. Source: Lord Cultural Resources

¹³ The design architect should confirm this size assumption prior to commencing design and make all necessary accommodations.

6.2 Facility Space Program

This section includes the space allocation tables for an expanded AGB facility at the existing site. The data is presented first as a summary chart and then in more comprehensive detail. A space summary for existing areas is also provided for comparative reference.

Gallery Zoning

Spaces within art galleries can be categorized according to a classification of program zones, which identifies the net (programmable) area in terms of public and non-public functions and collections and non-collections functions. This zone model allows for efficient data organization and facilitates efficient capital costing estimates. The program incorporates this zone system as an organizing tool.

The zones are defined as follows:

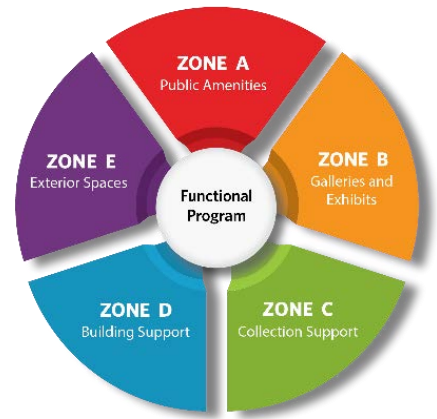
Zone A - Public Amenities: Visitors are present, but collections items typically are not (lobby, gift shop, studios and public program areas, event space, food service spaces, etc.). This zone typically accounts for 20-40% of total space in the facility.

Zone B - Galleries and Exhibits: Here, visitors encounter exhibitions featuring collections, as well as any collections borrowed from other institutions. As the main gallery function, it often requires 40% or more of the total space allocation.

Zone C - Exhibit and Collection Support: Collections and loaned objects are present here, and access is typically restricted to collections staff. For a mature collection-focused institution like the AGB, the figure is typically 20% of the total.

Zone D - Building Support: This includes areas that do not normally host the public or require specific environmental controls, such as offices and work areas, building support and general storage. As with Zones A and C, the figure is about 15-20% of total space.

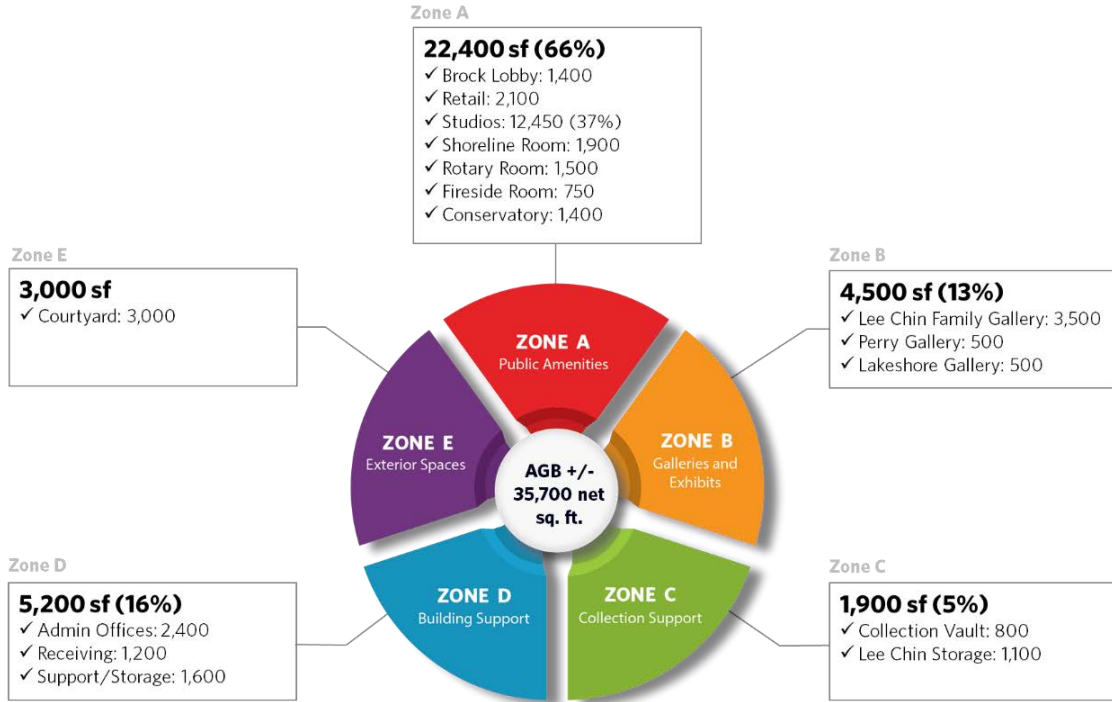
Zone E - Exterior Spaces: This zone tracks critical program elements located *outside* the building envelope. It identifies key spaces required to host outdoor events, programs, and visitor experiences such as plazas, courtyards, gardens, and rooftops. No net area is assigned to exterior spaces.



Existing AGB Facility

Based on information provided by the AGB, it is understood that the existing facility has approximately 35,700 net sq. ft of programmable area, and an approximate total building area of about 48,000 gross sq. ft. The following graphic summarizes the functions and the distribution per zone within the existing building.¹⁴

¹⁴ This information was provided to the consulting team by the AGB and has not been verified or manually checked against existing facility conditions. It is provided for reference purposes only.



Net and Gross Area

Facility programming requires two key facility measurements:

- 1) an identification of net square footage (the programmable space required for activities) and,
- 2) a determination of a gross square footage multiplier (represented as a percentage of the net area).

The gross multiplier considers the following:¹⁵

- Horizontal and vertical circulation (corridors, elevator shafts and fire exits/stairwells)
- Wall thickness between and around usable spaces
- Mechanical/electrical rooms, plumbing spaces and chases, conduit, or piping zones
- Public and staff washrooms

For planning purposes, a grossing factor of at least 30% (0.3 x nsf) and preferably 50% (0.5 x nsf) is recommended for new galleries. In the case of most art galleries, like the AGB, where larger public spaces, such as galleries and the lobby / atrium, also double as circulation space, and has a large proportion of studio spaces, the grossing factor can be assumed to be in the low / middle range.

As such **a grossing factor of 35% (0.35 x nsf) has been used.**

¹⁵ The gross area for the existing AGB has been assumed to be 35% (for planning purposes only) based on preliminary building area information provided.

New Facility Space Summary

The tables below provide a summary of the total net and gross areas for a new AGB gallery including a base assumption for the existing building. This tables indicates that the *existing gallery* has approximately 35,700 net sq. ft of programmable area, and an approximate total building area of 48,000 gross sq. ft, whereas:



The new gallery is programmed at 57,000 net sq. ft., resulting in a projected total building size of approximately 77,000 gross sq. ft.

This reflects an overall increase of about 29,000 gross sq. ft. (60%) when compared to the existing facility.

Rounded Figures

The following tables compare the existing AGB with the proposed new facility program.

Zone	Ref #	Functional Area	Existing Area (NSF)	Proposed Area (NSF)	Distribution (% of Net Area)	Variance (From Existing)
A		Public Amenities	24,965	33,900	59%	8,935
B		Gallery and Exhibits	4,515	10,500	18%	5,985
C		Collection Support	1,875	6,100	11%	4,225
D		Building Support	4,355	6,590	12%	2,235
Total Net Area			35,710	57,090	100%	21,380
Estimated Gross Area (35% x NSF)			12,499	19,982		
Estimated Total Gross Building Area			48,209	77,072		28,863

Of this total area, *the program includes a notable increase in the amount of Public Amenity, Education and Program, Studio, Gallery and Exhibit, and Administrative spaces*, which was deemed necessary in order to meet the forward-looking curatorial vision of the AGB and also to meet its wider community needs as well.

Zone	Functional Area	Existing Area (NSF)	Proposed Area (NSF)	Variance (%)
A	Public Amenities	6,710	12,600	88%
A	Event and Support	5,685	6,150	8%
A	Education and Public Programs	1,035	3,000	190%
A	Craft Maker Studios and Support	11,535	12,150	5%
B	Gallery and Exhibit	4,515	10,500	133%
C	Collection Storage and Support	1,875	6,100	225%
D	Administration	2,580	4,140	60%
D	Building Services	1,775	2,450	38%
Total Net Area		35,710	57,090	21,380
Estimated Gross Area (35% x NSF)		12,499	19,982	
Estimated Total Gross Building Area		48,209	77,072	28,863



The Weight of Clay, Installation Detail, 2023. Art Gallery of Burlington. Photo Credit: Jimmy Limit

New Facility Space Program

The following detailed program quantifies the required functional spaces and their recommended sizes. All areas are listed in net square feet (net sq. ft.). Spaces are organized according to gallery functional zones. Quantities (Qty) of each space and a suggested occupancy (Occy) are also noted.¹⁶ A preliminary suggestion for hours of access (Public Hours vs. Extended Hours) is also provided for reference.

Some variations to the size of spaces and their location should be expected during a future design process. Any significant deviations from these recommendations should be discussed with the AGB staff prior to proceeding with final design.

¹⁶ Occupancy numbers are estimates only and do not correspond to applicable building code restrictions. Design teams should confirm occupancy limits during the design stage.

Zone A: Public Amenities

Zone	Ref #	Functional Area	Existing Area (NSF)*	Proposed Area (NSF)	Qty	Occy	Hours	Functional Notes
Public Amenities			6,710	12,600				22%
A	1	Brock Lobby	1,470	1,500	1	-	PH	Assumes second entrance from north
A	2	Brock Reception Desk	120	120	1	2	PH	Standard fit out
A	3	Lakeshore Lobby / Reception	550	-	-	-	-	See Welcome Centre
A	4	Welcome Centre: Visitor Reception / Information	-	3,000	1	-	EH	Main entry lobby, reception, ticketing, information etc
A	5	Welcome Centre: Art Lounge / Orientation Zone	-	1,000	1	60	EH	Open social area, projections, interpretive content etc
A	6	Welcome Centre: Coats and Lockers	-	300	1	-	EH	Estimated 40 lockers
A	7	Welcome Centre: Dedicated Storage	-	250	1	-	PH	No special requirements
A	8	Welcome Centre: Security Room / Office	-	100	1	2	EH	Standard fit out
A	9	Gender Neutral Washrooms	-	-	TBD	TBD	EH	Per applicable codes
A	10	Rooftop Events Terrace	-	-	1	60	EH	Accessible from Welcome Center (after hours)
A	11	Café Food Services / Café Seating	-	2,000	1	40	EH	Final size TBC with food services consultant
A	12	AGB Shop	2,135	3,500	1	-	PH	Visibility from Lakeshore Rd.
A	13	AGB Shop Storage	60	100	1	-	PH	No special requirements
A	14	AGB Shop Office #1	130	100	1	1	PH	Standard fit out
A	15	AGB Shop Office #2	130	80	1	1	PH	Standard fit out
A	16	Visitors First Aid / Wellness Room	-	50	1	2	PH	Standard fit out
A	17	Conservatory / Green Feature	1,400	500	1	-	PH	Existing space deleted. Replace with green feature TBD
A	18	Conservatory Potting shed	365	-	-	-	-	Existing space deleted
A	19	Coat Room	350	-	-	-	-	See Welcome Centre
Event and Support			5,685	6,150				11%
A	20	Shoreline Room	1,930	-	-	-	-	See Flexible Event Hall
A	21	Rotary Lakeshore Room	1,545	-	-	-	-	See Flexible Event Hall
A	22	Rotary Lakeshore Storage	140	-	-	-	-	See Flexible Event Hall
A	23	Arts and Event Hall	-	3,500	1	250	EH	Estimate 250 seated in dining configuration / 350 standing
A	24	Event Hall General Storage	-	200	1	-	EH	No special requirements
A	25	Fireside Room	770	800	1	25	PH	Standard fit out
A	26	Event Hall Servery	400	400	1	-	EH	To support Flexible Event Hall. FF&E TBD
A	27	Laundry Room / Linen Storage	-	350	1	-	EH	Proximity to Event Hall preferred
A	28	Gender Neutral Washrooms	900	900	TBD	TBD	PH	Per applicable codes
Education and Public Programs			1,035	3,000				5%
A	29	Nelson Studio	1,035	-	-	-	-	See Flexible Program / Activity Room
A	30	School Bus Queuing (Exterior)	-	-	1	-	-	To accommodate 1 standard full size school bus
A	31	Collaboration Zone (Marshalling / Lockers / Lunch)	-	750	1	60	PH	Group marshalling, orientation, meeting, display etc
A	32	Reading Nooks / Research Pods (x3)	-	100	3	2	PH	Casual seating, occasional chairs etc
A	33	Flexible Program / Activity Room	-	1,000	1	40	PH	Standard fit out. Sink and lockable cabinetry
A	34	Object Study / Research Room	-	400	1	8	PH	2D / 3D object study. Work table, wall racks. Environmental controls
A	35	Collection Secure Hold Room	-	50	1	-	PH	Short-term secure storage. Environmental controls
A	36	Artist in Residence Studio	-	300	1	1	EH	Working studio for external artists, writing, craft etc. Final use TBD
A	37	Private Office: Manager of Public Programs	-	100	1	1	EH	Standard fit out
A	38	Education Programs Storage	-	300	1	-	-	No special requirements
Program, Studio and Studio Support			11,535	12,150				21%
A	39	Raku Shed	1,115	1,200	1	6	EH	Technical requirements TBC
A	40	Potters Studio	1,760	-	-	-	-	See Combined Ceramics / Clay Studio
A	41	Clay Studio	760	-	-	-	-	See Combined Ceramics / Clay Studio
A	42	Sculpture / Woodworking Studio	1,055	1,100	1	30	EH	See Combined Ceramics / Clay Studio
A	43	Combined Ceramics / Clay Studio	-	2,500	1	40	EH	Technical requirements TBC. Accessible after hours
A	44	Kiln Room	390	400	1	4	EH	Technical requirements TBC. Accessible after hours
A	45	Fine Arts Studio	1,340	1,350	1	30	EH	Technical requirements TBC. Accessible after hours
A	46	Fine Art Studio Storage	155	150	1	-	EH	Technical requirements TBC. Accessible after hours
A	47	Photo Studio	1,100	1,100	1	20	EH	Technical requirements TBC. Accessible after hours
A	48	Photo Studio Storage	380	400	1	-	EH	Technical requirements TBC. Accessible after hours
A	49	Textile (Weavers) Studio	1,490	1,500	1	40	EH	Technical requirements TBC. Accessible after hours
A	50	Textile Studio Kitchen	170	200	1	-	EH	Technical requirements TBC. Accessible after hours
A	51	Textile Studio Storage	135	150	1	-	EH	Technical requirements TBC. Accessible after hours
A	52	Photography	255	-	-	-	-	Existing program deleted
A	53	Darkroom	280	-	-	-	-	Existing program deleted
A	54	Jewelry Studio	-	500	1	25	EH	Technical requirements TBC. Accessible after hours
A	55	Screen Printing Fabric Studio	-	600	1	25	EH	Technical requirements TBC. Accessible after hours
A	56	Clean Studio (Flex Function)	-	1,000	1	30	EH	Technical requirements TBC. Accessible after hours
A	57	Dry Craft Studio (with Mezz, Kitchen & Storage)	1,150	-	-	-	-	See Clean Studio
A	58	Glass Blowing Studio	-	-	-	-	-	Program item not included

Zone B: Gallery and Exhibit
Zone C: Collection Storage and Support

Zone	Ref #	Functional Area	Existing Area (NSF)*	Proposed Area (NSF)	Qty	Occy	Hours	Functional Notes
Gallery and Exhibit			4,515	10,500				18%
B	59	Lee Chin Family Gallery	3,500	3,500	1	-	PH	Environmental controls
B	60	Perry Gallery	485	-	-	-	-	See Permanent Exhibition Galleries
B	61	Lakeshore Gallery	530	-	-	-	-	See Permanent Exhibition Galleries
B	62	Permanent Exhibition Gallery #1	-	2,500	1	-	PH	Environmental controls
B	63	Rotating Exhibition Gallery #2	-	2,000	1	-	PH	Environmental controls
B	64	Rotating Exhibition Gallery #3	-	1,500	1	-	PH	Environmental controls
B	65	Community / Emerging Studio Artist Gallery	-	500	1	-	PH	Environmental controls
B	66	Indigenous Narratives / Fireplace Room	-	500	1	15	PH	May be collocated with Exhibit Galleries
B	67	Gender Neutral Restrooms	-	-	TBD	TBD	PH	Per applicable codes
Collection Storage and Support			1,875	6,100				11%
C	68	Collection Vault	740	-	-	-	-	See Collection Storage Vault - Mixed
C	69	Lee Chin Family Gallery Storage	1,135	-	-	-	-	See Exhibit Case / Prop Storage
C	70	Collection Storage Vault - Mixed	-	1,500	1	-	EH	Assumes 2x existing vault capacity
C	71	Visible / Accessible Storage	-	1,000	1	-	PH	Size and design per architect concept. TBD
C	72	Exterior Collection Loading Bay	-	-	1	-	EH	Sized for one standard 53' semi-trailer
C	73	New Exhibition Shipping and Receiving	-	400	1	-	EH	Environmental controls
C	74	Acclimatization / Crating / Uncrating	-	300	1	-	EH	Environmental controls
C	75	Isolation / Quarantine	-	50	1	-	EH	Environmental controls
C	76	Transit Storage (Holding Area)	-	650	1	-	EH	Environmental controls
C	77	Exhibition Crate Storage	-	500	1	-	EH	Environmental controls
C	78	Clean Workshop / Exhibition Prep Workroom	-	450	1	10	EH	Environmental controls
C	79	Exhibit Case / Prop Storage	-	1,100	1	-	EH	Standard fit out
C	80	AV Storage / Monitors / IT Equipment	-	50	1	-	EH	Standard fit out
C	81	Open Workstation: Collections and Exhibitions Staff	-	50	1	1	EH	Standard fit out
C	82	Publication / Collection Records Storage	-	50	1	-	EH	Standard fit out

Zone D: Administration
Zone D: Building Services
Zone E: Exterior and Landscape

Zone	Ref #	Functional Area	Existing Area (NSF)*	Proposed Area (NSF)	Qty	Occy	Hours	Functional Notes
Administration			2,580	4,140				7%
D	83	Reception and Entry	450	-	-	-	-	See New Administration
D	84	Private Office #1	100	-	-	-	-	See New Administration
D	85	Private Office #2	100	-	-	-	-	See New Administration
D	86	Private Office #3	100	-	-	-	-	See New Administration
D	87	Private Office #4	100	-	-	-	-	See New Administration
D	88	Private Office #5	120	-	-	-	-	See New Administration
D	89	Private Office #6	100	-	-	-	-	See New Administration
D	90	Private Office #7	100	-	-	-	-	See New Administration
D	91	Private Office #8	120	-	-	-	-	See New Administration
D	92	Private Office #9	100	-	-	-	-	See New Administration
D	93	Reception and Entry Area	-	250	1	1	EH	Standard fit out
D	94	Private Offices (x10)	-	1,000	10	1	EH	Standard fit out
D	95	Open / Flex Workstations (x18)	-	1,100	18	1	EH	Standard fit out
D	96	Collaborative Shared Work Area	-	750	1	20	EH	Flexible open work area. Standard fit out
A	97	Staff Lounge / Break Room	700	-	-	-	-	Existing. See Staff Meeting / Break Room
D	98	Staff Meeting / Break Room	-	500	1	25	EH	Standard fit out
D	99	Secure Records File Storage	-	50	1	-	EH	Standard fit out
D	100	Collating and Copy	50	50	1	6	EH	Standard fit out
D	101	General Supplies Storage	100	100	1	-	EH	No special requirements
D	102	Volunteer Lunchroom	120	120	1	20	EH	Standard fit out
D	103	Hospitality Office	220	220	1	1	EH	Standard fit out
Building Services			1,775	2,450				4%
D	104	Exhibition Shipping & Receiving	1,235	-	-	-	EH	See New Exhibition Shipping and Receiving
D	105	General Services Shipping / Receiving	-	400	1	-	EH	Non collections shipping and receiving. Standard fit out
D	106	Custodial Office / Storage	350	350	1	1	EH	Standard fit out
D	107	Archival Records Storage	40	-	-	-	EH	Relocated to new Administration Suite
D	108	Server / Storage Room	115	50	-	-	EH	Standard fit out
D	109	IT / Server / BMS Room	-	50	1	-	EH	Standard fit out
D	110	Staff / Docent / Security Staff / Volunteer Lockers	-	150	1	40	EH	Half size. Standard fit out
D	111	Carpentry Workshop (including Flammables Storage)	-	650	1	6	EH	Lockable millwork. Standard fit out
D	112	General Building Storage (x2)	-	800	2	-	EH	No special requirements
D	113	Gender Neutral Washrooms	-	-	TBD	TBD	EH	Per applicable codes
D	114	Table and Chairs Storage	35	-	-	-	EH	See General Building Storage
D	115	Mechanical Room	-	-	TBD	-	EH	Per engineering requirements
Exterior and Landscape								
E	116	Gathering Honour Circle	-	-	1	10	EH	Landscape design TBD
E	117	Dye / Medicine Garden	-	-	1	-	EH	Landscape design TBD
E	118	Sculpture Walk	-	-	1	-	EH	Landscape design TBD
E	119	Service Parking	-	-	TBD	-	EH	Per applicable code
E	120	Staff Parking	-	-	TBD	-	EH	Per applicable code
E	121	Exterior Service Loading Area / Refuse Bins	-	-	1	-	EH	No special requirements
Total Estimated Net Area			35,710	57,090				21380sf Variance
Estimated Gross Area (35% x NSF)**			12,499	19,982				
Estimated Total Facility Area			48,209	77,072				59.9%

* Existing areas have been rounded for planning simplicity

** Assumes gross factor of 35% for existing building for planning purposes only

6.3 Experience Narratives

This section describes the key functions and experiences within the major spaces needed to enable the vision and meet the operational needs for a new AGB facility. Spaces are described in relation to their principal function and organized per the space list. Secondary spaces with standard requirements are not included.

Building Entry and Visitor Amenities



The AGB will be a living heartbeat in the community - a place where expression flows freely, stories take shape, and everyone finds a sense of belonging. From the first step inside, art and craft will guide the journey, weaving meaning into every experience.

Welcome Centre: Lobby

The AGB will open its doors to audiences from unexpected and underserved places, welcoming individuals from all backgrounds to come together and be inspired and challenged by art. The Welcome Centre is therefore intended to communicate a sense of openness and inclusion from the moment guests arrive. Serving as the central point for orientation, it will offer key information about exhibitions, wayfinding, and amenities. From here, visitors can access the expanded exhibit galleries, café and retail spaces, or extend their creative journey to the many craft studios. Transparency and natural light will be essential design elements, creating a fluid connection between the interior and the adjacent lakeshore. This space may also incorporate digital features, projections, or collection highlights to help ground visitors in the experience ahead.

Welcome Centre: Art Lounge / Orientation Zone

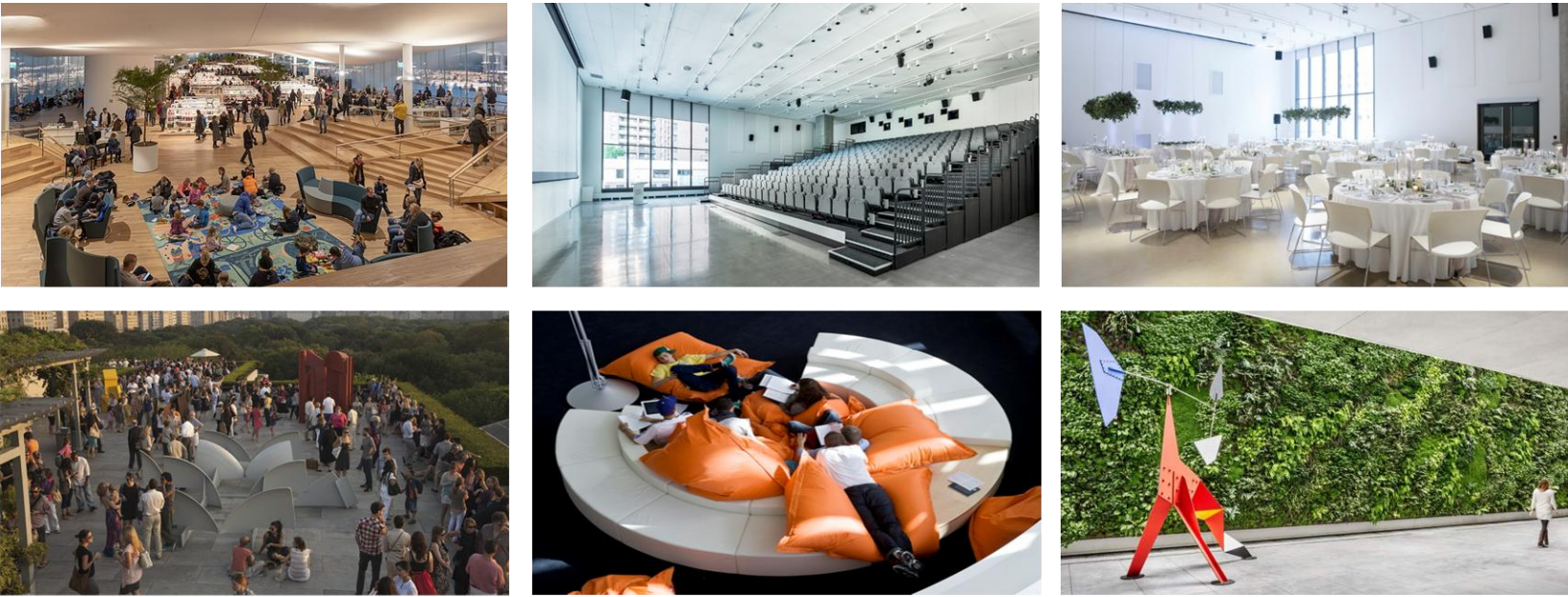
Accessible from the Welcome Centre, the Art Lounge is a welcoming, flexible space where visitors can pause, reflect, and connect. With cozy reading nooks and informal gathering areas, it offers a moment of rest or conversation - a chance to process and share what's unfolding during their visit. Open to all, this free space invites exploration without barriers. Nearby, the Orientation Zone gently introduces the Gallery's purpose and encourages visitors to engage with the content in their own way, reflecting the AGB's inclusive approach. Functional needs may include a sound system, adaptable lighting, casual seating, opportunities for informal artmaking, and a platform for talks or performances.

Gift Shop / Café Seating

A well-curated gift shop and café will serve as essential extensions of the gallery experience, offering visitors a chance to connect with the culture they've just explored. The gift shop (and art rental program) will feature unique, locally sourced items, studio-crafted products, and exclusive collections that reflect the spirit of the AGB, allowing visitors to bring a piece of their journey home. The café will provide a relaxed space for guests to enjoy a light lunch or refreshment, encouraging longer stays and fostering deeper engagement with the Burlington waterfront. Together, the gift shop and café will not only enhance the visitor experience but also drive important revenue streams and support the activation of Lakeshore Road, creating a lively destination that invites both gallery goers and the local community to gather and connect.

Arts and Events Rentals

Responding to the initial project principles regarding long term economic sustainability, revenue generation is a priority. To meet a growing demand for large group event rentals and also to expand its programming capability, the program includes a 250-seat rental venue. The Arts and Event Hall (and Fireside Room) will support a range of functions including lectures, performances, weddings, and corporate events. Retractable seating could be included for maximum flexibility and configuration.



Top Left to Right: Oodi Library, Helsinki; Ottawa Art Gallery, Ottawa; Ottawa; Ottawa Art Gallery, Ottawa
 Bottom Left to Right: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City; Visitor Pods (Unknown); San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco.

These spaces should also have direct access to a catering kitchen and easy access from loading and unloading. Special events and rentals may also occur on the roof terrace, designed to take full advantage of the picturesque views of Lake Ontario and Spencer Smith Park. Other support areas include gender neutral washrooms and dedicated storage for event supplies and furniture. Technical requirements may include a sound system, directional lighting, seating in the round, ability for artmaking, and risers/platform for speakers or events. The rental events room should accommodate up to 60 people at a time for social functions, performances, and formal events. After-hours access is required.

Conservatory / Living Wall

The existing conservatory is a beloved feature of the current building, offering a peaceful retreat that connects visitors to nature. While this specific space won't be recreated, the essence of that connection remains a key principle in the planning. To honor this legacy, new green features - such as a living green wall or an indoor garden atrium with flowing water elements - should be considered. These nature-inspired elements would not only enhance the space aesthetically but also provide visitors with a calming, immersive experience that fosters a deeper connection with the environment.

Visitor Parking

Visitors to the AGB currently utilize the surface parking when visiting the gallery. As part of the expansion, dedicated underground parking should be considered and further evaluated. Preliminary study indicates that the expansion could accommodate approximately 40 spaces. Some of these will be allocated for staff, but it is recommended that some also be for visitors. Planners should also encourage the use of green transportation with dedicated EV charging stalls and bike parking.

Education and Public Programs

The AGB is more than an art gallery; it is also an informal learning venue that fosters curiosity, creativity, and close engagement with artworks. Education and public programs will spark conversations across generations and sectors, helping people understand traditional materials in new ways. Classes, demos, and workshops will highlight global practices and Indigenous knowledge, encouraging creativity, experimentation, and blending between art and craft. Through community-focused programs dedicated to health, wellness, and interactive exploration, the AGB will serve as a valuable educational resource for meaningful, community-based learning experiences.

The program proposes a collocated suite of spaces to serve the higher-level education programming needs. Spaces are intentionally located together to promote cross pollination of ideas across different age groups, but also for functional efficiencies. Additionally, the program also recognizes the benefits of distributing some program spaces, such as flexible classrooms, with other curatorial spaces to promote cross pollination of ideas and a diverse learning experience for its users. Equally, the additional program space will relieve the scheduling and programming pressure on the studios. Ultimately, discoveries happen, and cross-pollination can flourish when these elements come together.



The AGB encourages intergenerational learning through programs that reflect its diverse audiences, with a focus on families, youth, and underserved communities. It aims to be a safe, inclusive space for meaningful connection, curiosity, and shared exploration.

Recommended program spaces include:

Collaboration Marshalling Zone

The Collaboration Marshalling Zone is conceived as a central marshalling area for large groups on arrival and departure, communal orientation for the daily programs, and an organizing hub from which other program spaces are accessed, such as lockers and classrooms. This space may also be accessible during non-gallery hours for special events or activities. While not a formal gallery, this space may also include the display of non-sensitive art (or in casework) or some level of student-generated interpretive content.

Flexible Program / Activity Room

A single program classroom is included in the program. This room should be collocated with other education programming spaces and will function as a “hands on” working room for 25-30 people for interactive activities, programs, and various workshops etc. This space should include a wet counter to enable more messy production activities.

Object Study / Research Room

A flexible 3D-object study room to be used by researchers requiring direct, supervised access to AGB collection items. The room should be large enough to accommodate a small seminar class of 8-10 people. FF&E requirements include short-term secure object storage (either millwork or in secure adjacent room), worktables, gallery track lighting and a wall hanging/chair rail display system for 2D collection items. Environmental controls are required. Preferred access to this space should be via the public side and the back-of-house side, and with routing to the vaults to minimize the risk to collections through movement.

Artist-in-Residence Studio

A single multipurpose maker room for an *Artist-in-Residence* or for hands-on art classes, life drawing courses etc. is included. Finishings in this space should be highly durable, washable and anticipate programming that is messy in nature.



Left to Right: Left: Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal; Mingei International Museum, San Diego; Children's Library Discovery Center, New York.

Craft Maker Studios



The maker studios are a unique asset in the region, and in high demand, but long-term institutional sustainability will depend heavily on making them more accessible to more people more of the time.

A vital element in achieving the broader vision for the AGB is to increase access to education program spaces, and particularly the craft maker studios. The studios are an important community programming resource, and potentially a source for exhibit content. Making the studios more accessible to more people is the key to long-term sustainability. And by physically and metaphorically dissolving the real and perceived boundaries to access all its spaces, the gallery can strengthen its role as a space for creative collaboration.

The program has assumed that almost all the existing studio functions are provided in the new building.¹⁷ In addition, the program includes three new studios – Jewelry, Screen Printing & Fabric, and a flexible Clean Studio for textile work. Further, a small glass blowing studio was also considered although it is not included in the program at this time (largely due to technical requirements). Design teams, however, are encouraged to continue this conversation in the design stage.

When compared to the existing studios, which total approximately 11,535 sq. ft., the new facility program proposes an increase to 12,150 sq. ft., representing an **additional 600 sq. ft. of programmable studio area**.

A summary of the programmed studios includes:

Studio Name	Size (nsf)	Studio Name	Size (nsf)
Raku Shed	1,200	Textile (Weavers) Studio & Storage	1,850
Sculpture / Woodworking Studio	1,100	Jewelry Studio	500
Combined Ceramics / Clay Studio	2,500	Screen Printing Fabric Studio	600
Kiln Room	400	Clean Studio (Flex Function)	1,000
Fine Arts Studio & Storage	1,500		
Photo Studio & Storage	1,500	Total	12,150

These proposed changes unlock new benefits for artists, educators, and community members, expanding access, improving functionality, and creating more inclusive, flexible spaces for creativity to thrive.

- ✓ **Enhanced Studio Access Through Addition of Education Centre:** Separating the Education Centre from the Craft Maker Studios limits competition for space, allowing more dedicated, uninterrupted access to studios for artists, AGB studio members, and community users. This shift dramatically increases the availability and functionality of the studios for programming and personal practice.
- ✓ **Extended Hours Through Separate Entrance:** A dedicated entrance to the studios enables before- and after-hours access, expanding usage opportunities and supporting more flexible scheduling for classes, independent use, and special programming - a key step toward long-term sustainability.
- ✓ **Alleviated Scheduling Pressure:** By relocating the school visits and camp education programming to a purpose-built Education Centre, the AGB can relieve scheduling congestion in the studios. This ensures each space serves its intended purpose more effectively, enhancing the overall user experience.
- ✓ **Greater Inclusion and Creativity:** With studios less overburdened by educational overlap, the AGB can welcome a broader range of makers, including underserved communities, promoting creativity, inclusion, and community-building across generations and disciplines.

¹⁷ Exceptions include the existing Photo Studio and Darkroom, which have not been included in the proposed program due to low usage and inflexibility for other programming. Also, the Potters Studio and Clay Studio have been combined into a single flexible Ceramics and Clay Studio.

Finally, because the studios support a range of functions, activities, and technical needs, it is not possible to define every requirement in detail at the programming stage. It will be up to the design team to finalize the specifics of each space during design. Teams should use the current function and setup of each studio as a reference point, while working closely with the client to ensure future needs are fully understood and addressed.

Key operational principles include:

- Recommended that studios be collocated (as much as possible) into a suite of space for operational and planning efficiencies.
- After-hours access is preferred to enable flexibility in program scheduling.
- Ground floor location is preferred for ease of access but also to enable outdoor activities to occur.
- Studios should be able to support a critical mass of approximately 20-25 people depending on their function and activity. Refer to the space program for additional information.

Gallery and Exhibits

The exhibit galleries will include a mix of temporary and semi-permanent spaces showcasing rotating works from the collection, new commissions, and acquisitions. Designed for flexibility, they will support a range of media, curatorial approaches, large-scale traveling exhibitions, and in-gallery performances or programs. 2025 marks the 50th anniversary of the AGB, providing an opportunity to address the environmental and emotional contexts of home. As such, future installations will circulate stories of place and our relationship to time and will ground visitors in the cultural context of the region, while temporary shows will explore themes that move across and between communities.



Content will spark storytelling that reflects broad community perspectives and the intimate nuances of individual works, allowing visitors to see themselves in the exhibitions and deepening the AGB's role as both a cultural and human experience.

Permanent and Temporary Exhibit Galleries

A large amount of gallery area will be dedicated to exhibits that draw on works from the permanent collection. Most of the exhibit spaces will feature aesthetic displays that focus on the works of art, with some interpretation and media. Galleries should be column free where possible. The recommended ceiling height should be a minimum of 20 feet throughout with an open ceiling structure. Design teams may consider the use of adjacent niche spaces, or mezzanine conditions with lower ceiling heights to accommodate smaller-scale items that may be related to the larger exhibit.

These galleries must meet the requirements of international Curators, Conservators and Lenders for lighting, finishes, communications systems, environmental conditions, and security for works of art with additional provision for microclimates as required.

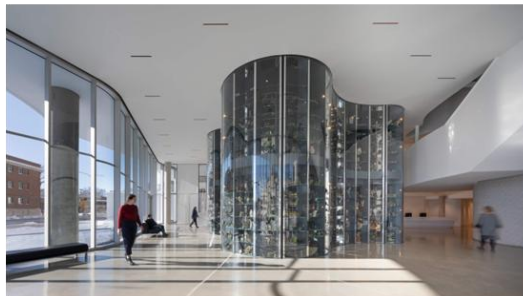
Community and Emerging Studio Artist Gallery

The AGB is keen to facilitate and promote direct encounters and exhibit opportunities with artworks from emerging studio artists or guest curators. The community and studio artist gallery will enable the AGB to

create greater outreach and engagement opportunities by enabling a variety of media and exhibit techniques, or subject matter. Given the nature of the likely exhibits, environmental conditions may not be required. Ground level access, and visibility from the street, are priorities for the studio gallery. Access from the Education Collaborative Zone is also a preference.

Visible Vault

To expand opportunities for interpretation and engagement, the inclusion of visible (or accessible) storage is recommended within the program. More than a practical solution for relieving pressure on the collection vault, visible storage can become a dynamic centerpiece of the visitor experience - much like the innovative model at the Winnipeg Art Gallery (as seen in the following image). By integrating this feature as a prominent design element, the gallery can invite self-directed exploration and discovery, particularly for students, researchers, and curious visitors. While specific storage needs are still to be determined, the design team should continue working closely with curatorial staff to explore how visible storage can function both practically and symbolically at the heart of the experience.



Top Left to Right: MacKenzie Art Gallery, Regina; Laguna Art Gallery, Laguna Beach; Elders Meeting Room
Bottom Left to Right: Cleveland Art Museum, Cleveland; Winnipeg Art Gallery, Winnipeg; Melbourne Museum, Melbourne

Indigenous Narratives / Fireplace Room

Access and inclusion are vital. It is about providing a space where *one doesn't need permission to go and gather*. Here, students, staff and visitors will have the opportunity to co-mingle and share ideas. Elders are a library but without books. Stories passed down by generations are vital. The narratives room is a malleable space designed to accommodate "knowledge-yet-to-come," and be adaptable to change as new protocols of ceremony and context are discovered over time. It can be used for ceremony, display, visitation, and storage and as such, modular design is preferred so the space can easily be transformed for specific use. Anticipated usage may include meetings in the circle (15 persons), consultation, or pipe ceremony and smudging.¹⁸

¹⁸ Engagement spaces should be designed to accommodate significant amounts of smoke without triggering smoke detectors or drifting to adjacent spaces. Smoke carries prayers and ideally should be able to travel outside.



Roya Del Sol. Dry Thunder. Art Gallery of Burlington. Photo Credit: Jimmy Limit

Collection Storage and Exhibit Support

Managing an active collection borrowing program to support a range of permanent galleries and changing exhibition spaces requires back-of-house facilities for receiving shipments, unpacking crates, temporary storage, and safe movement of collections. The collection support sequence is important for the efficiency and security of all collections (loaned or permanent).

The best practice for galleries is to have dedicated shipping and handling facilities for collections and exhibits, separate and secure from those for food, retail, events, and other service deliveries and trash removal. This requirement is to maintain high levels of cleanliness and security, but also the frequent time and space conflicts between the two functions.

Functional requirements for these spaces include:

Collection Storage

See *Chapter 4, Section 4.2 AGB Collection Storage* for storage requirements and recommendations.

Collections Loading Dock

An exterior, covered truck loading bay dedicated for collections movement, sized to accommodate semi-trailer trucks. The truck surround should be able to fully cover the trailer and cab with secure exterior and interior overhead doors for security and environmental purposes. Appropriate dock lift-levelling hardware should be provided, depending on final grade elevations.

Collections Shipping and Receiving

An enclosed dedicated area is provided to allow for secure shipping/receiving of collection items.

Crating and Uncrating

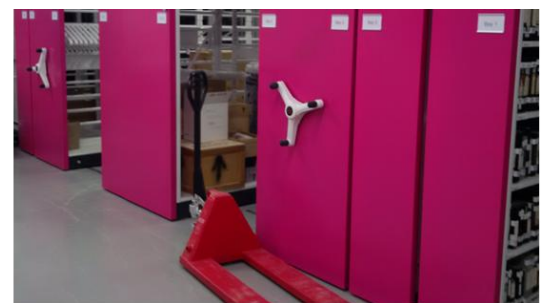
An open area, adjacent to the Shipping and Receiving for packing/ unpacking or collection items.

Travelling Exhibitions (Transit) Storage

It is necessary to hold (or acclimatize) collections on loan from other institutions which will be displayed or are awaiting onward shipment. Collection-level environmental conditions are required for this space.

Crate Storage

For the storage of temporary exhibition crates while on loan, with appropriate climate controls.



Left to Right: Crate Storage MacKenzie Art Gallery, Regina; Clean Prep Ottawa Art Gallery, Ottawa; Compact Storage Ottawa Art Gallery, Ottawa

Clean Workshop / Exhibit Prep Workroom

Clean space for mount-making for exhibition or preparation, and for potential conservation work on the collections. This room needs to be a dust-free, clean space for the safety and preservation of collections handled in this space. Includes storage capacity for frames and mattes of various sizes.

Carpentry Workshop

Standard workshop to accommodate exhibit-based minor repairs and touch-ups of exhibition furniture, and crate construction. It can be located outside the secure collection zone, if desired, and designed to accommodate bulk supplies, tools and work surfaces.

Isolation Room

Dedicated for collection items that require disinfestation or separation from other collections while risk factors are mitigated. Climate controlled, this room may include inert nitrogen gas treatment facilities or a chest freezer (FF&E to be determined by others).

Collections Freight Elevator

Dedicated for the movement of collections only, it requires keyed access to every floor on which collections are stored, processed, or exhibited. Recommended size of 8'-0" (L) x 10'-0" (W) x 10'-0" (H) with a capacity of 10,000 lbs. Design teams should confirm this dimension and capacity during the design stage.

Collections Environment: The above spaces will contain collections and therefore must meet the same environmental conditions as the exhibit spaces. See Chapter 4 Section 4.2 AGB Collections for environment, temperature and climate recommendations.

General Administrative

Providing quality environments for staff and volunteers is critical to the sustainability of the staffing model. Staff spaces should be uplifting with access to natural light and provide opportunities for a variety of work-related functions to occur. Continuing with a democratic approach to collocation, the General Administrative area includes a combination of enclosed offices and semi-private open workstations for all staff (assumed 28 staff), along with shared, open collaborative work areas for volunteers.¹⁹

Spaces in this group include:

Private Offices (x10)

A small complement of individual offices has been included in the program, specifically for senior leadership and those staff requiring privacy. In general, offices should be of standard fit out, except for the Executive Director office which includes additional furniture and fittings typical to the position.

¹⁹ Design teams should confirm staffing numbers prior to the design stage, as policies regarding in-person working may have changed.

Flexible Workstations (x18)

The program recognizes that not every staff member requires a private office. Workstations will enable more staff to work within less area, while still providing sufficient privacy. At the design stage, there should be consideration given for the rapidly changing needs of workstations due to hybrid meetings and sound bleed.

Collaborative Work Area (Volunteers, Gallery Facilitators)

To facilitate drop-in or hoteling capability for staff and volunteers who spend most of their time working in the galleries or other locations. FF&E includes combination of open workstations, worktables and chairs, counter surface, and lockable upper and lower millwork.

Virtual Meeting and Staff Work Room

A small meeting room is included to afford staff privacy either during a meeting, or to work in a quiet environment for a short time. Rooms may include table and chairs, video conferencing or a computer terminal and be able to accommodate meetings of up to 25 people at a time. Sound transmission should also be considered.

Support Areas

Staff and volunteers need a place to secure their personal belongings while in their work area. Both staff and volunteers benefit from a small Staff Lounge and Kitchenette to be used as a lunch area where they can relax and socialize, thereby making it possible for them to stay longer at the gallery. A first aid and wellness room are also provided for nursing mothers or staff requiring individual health-related time.

Design teams should confirm final staffing requirements and standard equipment sizing during the design stage as policies regarding in person working may have changed.

Exterior and Grounds

Vitally important to the visitor experience (and the visitor movement) are the outdoor spaces. The outdoor spaces celebrate the important connection to the Lake Ontario waterfront and nature at large, will allow visitors to pause, rest, relax and recharge, but more so will be an opportunity to launch deeper conversations about the role of restoring landscapes. Naturalized areas (particularly to replace the existing AGB courtyard) should be seen as a direct extension to the visitor experience, and can be culturally driven, quiet, and contemplative yet also suitable for private and public events.



The clay and pottery collections reflect a deeply rooted relationship with the land and form a vital part of the overall project ethos. A reimagined AGB can be the physical and spiritual bridge, linking visitors with the land, each other, and all that surrounds it.

A mix of inspiring outdoor experiences and places are envisioned including:

Indigenous Gathering / Honour Circle

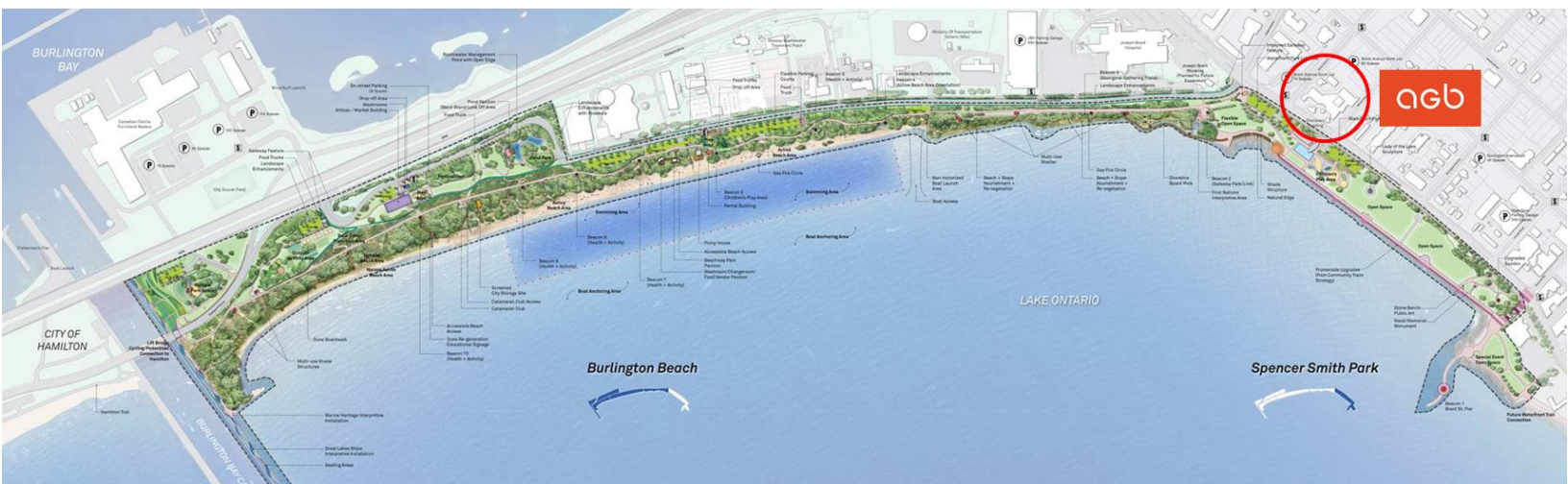
A space for gathering or ceremony held by Indigenous communities to acknowledge and celebrate important events, such as births, weddings, deaths, and other significant milestones. Outdoor power, lighting and water services may be required in certain situations to serve art installations and interpretation, events, and maintenance activities.

Dye / Medicine Gardens

An important part of traditional Indigenous medicine practices, helping to preserve and promote the healing knowledge of these communities while also fostering sustainable agriculture and land stewardship practices.

Culture / Waterfront Trail

While the trunk sewer line was originally seen as a constraint, it now presents a bold opportunity to create a continuous urban green corridor connecting the Brant Museum to City Hall. By reimagining this infrastructure corridor as a nature trail, the City can create an inspiring linear park that invites movement, gathering, and discovery. This green spine has the potential to shape a larger urban narrative, linking civic landmarks and sparking renewed public life along its route. The City has already developed a compelling master plan for its waterfront, and this culture trail will further enhance the overall experience by seamlessly integrating with existing waterfront plans, enriching both the natural landscape and the cultural fabric of the area.



Top Left to Right: Kröller-Müller Art Museum, Netherlands; Nature Trail (Unknown)
 Middle Left to Right: Honouring Circle, Thunder Bay; Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao; Nasher Sculpture Museum, Dallas
 Bottom: Spencer Smith Park & Burlington Beach Masterplan: Brook McIlroy Architects

6.4 Journey by Persona

Implementing the larger vision goes beyond simply identifying physical spaces or listing their functions. It requires thoughtful consideration of the people these spaces are intended to serve, and the experiences they will have as they move through the building. This is as much about the emotional and intellectual journey as it is about architecture and layout.

Families and children seeking inspiration and play, artists and craft makers engaging in hands-on learning, and Indigenous community members looking for a space of cultural expression and connection, all experience the gallery in different, yet overlapping ways. Each visitor brings their own expectations, needs, and stories, and the design must respond with spaces that are intuitive, welcoming, and meaningful.

The following graphics offer an illustrative interpretation of what a typical visit might look like for these audiences. It aims to demonstrate how the spaces and users work together to support a fluid, interconnected journey - much like a Möbius strip, where boundaries blur and experiences overlap seamlessly from one to the next. In this model, the roles of observer, participant, and creator shift naturally throughout the visit, allowing creativity, discovery, and belonging to unfold through the physical environment.

The three groups considered include:

- Families and Children
- Artists and Craft Makers
- Indigenous Community Members



Families and Children

Families are central to the AGB's vision - essential to fostering lasting connections and building a vibrant, inclusive community. For many, the journey starts online, where the AGB's website highlights creative programs and youth-centered experiences. Stepping into the Welcome Centre, visitors are guided through the Orientation Zone, which gently introduces the Gallery's purpose and encourages personal exploration. Their adventure begins in the Lee Chin Family Gallery and continues through to the Program Room, where age-specific activities spark curiosity and creativity. The AGB is not only a place to view art - it's a place to make it. In the maker studios, children can take part in craft lessons led by experienced educators and studio makers, learning new techniques while expressing their creativity. As the day winds down, quiet conversations with Elders in the Narratives Room create moments of intergenerational connection. A cozy Reading Nook or a nap under the trees in Brock Park offers a peaceful close to a day full of wonder.





Artists and Craft Makers

For studio members, craft and maker artists, the AGB offers a journey of inspiration, skill-building, and connection to materiality. It begins in the Welcome Centre and flows into Visible Storage, where the depth of the collection sparks ideas and dialogue. In the numerous hands-on maker studios, artists engage with instructors and studio leads, honing their craft across a range of different mediums. The experience continues in the exhibit galleries, including a dedicated space for emerging community and studio artists whose work often takes shape in the very studios onsite. A visit to the Artist-in-Residence Studio offers insight into contemporary practice in action. Outside, a stop in the Sculpture Garden or a walk along the shoreline of Lake Ontario in Rotary Park offers space to reflect. Rooted in the land, the journey ends with a reminder that clay - drawn from this place - has always been at the heart of AGB's maker ethos.





Indigenous Community Members

The ethos of the AGB will come alive through storytelling, as well as the knowledge and wisdom that has been passed down from generations. All members of the community will be welcomed and invited to join in the forum of truthful discovery. Entering the Welcome Centre, meaning-making is front and centre through the visual connections with Lake Ontario. The Lee Chin Family Gallery will advance the stories of truth and reconciliation and make even larger connections to the collection. Next, a stop in the Medicine Gardens to gather sacred plantings for use in the Honour Circle where visitors will hear the teachings of the medicine wheel. For more private meetings, prayer, or offerings to Elders and community leaders, the Indigenous Narratives Room is a welcoming space for spiritual wellbeing. And, like everyone else who experiences the gallery, the Art Lounge provides a casual atmosphere to unwind with friends. The cycle ends with a quiet stroll in the gardens, or a visit to the outdoor ceremonial space for a pipe ceremony or dance.



agb.life



6.5 Functional Adjacencies

The relationship between spaces is critical to maintaining efficiency and best practice, particularly given the complex functional and security requirements of an art gallery with a large component of public space (studios). The following adjacency diagrams visually communicate the appropriate interactions among major spaces identified in the program. These diagrams illustrate:

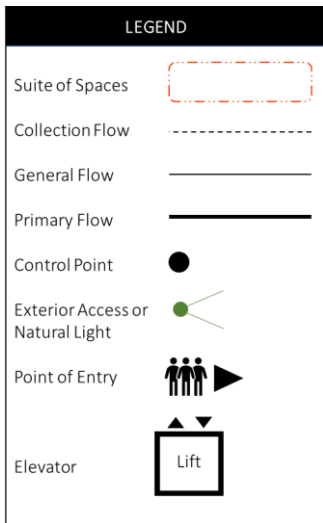
Access: Entrance to and egress from the gallery for visitors and staff

Adjacency: The sequence of primary and support spaces within functional areas

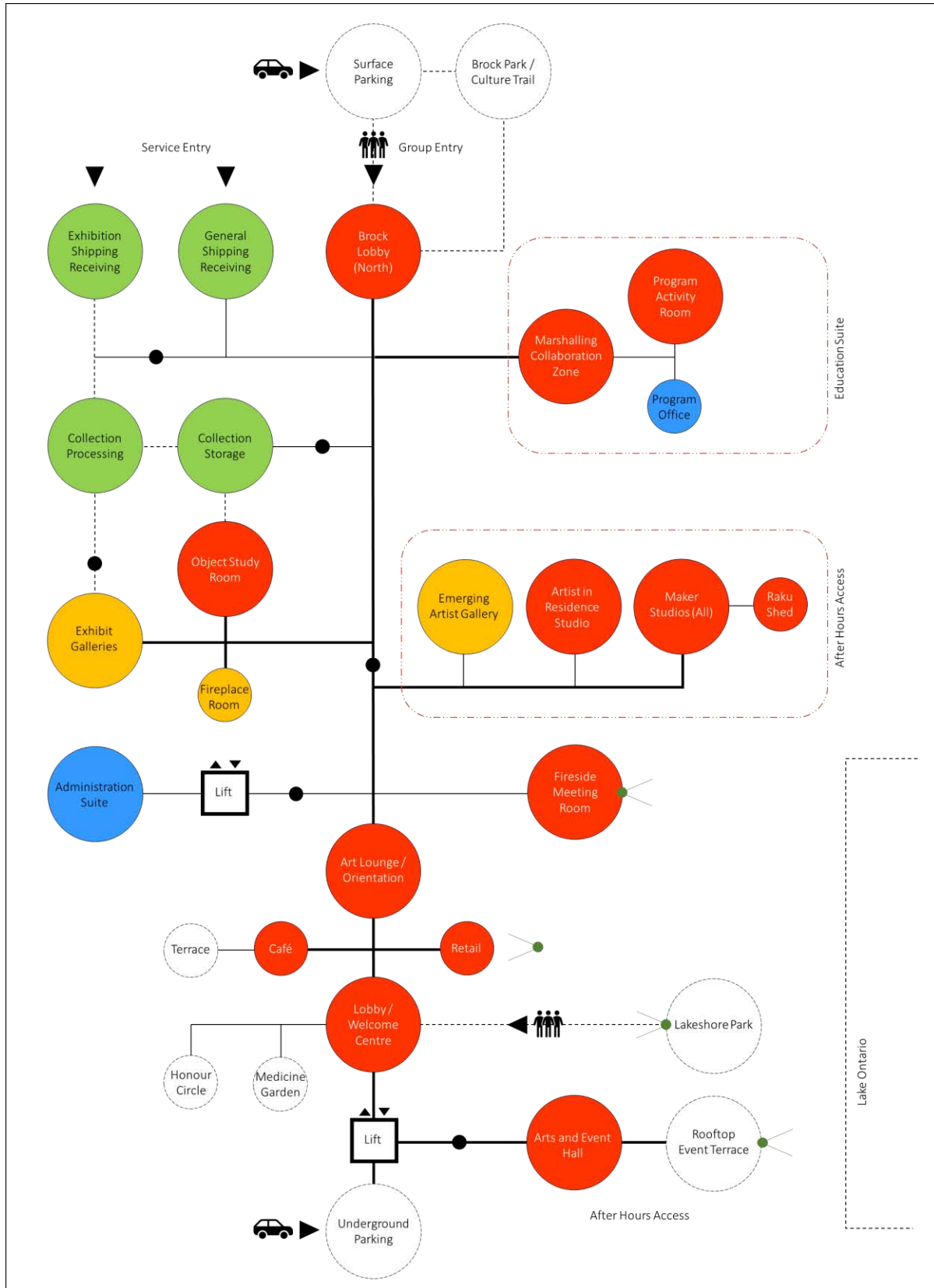
Circulation: The routes of travel for visitors and staff (front-of-house) overlaid with collections, staff, and supplies (back-of-house)

Security: The high-security zone, and key control points, where collections are displayed/circulated and held, or visitor access is controlled

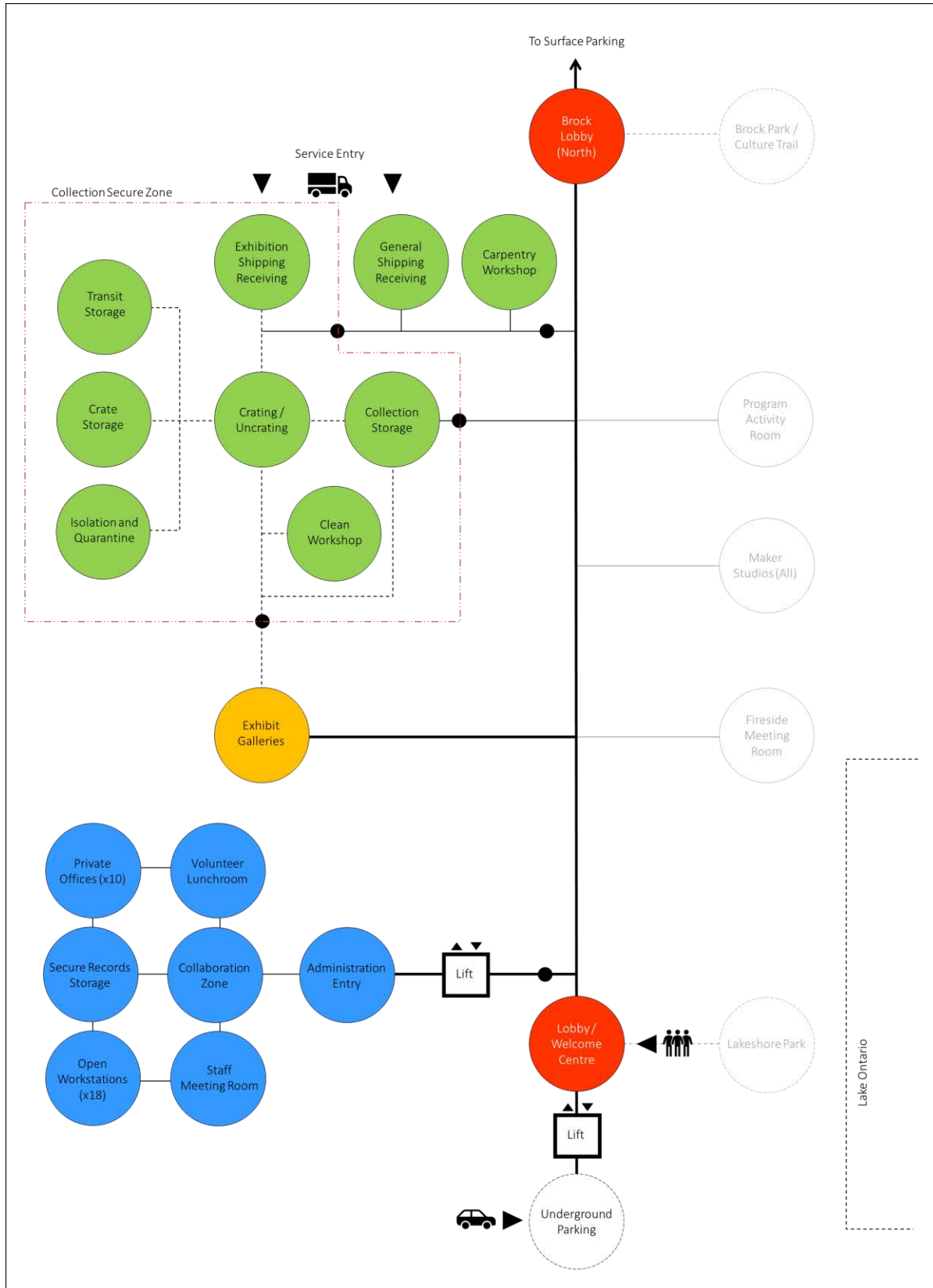
While these diagrams are illustrative, the individual spaces are not drawn proportionately to each other based on total net area. They should not be read as architectural floor plans, but rather to diagram recommended circulation and flow as a guide for the subsequent design.



Front-of-House



Back-of-House / Support Areas





Chapter 7

CONCEPT DESIGN

7. CONCEPT DESIGN

This chapter begins with a summary of the physical conditions of the existing site and building that have helped shape the overall design approach. It also describes the key features of the preliminary design. These diagrams represent a 'proof-of-concept' test fit of the program area, and do not necessarily indicate a final or "shovel ready" design solution.

7.1 Existing Site Factors

Trunk Sewer Line

Part of the site the current gallery is built on includes an easement for the main sanitary sewer line owned by the Halton Region. This 2-metre diameter trunk sewer is critical City infrastructure. It is highly unusual to have a building placed on top of an infrastructure corridor of this importance, as access to the sewer line (as part of standard or emergency maintenance), is severely hampered by the building which straddles it.

This report recommends that the current building is inadequate for renewal and should be demolished. A key metric for this recommendation is to address the need for the trunk sewer to be made accessible. In considering the site area for a new building, this report recommends that the north boundary be amended to permit a 13 metre / 40 foot wide easement over the sewer line, which can be dedicated as an open space green corridor. This easement of 1,505 sq. m. / 16,200 sq. ft. (in combination with a revised north property line bordering the south side of the easement) has the added benefit of expanding the public open space contiguous with Brock Park.²⁰

Site Area

The City-owned site of the current AGB is 4,478 sq. m. / 48,200 sq. ft. in size. Considering the easement noted above, the recommended net new site area for the new gallery is therefore 4,337 sq. m. / 46,683 sq. ft. or 3.20 % less than the current site. While smaller overall, this site area provides ample room for the creation of a new gallery of approximately 77,000 - 80,000 gross sq. ft. in a 3-storey structure that greatly expands the size, programming and impact, while also dramatically expanding public outdoor green spaces that connect to Brock Park to the north and Spencer Smith Park to the south.

Adjacent Properties

In considering the future potential of the gallery site, additional possibilities for an expanded development site that may include other uses (including housing, green space or other uses strategically aligned with the gallery development) may be considered including three parcels that are privately owned.

Facing Lakeshore Road on the southeast side of the block, a small triangular parcel of 566 sq. m. / 6,092 sq. ft. currently accommodates a single-family home.²¹ The gallery encircles this lot on three sides. While this study illustrates that this parcel is not required to accommodate the spatial needs of a new gallery, the

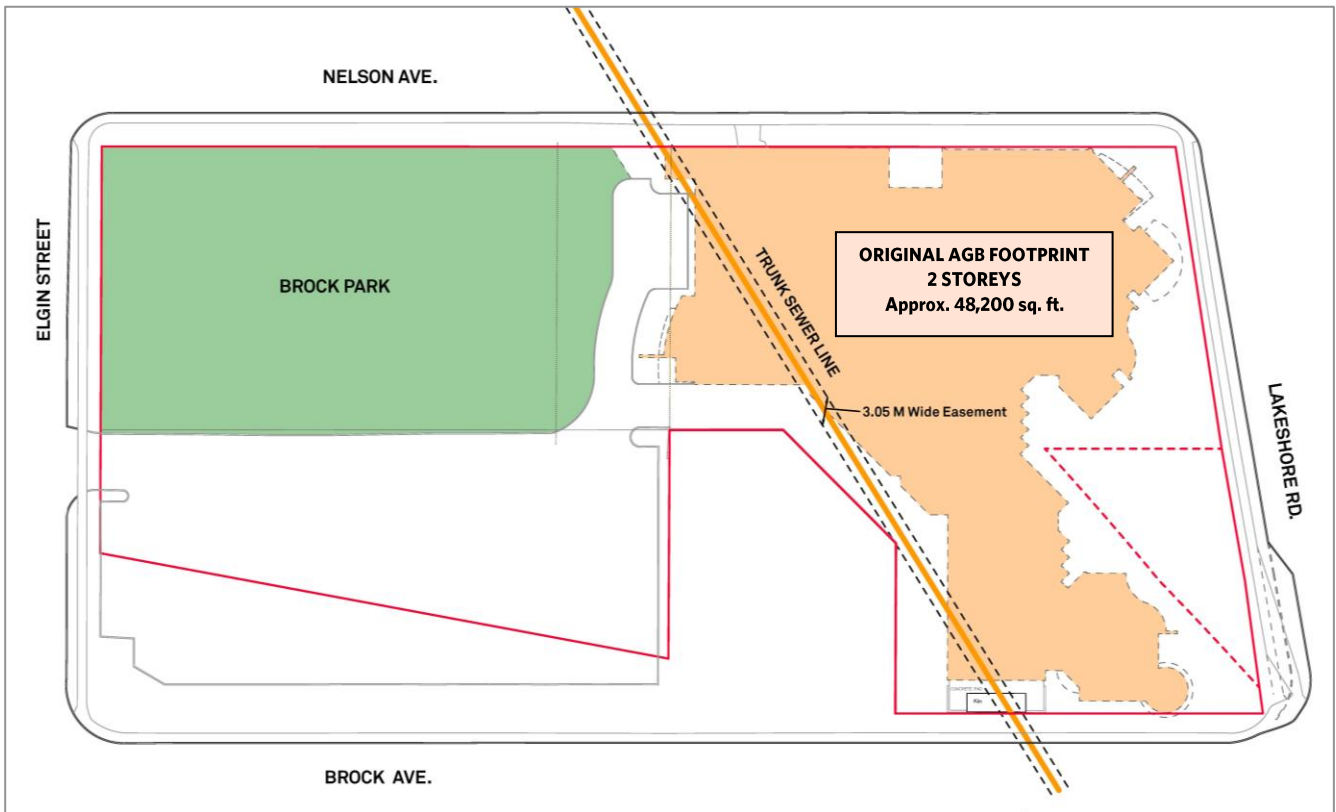
²⁰ The existing park area of 3,756 sq. m. / 40,429 sq. ft. would therefore expand by almost 60% to 5,975 sq. m. / 64,314 sq. ft.

²¹ This site is referenced elsewhere in the report as the Veitch Property.

presence of a single-family dwelling directly in front of the gallery limits the visual presence and impact of the gallery as a landmark and gateway to the City on Lakeshore Road..

Two other contiguous commercial properties front onto Brock Avenue collectively are 3,105 sq. m. / 33,420 sq. ft. in area. While these other non-City owned parcels may be considered in planning for future redevelopment scenarios it is noted that the current land area owned by the City can accommodate a stand-alone future gallery.

The following site plan diagrams the existing site conditions noted above.



7.2 Proof of Concept Design

Based on the space program, BMA has developed a 'proof-of-concept' design that illustrates the potential of the site to accommodate the new program and to provide exciting new relationships to both Spencer Smith Park and the waterfront as well as Brock Park.

Key features of the design include:

The Living Drum (Visible Collection Storage)

The gallery's signature feature is a circular drum-like form with a spiral pathway connecting all three levels. This gently sloping ramp not only provides access but also showcases the extensive collections that would otherwise remain out of public view. At the core of the drum is a spacious atrium open to floors above and below, illuminated by clerestory windows that fill the space with natural light. From the exterior, this iconic drum stands as a landmark and gateway to downtown Burlington.

On the ground floor, the drum could enclose an interior forest serving as a calming natural centerpiece around which the spiral ramp winds. Display cases are thoughtfully integrated within the ramp itself, allowing visitors to view the ceramics from both sides, while simultaneously connecting with the forest and Lake Ontario beyond. This design reflects the gallery's commitment to wellness through art by emphasizing connections to nature and incorporating green features, fostering a space where healing and creativity coexist.

The concept for this landmark element was first discussed during the Indigenous Sharing Circle hosted during the study process. It referenced the inclusive circle, the sky realm and the drum as cultural narratives that assist in restoring Indigenous presence into the heart of Burlington and expanding awareness of the millennial settlement of this region by Indigenous Peoples. Drawing also on the motif of a vessel for ancestral memory embracing both its Indigenous roots, the design charts a forward-looking vision that makes room for diverse voices and critical cultural discourse.

Gift Shop and Café

The expanded Gift Shop on the ground floor flanks the main entrance and has tall full glass frontages on both Lakeshore Road and Nelson Avenue providing vital retail exposure. Its displays spill out into the lobby / entrance area and help to animate the Welcome Centre.

The new Café is located on centre with the main entrance and has exposure to both the Welcome Centre as well as the west-facing gallery muse. A variety of seating areas are provided including open seating within the Welcome Centre lobby space, bench, booth and bar seating within the Café itself and west facing outdoor terrace seating in the gallery muse. The kitchen serves both the Café as well as the event space on the third floor through a dedicated service elevator.

Galleries and Exhibitions

Six Exhibition Galleries are clustered on the second floor and provide continuity in movement between the various galleries. In addition to the interior galleries, expansive circulation spaces are designed for resting, lingering and social exchange. They are wide enough for lounge seating and additional exhibit areas and benefit from sunlit views to the lake and park areas providing a diversified visitor experience.

The distribution of key public programs has also been configured to optimize use after hours for non-gallery functions.

Studios and Education Programs

The Studios and Education areas are grouped together in the 2-storey southwest wing and can be accessed after hours from the gallery muse / north entrance which is also the location of the security office. When used after hours by the community, this wing can operate comfortably without access to the main building and includes its own washrooms, elevator and staircases.

At the same time, during gallery hours the Ceramics Studio has a strong presence within the ground floor Lobby / Welcome Centre. Visitors will immediately witness ‘artmaking’ as they enter the building. The studios are unique participatory, community focused programs that are a key attribute and differentiator of the AGB. This studio culture will have a highly visible presence and will be key to the unique AGB experience.

Community Events & Activation

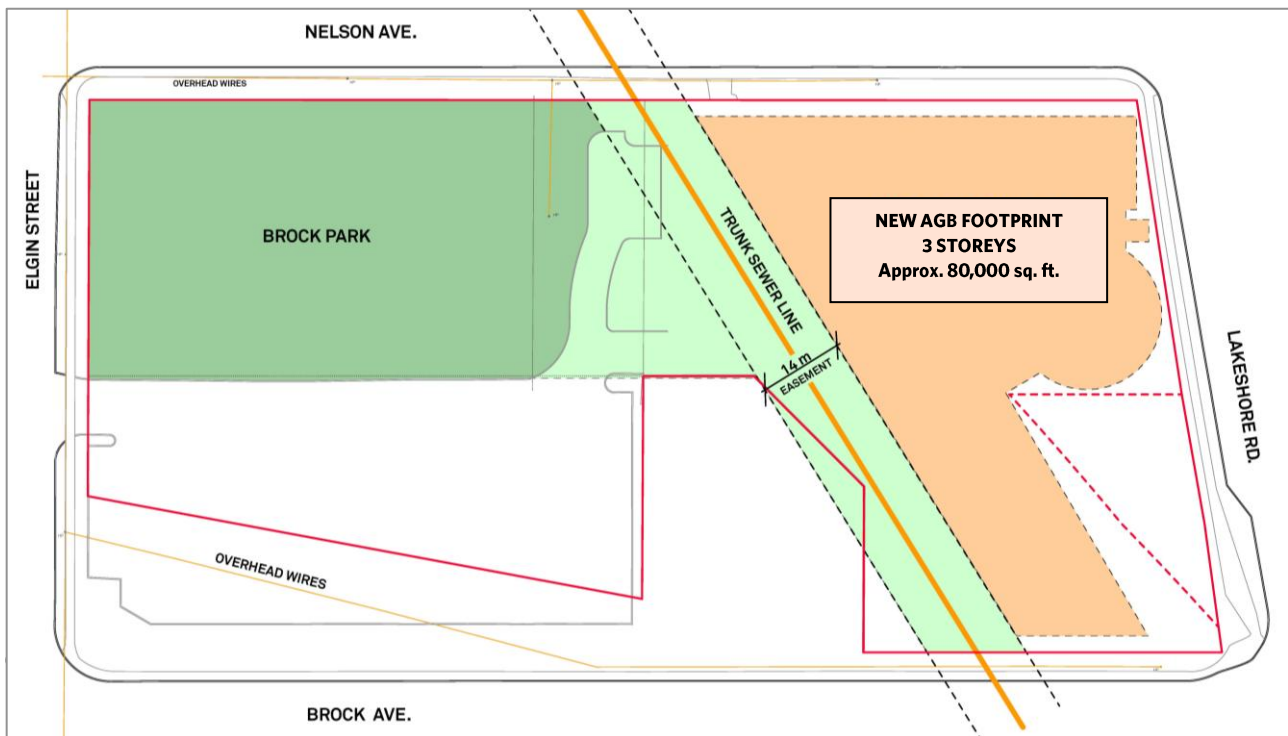
The Event areas are located on the 3rd floor and directly accessible from the lobby and the ‘drum’ spiral pathway. The Event spaces have direct access to various outdoor / roof terraces that overlook, on one side the Lake, and on the other Brock Park and the gallery muse. These event spaces are supported with back-of-house areas including a kitchen servery, laundry and furniture/equipment storage.

As the third floor is the final destination of the spiral path it is important there be a strong public activity on this level, recognizing that events and administrative uses will not in themselves provide daily public interest. A Special Exhibition Area is therefore centred in the 3rd floor circulation space which may be appropriate for iconic pieces from the collection or for special artist installations.

Concept Drawings

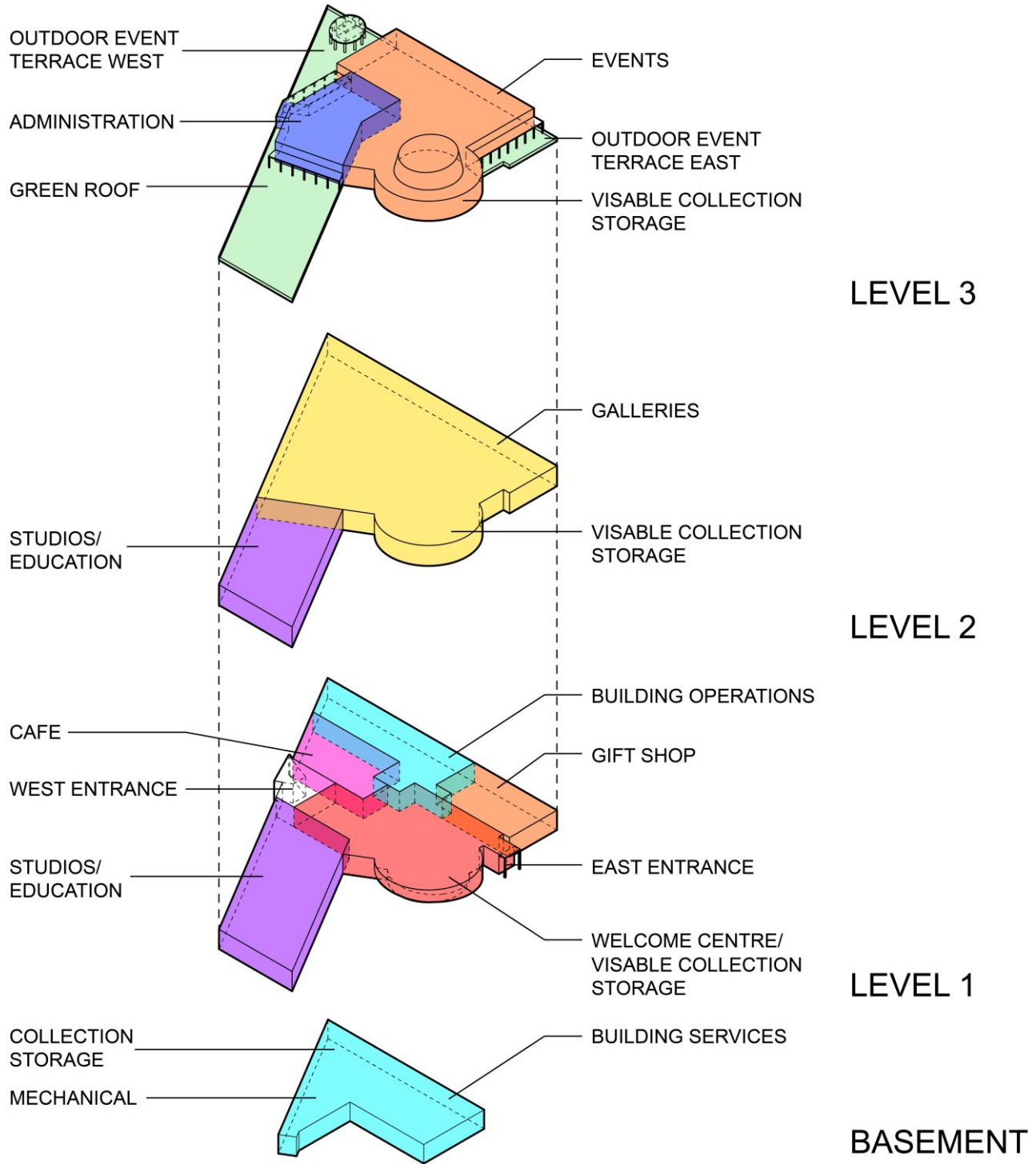
The following ‘proof-of-concept’ drawings, including the site plan below, illustrate the various strategies and efforts to achieve the larger vision for the future AGB and the recommended space needs.

Site Plans





Program Stacking



Concept Massing



Top: View looking Northeast
Bottom: View looking Northwest

Concept Massing



*Top: View looking Southwest
Bottom: View looking Southeast*

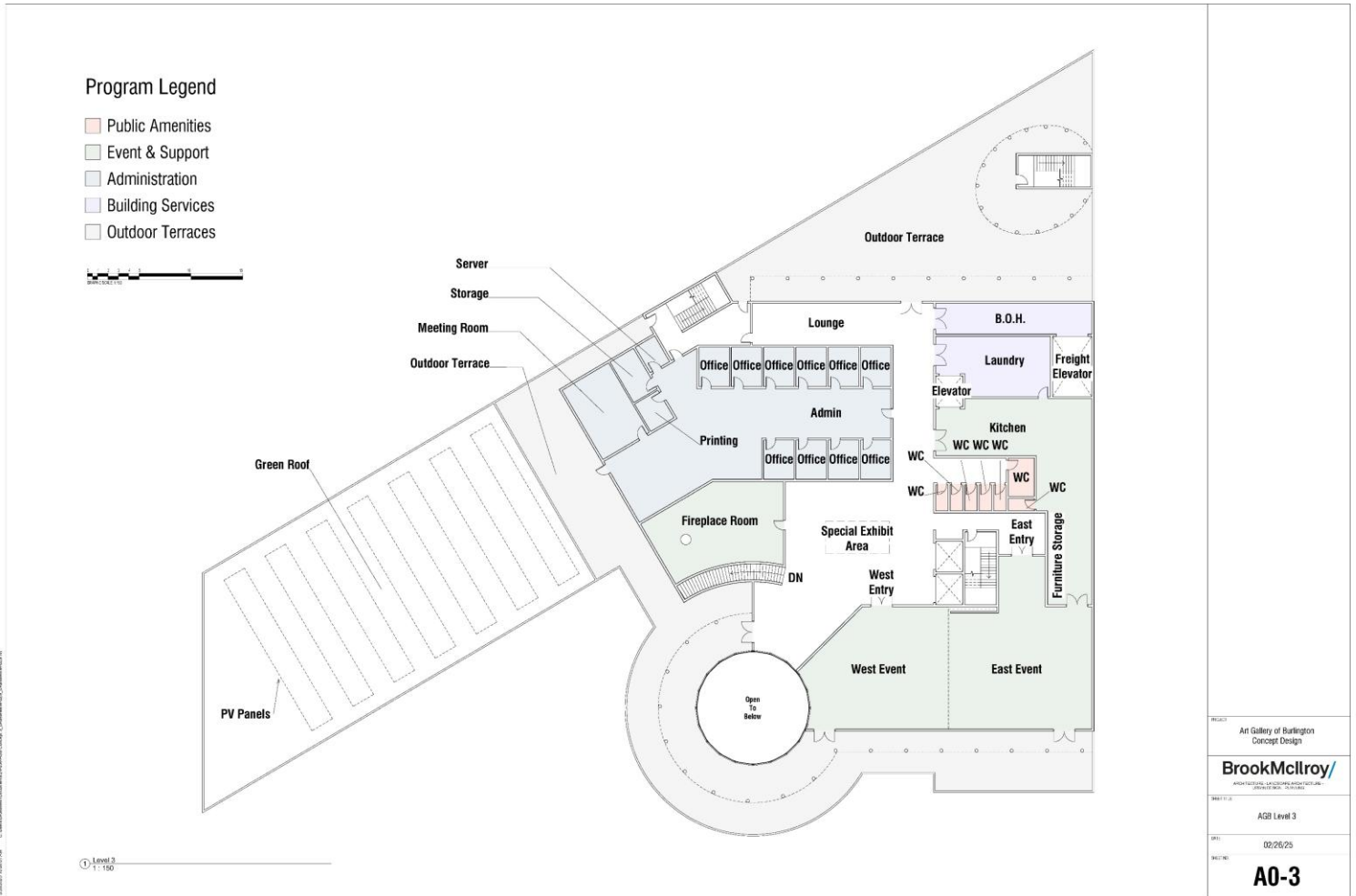
Ground Floor Concept Plan



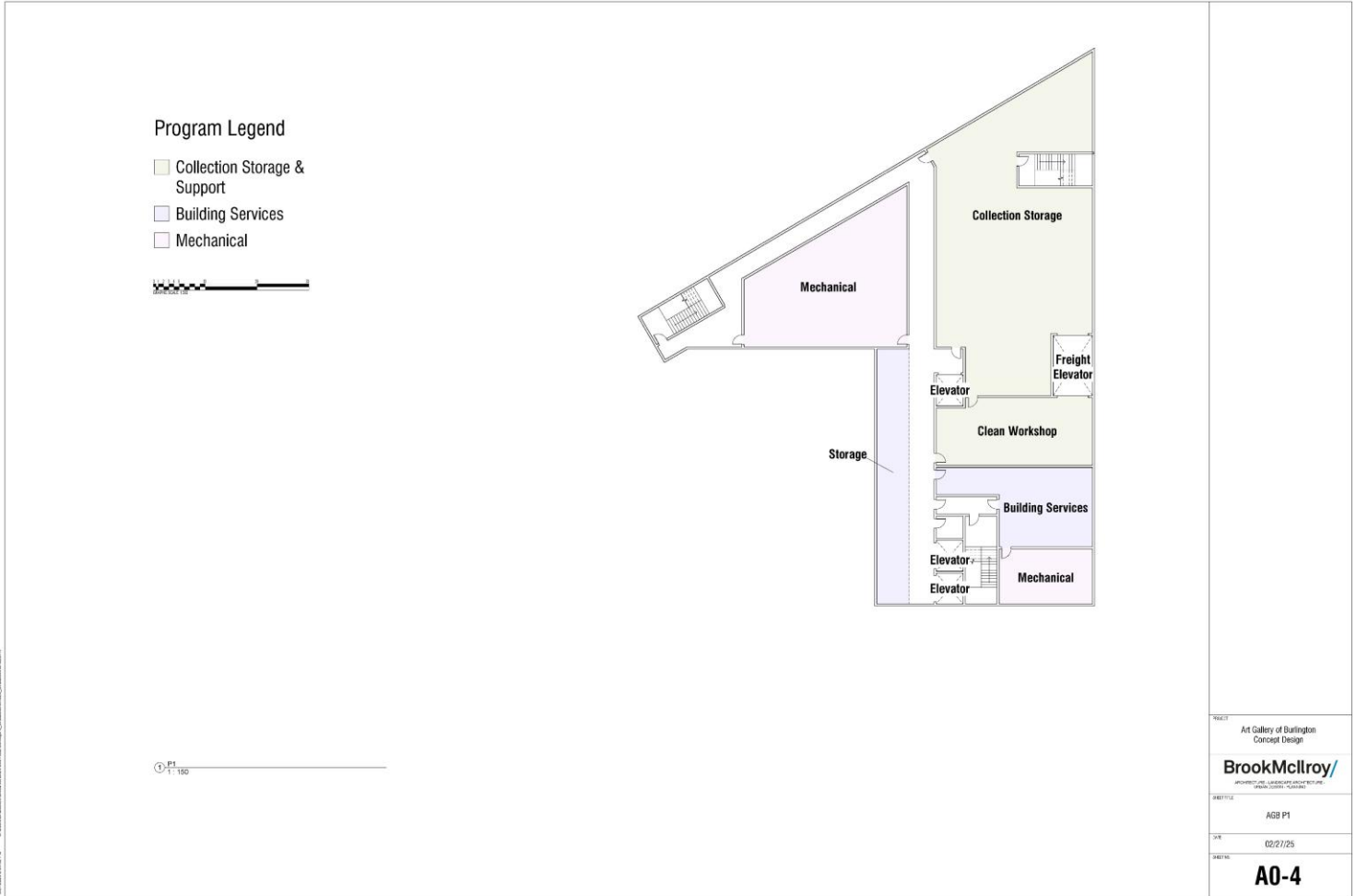
Second Floor Concept Plan



Third Floor Concept Plan



Lower Level Concept Plan



Greenway Cultural Corridor

The proposed Greenway Cultural Corridor envisions a vibrant, walkable connection linking Burlington Beach to City Hall, threading together a series of civic, cultural, and natural landmarks through a thoughtfully designed public realm. Starting at the waterfront, the green path moves past the Art Gallery of Burlington and Gallery Muse, through a revitalized Brock Park and new children’s play area, and continues along Apeldoorn Park toward the Performing Arts Centre and City Hall. A feature crosswalk treatment at the intersection with Lakeshore Road enhances pedestrian visibility and marks a key entry point to this cultural spine. Along the way, the corridor integrates green space, public art, and gathering areas to create a safe, accessible, and enriching pedestrian experience.

This continuous green connection is more than just a pathway, it is a civic gesture that unifies the downtown core, supports cultural destinations, and strengthens the identity of Burlington’s waterfront district. By linking key assets such as the Joseph Brant Museum, Spencer Smith Park, and Brant Street’s commercial and civic heart, the Greenway Cultural Corridor encourages exploration and promotes community interaction. It provides a flexible framework for seasonal programming, family outings, and casual strolls alike, supporting a resilient and inclusive downtown for generations to come.



7.3 Preliminary Capital Cost

To support the functional program, a preliminary order-of-magnitude estimate of capital construction and project costs has been prepared by the BMA. The capital costs are based on the functional program, the concept drawings, and include appropriate contingencies. The following terms have been applied.

- The project has been priced to be completed as a single phase.
- The figures are in advance of architectural design, and as such, include a design and pricing contingency of 15%, a construction contingency of 10%, and a soft costs contingency (permits, legal, engineering/design fees) of 11.5%.
- Demolition of the existing structure is assumed.
- No property acquisition costs are assumed.
- Per square foot cost figures are based on the 2025 *Altus Cost Guide for Museums/Galleries* in the GTA.
- The Altus Cost Guide provides a construction cost range of \$660 to \$1,200 per sq. ft. for museums and gallery buildings. Given the high-quality finishes expected in an art gallery, the specialized studio infrastructure, and strong community expectations, we have assumed a cost of \$1,100 per sq. ft. as a prudent estimate.
- Costs are in 2025 dollars. Escalation costs of approximately 3% per annum should be added based on the date of construction tender.

The **total project is estimated to be approximately \$116,380,000**, of which \$111,380,000 are facility construction costs, and \$5,000,000 are allocated for demolition of the existing structure.

Programmed Building Gross Area (sq. ft)	77,000
Construction Cost / sq. ft.	\$1,100
Base Construction Cost	\$84,700,000
Design Contingency (10%)	\$8,470,000
Construction Contingency (10%)	\$8,470,000
Soft Costs (Permits, Design Fees, Fegal) (11.5%)	\$9,740,000
Total Estimated Construction Cost	\$111,380,000
Demolition Allowance	\$5,000,000
Total Estimated Project Cost	\$116,380,000



Chapter 8

NEXT STEPS

8. NEXT STEPS

This project is driven by the dedication of the entire AGB team, its stakeholders, members, and volunteers, all united in delivering a contemporary new home that fulfills the gallery’s forward-looking mission. The vision and priorities in this document reflect a strong commitment to creating a transformational experience for all who engage with the AGB. The functional program is both practical and aspirational, ensuring recommendations are future-ready and aligned with both gallery goals and wider community needs.

Design teams should review this report, along with *Volume 2: Business Plan*, before detailed design begins to fully understand the mission, vision, and functional requirements.

Next steps may include:

NEXT STEPS

Community Engagement

Although this planning study included an interview process, additional community or user engagement may be seen as a positive benefit, particularly during the design stages.



Fundraising

A fundraising feasibility study or potentially moving directly to a fundraising campaign, promotional sell document and a staff allocation to facilitate the process is recommended.



Design

Engage an architectural team to design the future building.





Chapter 9

APPENDIX

9. APPENDIX

9.1 Guild Interview Protocol

The AGB is currently completing its first steps in a longer-term facility revisioning process, as identified as a component in its “2023-2025 Strategic Plan - Intersections”. We are having informal conversations with key stakeholders and are asking for your input to help shape the future of the AGB. The conversation is confidential. All the findings are reported in the aggregate; nothing will be attributed to an individual(s).

- Can you explain your current operational relationship with the AGB? How much do you interact with each other, with AGB Staff? Who controls / manages the studio spaces (scheduling, setup, cleanup, etc.)?
- Regarding your specific activities, do you also act as programmers/educators/presenters as part of AGB programming, or do you service individual Guild members only?
- Do you think there is a need / opportunity for more or less integration with the AGB – programs, staff, resources, spaces, etc.? Or are you satisfied with the current arrangements?
- How have the activities of your guild changed in recent years (post COVID) What are the trends or key directions for you going forward? Has your audience’s demographic changed in recent years?
- What do you see as the AGB’s main strengths / opportunities that can be realized with this feasibility study?
- What do you see as the AGB’s main weaknesses / challenges that should be addressed with this feasibility study?
- What do you think about the current location (site)?
- Regarding facility needs going forward – what works, what doesn’t? Do you have any concerns about how a facility renovation may impact your services and programs.
- Anything else you wish to discuss?

9.2 Background Documents Reviewed

To gain a 360-degree understanding of the pertinent issues and potential opportunities relating to the project, the team reviewed several AGB documents (mission and vision statements, facility data, collection summaries, annual reports etc.). Documents were provided by AGB to the consultant team and included the following (listed by document title or content (where no formal title was provided)).

- City of Burlington, Live and Play Plan (2024)
- AGB Building Overview (2024)
- AGB Current Space Allocation (2024)
- Guild Studio Access Schedule (2024)
- AGB Ontario Arts Council Grant Application (2024)
- City of Burlington 2022 – 2026 Burlington’s Plan from Vision to Focus (2023)
- AGB Strategic Plan (2023-2025)
- AGB Annual Reports (2020, 2021, 2022, 2023)
- Arts Burlington Partnership Agreement (2021)
- Arts Burlington Constitution and Bylaws (2020)
- City of Burlington, Cultural Action Plan (2013)
- Arts Burlington Constitution and Bylaws (2011)
- AGB Bridge Financing Agreement (2000)
- Burlington Arts Centre Capital Expansion Plan (1999)
- AGB Letters to City Council (1982, 1977)
- AGB Request Financial Assistance (1975)
- Burlington Cultural Centre Management Guide (no date)

9.3 Existing AGB Facility Program

The following table summarizes the existing AGB facility. It includes a listing of functional spaces and assumed gross areas.

The table indicates a total facility size of approximately 44,150 gross sq. ft, although this table likely does not include all other corridors or secondary circulation areas, and the existing facility is likely to be slightly larger. It also includes the courtyard, which is typically counted as an exterior space, and not building area.

This information was provided to the consulting team by the AGB and has not been verified or manually checked against existing conditions. It is provided for reference purposes only.

SPACE NAME	Net Square Feet	Gross Area	Floor #	Percentage
EXHIBITION SPACE				
Lee Chin Family Gallery	3,548		Ground Floor	
Perry Gallery	484		Ground Floor	
Lakeshore Gallery	530		Ground Floor	
Sub-Total	4,562	0		13%
VISIBLE STORAGE				
Brock lobby	1,470		Ground Floor	
Corridor 1		1,200	Ground Floor	
Corridor 2		3,200	Ground Floor	
Corridor 3		800	Ground Floor	
Sub-Total	1,470	5,200		4%
STUDIOS				
Raku Area	1,115		Ground Floor	
Potters Studio	1,760		Ground Floor	
Clay Studio	758		Ground Floor	
Kiln Room	392		Ground Floor	
Sculpture Studio	1,057		Ground Floor	
Fine arts Studio	1,336		Ground Floor	
Photo Studio	1,096		Ground Floor	
Textile Studio	1,490		Ground Floor	
Photography	255		Ground Floor	
Darkroom	279		Ground Floor	
Craft Studio (with Kitchen & Storage)	1,152		2nd Floor	
Mezzanine & Craft Studio	722		3rd Floor	
Kids Studio	1,035		Ground Floor	
Sub-Total	12,447	0		35%
GREEN SPACE				
Courtyard		3,040	Ground Floor	
Conservatory	1,390		Ground Floor	
Sub-Total	1,390	3,040		4%
VENUE RENTAL & RETAIL				
Shoreline Room	1,930		Ground Floor	
Rotary lakeshore Room	1,547		Ground Floor	
Servery	400		Ground Floor	
Washroom	900		Ground Floor	
Fireside	770		Ground Floor	
AGB Shop	2,136		Ground Floor	
Sub-Total	7,683	0	Ground Floor	22%
ADMINISTRATION				
Main office	1,443		Ground Floor	
Lunchroom	120		Ground Floor	
Shared office / Server Room	221		Ground Floor	
Education Office	112		Ground Floor	
Brock Reception Desk	120		Ground Floor	
AGB Shop Offices and Back-of-House	331		Ground Floor	
Collection Vault	742		Ground Floor	
Sub-Total	3,089	0		9%
STORAGE / BACK OF HOUSE				
Lee Chin Family Gallery Storage	1,136		Ground Floor	
Shipping & Receiveing	1,234		Ground Floor	
Coat Room	350		Ground Floor	
Custodial Office / Storage	350		Ground Floor	
Rotary Storage	140		Ground Floor	
Chairs	36		Ground Floor	
Textile Studio Kitchen	170		Ground Floor	
Textile Studio Storage	135		Ground Floor	
Conservatory Potting Shed	363		Ground Floor	
Photo Studio Storage	380		Ground Floor	
Fine Art Studio Storage	155		Ground Floor	
Mechanical Room		650	2nd Floor	
Elevator & Stairs		170	Ground Floor	
Sub-Total	4,449	820		13%
TOTAL EXISTING FACILITY	35,090	9,060	44,150	100%

9.4 Facility Technical Requirements

Preliminary Climate and Technical Recommendations

Environment

The new collection storage, collection processing and permanent/temporary exhibit spaces should meet the “Category A” designation for a cultural institution as defined by the Department of Canadian Heritage, including achieving ASHRAE Class A²² for permanent exhibition, collection storage and processing spaces. Class A specifications are as follows:

- The recommended temperature in storage and exhibit areas are to be minimum 70° F +/-2° F.
- The RH set point and standard fluctuation for the new construction shall be 50% RH +/- 5%. The range would be 45%-55% RH for temporary exhibition galleries and all support spaces used in the unpacking, packing, treatment and storage of borrowed works for temporary exhibitions.
- Paper, textiles, wood and ferrous metals require an RH of 40%, so this additional level of RH control should be provided through climate-controlled display cases when exhibited. These micro-environments of 40% RH will be interior to the case, within the 50% RH gallery environment.
- Paper storage, including prints and photography, should be set at 40% RH.
- Chemically unstable organic material can be kept at cool, cold or frozen levels as defined by the ISO Standard 18934: 2011 as lower temperature extends the life of an object. Cool: 8 to 16°C, 30-50%RH, Cold: 0 to 8°C, 30-50%RH; Frozen: -20 to 0°C, 30 -50% RH.
- Temperature and relative humidity sensors should be provided in all collections areas as well as cool or cold rooms containing collections and/or each refrigerator or freezer containing collections, with each sensor monitored by the building management system (BMS).

Sprinkler Systems

The requirements for sprinkler systems for galleries are more specific than Fire and Building Code requirements, since they are directed towards preserving and preventing damage to collections in addition to preserving human life.

A pre-action wet-pipe system is the recommended choice for the following reasons:

- It is considered best practice for art galleries and is usually recommended by fire departments over a dry-pipe system.
- A “pre-action” system requires a preceding event, such as an alarm from a smoke or heat detector, before the system is triggered. This prevents accidental activation, which is a risk in and of itself in galleries with high-value or irreplaceable collections.
- Most systems are wet pipe, as it is the cheapest and easiest to install and maintain and is quickest to respond in case of a fire.

²² Per ASHRAE 2011. Confirmation of these environmental recommendations is the responsibility of the client team, project architect or engineering teams during the design stage.

Collection Storage

- Floor loads should be designed to consider the loading capacity of collection and equipment loads.
- Collection storage equipment - maximum recommended shelf height is 2.4 m.
- Air intake and air return design should consider storage equipment layouts.
- Overhead lighting should be integrated with the layout of storage units in each space.
- CCTV cameras are required for collections storage areas including access points.

Collections Loading & Shipping/Receiving

- Designed to accommodate a hydraulic platform lift (aka scissor or elevating dock) set into the grade in the loading dock area to allow the movement of objects vertically from truck height to building floor height, and vice versa.
- Space between the dock and shipping and receiving area must accommodate the movement of the Design Object on moving equipment.

Doors and Openings

- Doors should be fire-rated to all applicable codes, except Temporary (Transit) and Collection Storage areas, which require additional fire protection for a minimum 2-hour fire rating.
- Viewing windows should be installed in all doors through which collections move. They should be approximately 7.5cm wide by 45cm tall with the bottom of the window located approximately 1.4m above the floor.
- Interior doors through which collections travel should be equipped with push buttons to activate and hold open for a given period to accommodate the passage of carts and dollies.
- Corridors will be a minimum of 2.4 m wide x 3.5 m clear height, unless a wider opening is necessary in some locations to allow sufficient maneuvering room for larger items. The recommended minimum size of door openings through which collection objects will move shall be 2.6 wide x 3.0 m high.

Flooring

- Collection storage, movement and work areas require durable floors such as painted concrete or vinyl sheet goods with even floor surfaces to reduce vibration in carts or dollies rolling across the surface.
- Floor coverings in collections areas should be light colored without pattern to enable easy assessment of cleanliness.

Walls

- Walls in collection spaces including permanent collection and temporary storage, shipping/receiving, crating/uncrating, isolation, and freight elevator shaft and corridors should be sealed or painted concrete to prevent dusting, even in concealed locations, for example, above suspended ceilings if installed.
- Public collection walls are to be separate from the exterior structural wall; capable of supporting 200 kg per hanger; seamless, with no trim; repeatedly nailable; and painted 16mm fire-rated gypsum wall-board over 16mm top 19mm plywood on studs.

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