

March 2025

Impact Strategy Presentation

HRM Community Planning
and Economic Development
Standing Committee

TURRET ARTS SPACE

The new **Turret Arts Space** will house a critically engaged community where youth, artists, and the public can connect and thrive in a space that is **physically, economically, and culturally accessible**

Our Purpose

To transform social hierarchies and support participation in artistic culture and society.





Values:

**Creativity and
Experimentation**

Accessibility

Co-operation



Our Role and Responsibility

LANDLORD

- A **sustainable economic model** with a 20-year horizon
- **Facilities management**
- Two critical arts and social purpose charities as **Anchor Tenants with protected rental rates** (less than 50% of market rent in downtown Halifax)
- One **commercial café tenant**
- Many **community rentals** for office and event space

PROGRAMS

- **Turret Learning Center:** professional development in arts and culture
- **Public Presentations:** exhibitions and performances
- **Artistic Residencies:** through the multi-disciplinary Art Studio
- **Public Art:** indoor and outdoor

STEWARD

- **Queer Heritage Interpretive Site:** permanent and rotating art exhibitions expressing themes of the Queer Heritage of 1588 Barrington Street



Anchor Tenants and Community

The Khyber Centre for the Arts

ANNUALLY over 2000 audience members

- over 30 public events
- 6 exhibitions
- 3 residencies
- Publications, virtual events, and workshops



Leave Out Violence Nova Scotia

ANNUALLY over 300 youth participants

- Programming that serves youth in **HRM, Sipekne'katik First Nations, Membertou First Nations, Dartmouth, and Preston**
- One-on-One Support as well as a **24/7 On-Call Crisis Support Services**

Greater
than
anything



Turret, The Khyber, LOVE NS all have mandates which service the 2SLGBTQIA+ community

TURRET ARTS SPACE

Economic Collaboration

\$1 million raised for Design, Planning, and Preliminary Abatement of Hazardous Materials

Funded by Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Canadian Heritage, Community Business Development Corporation, Halifax Regional Municipality, and Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

Canada 

 NOVA SCOTIA

HALIFAX



TURRET ARTS SPACE

Impact Alignment

HALIFAX

- **SHARING OUR STORIES** The Halifax Regional Municipality's Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan 2023
- **People.Planet.Prospersity** Halifax's Inclusive Economic Strategy 2022-27
- **Halifax Regional Integrated Tourism Master Plan 2021** (HRM, ACOA, Discover Halifax)
- **2022-2024 Youth Service Plan** "A Strategic Vision for Youth Services" (HRM)
- **Halifax Strategic Priorities** 2021-25



*Turret Arts Space is named in Downtown Halifax Business Commission **Vision 2030** and the new **Integrated Tourism Master Plan 2030** (Discover Halifax, HRM, ACOA) scheduled for completion in 2025.*



An Urgent Need for Expansion in the Arts, Culture and Social Spaces

PROBLEM 1:

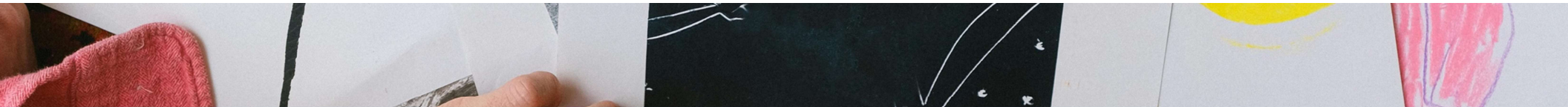
Public commemorations have ignored deserving histories, discouraging community participation

PROBLEM 2:

Arts and culture workers are left behind by the systems that should support them

PROBLEM 3:

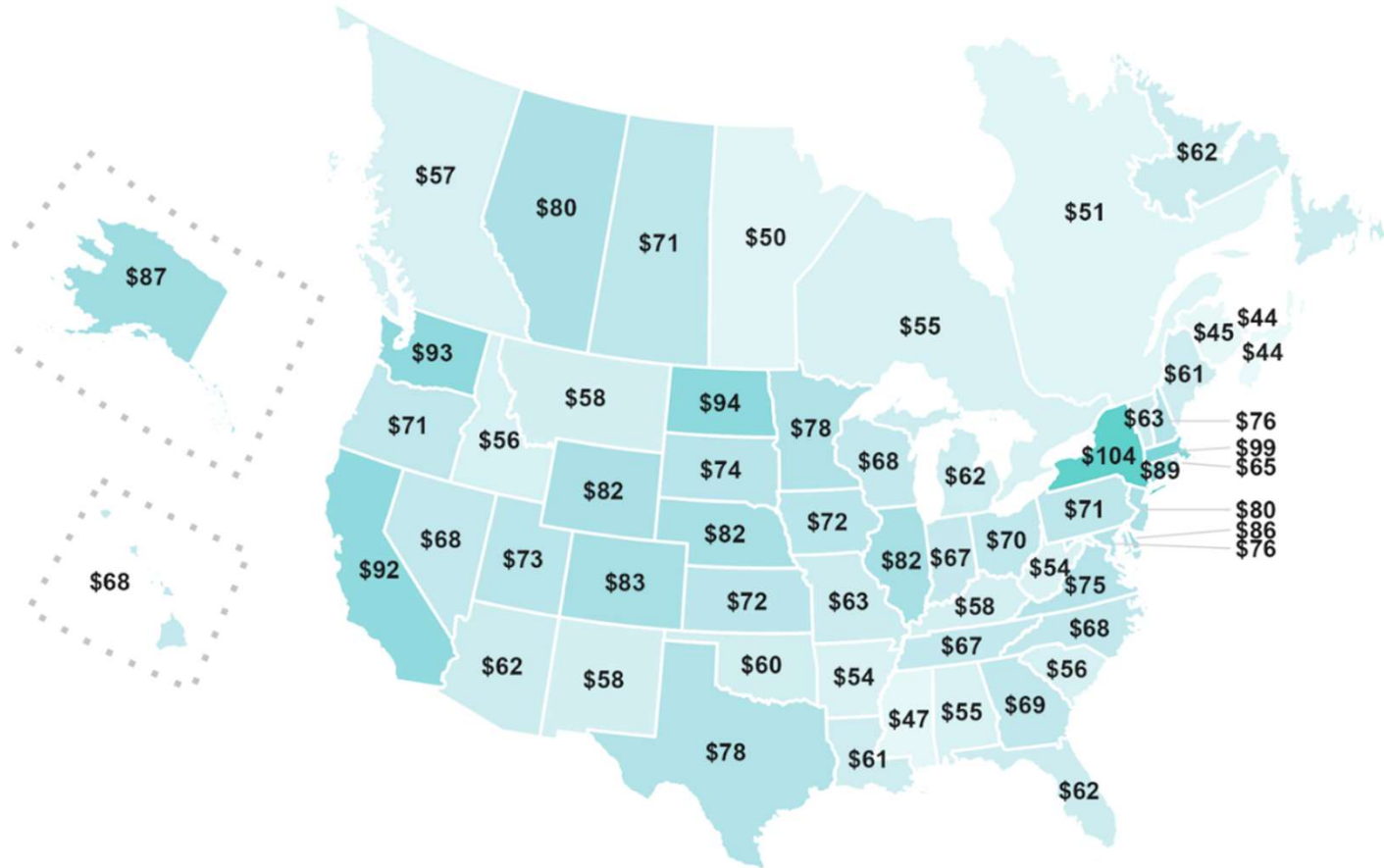
Downtown Halifax is growing at an unprecedented rate, but the cultural spaces that create community are disappearing



Cumulative Effect

→ **Nova Scotia's productivity trails the rest of North America...**

GDP per Capita in 2022



Trevor Tombe, "As productivity plunges, Ontario and Alabama now have the same per capita GDP," *The Hub*, commentary, 15 June 2023

Cumulative Effect

→ *There is a Provincial deficit in the economic contribution of the cultural sector*

2021 Cultural Products Per Capita

Imports

Nova Scotia

\$426.89
per capita

National Average

\$600.91
per capita

Exports

Nova Scotia

\$135.00
per capita

National Average

\$478.11
per capita

Trade of Culture and Sport Products Report (TCSP, 2021)

Cultural products are defined as art, films, music, crafts and broadcasting

TURRET ARTS SPACE

PROBLEM 1: Public commemorations have ignored deserving histories, which deters community participation

RESPONSE: Turret Arts Space aims to designate 1588 Barrington as Canada's first Queer Heritage Site and set a national precedent for stewardship.

1A. Stewardship
of Queer Heritage

1B. Build and Enhance
Key Demand Generators
for Tourism

TURRET ARTS SPACE

The Turret Club was “iconic” and “famous across Canada,” but its pivotal history has no public or site-specific commemoration.

1969

Homosexuality partially decriminalized in Canada

Queer community members living in Nova Scotia still had **no protections** under the Human Rights Act

1972

Gay Alliance for Equality (GAE) is formed

GAE sets up GayLine **helpline service** and begins political activation

1976

First GAE disco held at 1588 Barrington Street

Halifax social **establishments shunned queer patrons** so GAE created friendly, non-oppressive meeting place for gays and lesbians in the city

1976-1982

The Turret Club hosts discos, drag and variety shows, buffet dinners, GAE meetings, and “Turret Cinema” movie nights

A place run “**by and for the gay community.**” 25% of Turret Club profits funded GAE and the remaining 75% was banked towards the goal of developing a queer community centre

TURRET ARTS SPACE

PROBLEM 2: Arts and culture workers are left behind by the systems that should support them

RESPONSE: Turret Arts Space drives economic impact through the culture sector by building artists' livelihoods.

2A. Generate,
Attract, Retain
and Develop
Talent

2B. Increase
Exportability of
Arts and Culture

TURRET ARTS SPACE

PROBLEM 3: Downtown Halifax is growing at an unprecedented rate, but the cultural spaces that create community are disappearing

RESPONSE: Turret Arts Space provides an accessible cultural hub that attracts artists, youth, and visitors of all ages to Halifax.

3A. Strengthen
the Dynamism of
Downtown

3B. Contribute to
Economic Growth

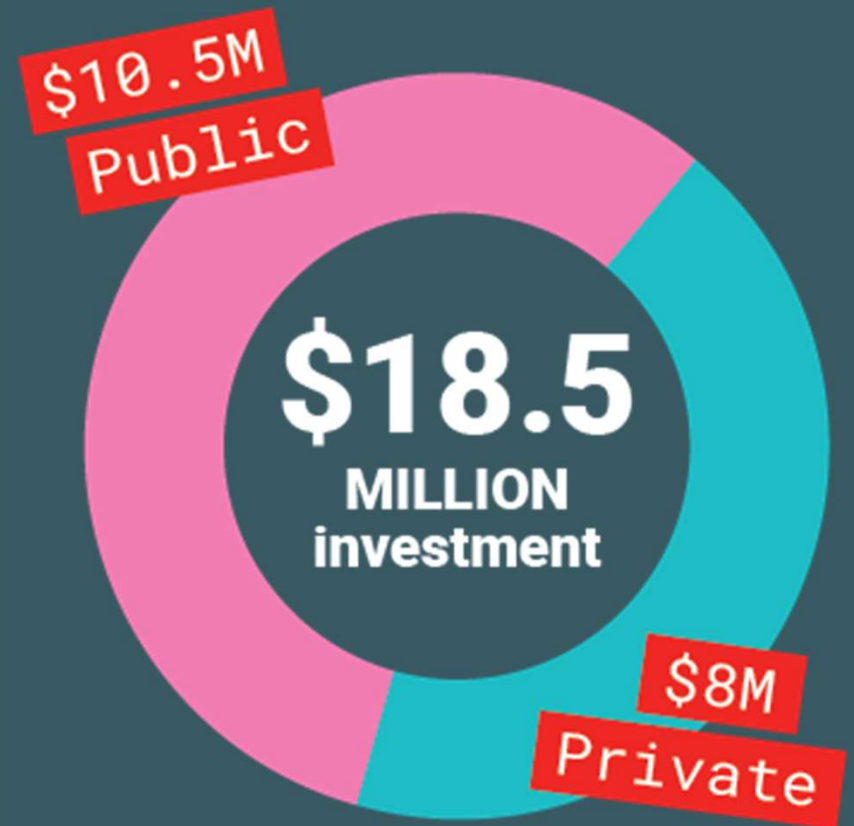
Risks to the Solution

- Need to engage with the growth of the downtown, **or lose it**
- Unprecedented cost escalation exacerbates all issues:
THE TIME IS NOW
- Funding delays lose cost efficiencies and **threaten team momentum**
- **Risk losing a heritage asset! Environmental impacts** from unprecedented flooding events put the building at risk if left vacant
- The Anchor Tenants are key, established, cultural pillars but their **premises are lacking economic and physical accessibility**
- **Losing the opportunity** to set a precedent and show real cultural leadership in stewarding Queer Heritage

Economic Collaboration

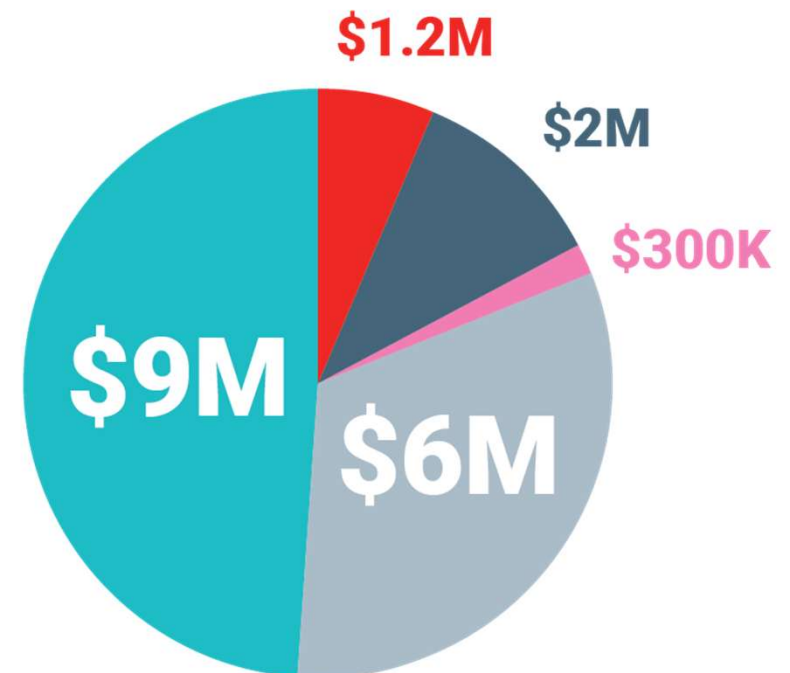
Project leverages **FEDERAL INVESTMENT** and **ACTIVATES PRIVATE INVESTMENT** across many critical community interests.

Financial Model shows how Turret can be **sustainable and thrive over a 20-year horizon with a blend of non-profit and profitable activities**



Economic Collaboration: Budget Breakdown

- Construction Documents, Complete Abatement, Governance and Program Planning: **\$1.2 million**
- Operationalization Bridge Funding, to get to full Operating Revenues and Funding: **\$2 million**
- Queer Heritage Interpretation and Implementation: **\$300k**
- Shell, Structure, and Major Accessibility Interventions: **\$6 million**
- Systems, Interiors, and Equipment: **\$9 million**



Request to HRM



1. INVESTMENT OF \$1.5 MILLION

To get to Construction Tender “shovel ready” with a complete Operationalization Plan and Business Case, ready for implementation	\$1,221,000
Complete Hazardous Materials Abatement, Site Security, Site Preparation, Insurance	\$233,000
Construction Documents and Interpretive Heritage Planning	\$380,000
Operationalization Planning and Funding Strategy	\$240,000
Communications and Marketing	\$35,000
Project Management and Strategic Planning	\$100,000
Legal, Accounting, Procurement Planning	\$45,000
Contingency/Risk (10%), Discounted Tax (7.5%)	\$188,000
Operating Support while in-process (2024/2025, 2025/2026, 2026/2027 - Property Tax, Insurance, Interim Building Protection), with immediate injection of \$50k	\$150,000
Collaboration with HRM to develop Queer Heritage Designation Pilot and Building Ownership Model	\$130,000

Request to HRM



2. CO-CREATION PARTNERSHIP TO SET PRECEDENT FOR STEWARDSHIP OF QUEER HERITAGE

Designate and interpret 1588 Barrington Street as the first Queer Heritage Site in Canada:

- HRM relief of Property Tax (already in place)
- Partnership for 100% of building maintenance
- Time and effort investment to collaborate on a pilot project to **set a national precedent**
- Completed in time for **Halifax to host Canada Pride, July 2027**
- **Maximize access to Federal funding programs** through Municipal partnership

Request to HRM

3. DEVELOP A BUILDING OWNERSHIP SOLUTION



- Collaborate with Turret Arts Space Society to find the **most strategic and sustainable building ownership model**
- Prioritizing the **two critical Anchor Tenants** and their future growth
- Consider creative precedents from **cities with a variety of cultural assets**

Request to HRM

TIMELINE:

6 months

Design, hazardous materials abatement, tender

With a successful funding strategy, construction could begin in Fall 2025, making the building ready to open for Canada Pride 2027 in HALIFAX!!

Operationalization Planning and Funding Strategy, Communications and Marketing, Legal, Accounting, Procurement Planning

12 months





TURRET

ARTS

SPACE