



Request for Proposal

Architectural Design Services

TOWNSHIP OF SIOUX NARROWS-NESTOR FALLS

Sioux Narrows Community Hall

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Township of Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls is seeking to retain the services of architectural design firm to complete the design phase, and develop construction documents and renderings for the Sioux Narrows Community Hall expansion. This project is time sensitive, and it is hoped that the required tender package will be available for sharing prior to the end of November 2026.

2.0 BACKGROUND

The Township of Sioux Narrows –Nestor Falls is a rural township located on the eastern shore of Lake of the Woods. It has a permanent year-round population of 727 and is 156,358 hectares in size. The local economy is based primarily on cottaging and tourism, with an emphasis on lake based recreational activities.

The municipality has over 1200 households, and has over 60 customer service facilities. Kenora and Fort Frances are the two nearest regional services centers. The median age is 46.3 years, and many of the residents are seasonal, choosing to reside at their lakefront residences from May through to mid-October. Tourism is the mainstay of the local economy.

3.0 SCOPE OF WORK and DELIVERABLES

The purpose of the RFP is to seek an architectural design firm to complete the design/ drawings for the proposed expansion of the Sioux Narrows Community Hall.

Specific elements required as part of this project include (but are not limited to):

- Architectural design, including engineering, of the proposed expansion

- The preparation of a construction tender package (by end of November 2026)
- Image renderings of the proposed expansion for use in community information materials and meetings.

4.0 PROJECT TEAM

The consultant shall report to the Township of Sioux Narrows Nestor Falls project team in undertaking the completion of the work. Representation on the team consists of Township staff and elected Municipal Councilors.

5.0 PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

5.1 GENERAL

All information, electronic data, reports, mapping, literature or software/hardware developed or acquired by the consultants in the course of this study and having application to this project shall become the property of the Township. This property shall be delivered to Township with the final billing unless the Township provides the consultant with explicit written direction to the contrary.

A contingency allowance should not be used in making cost estimates for the completion of the work. All proposals should clearly indicate that the work to be provided will be for an “upset limit”. Cost overruns will not be considered by the Project Team.

Regular progress payments will be conditional upon the receipt of work completed, submission of an invoice for the work and approval by the Township.

5.2 MEETINGS

The minimum number of meetings required to be held at the following stages of the work program are as follows:

1. An introductory meeting between the Project Team and the consultant to conduct a site visit, discuss the scope of work, identify the key planning issues & areas of concern, establishment of design parameters and confirmation of timelines and project completion;

Draft documents need not be in bound form and, may be accompanied by full sized sites/drawings and schedules in order to keep costs down.

6.0 CONSULTANT PROPOSAL

The consultant selected by the Project Team shall prepare a proposal which clearly indicates how the consultant will carry out the work set out in the terms of reference. The consultant's proposal must contain at least, but not be limited to:

- The methodological approach that will be used in the Project;
- Names, qualifications and experience of staff/sub-consultants assigned to this project;
- Per diem rates for key personnel involved in the assignment.
- Disbursement costs for the proposed work.

The consultant shall submit **one electronic copy** of the above noted proposal, not later than **10:00 a.m. on Thursday October 1, 2026.**

We expect to notify the successful proponent by October 7, 2026 to ensure that our timelines can be met.

7.0 REFERENCE MATERIAL

The consultant will have access to the following in the preparation of proposals:

1. Special Events Infrastructure Feasibility Study.
2. Rough design sketch outlining the proposed project.

8.0 CONTRACT

The consultant shall enter into a contract with the Township of Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls. The contract shall indicate that the work undertaken shall be completed to the satisfaction of the Township, according to the terms of reference, and for the amounts as set out in the consultant's proposal. The contract shall also indicate that no additional money shall be paid to the consultant for any additional work for which prior authorization has not been given in writing.

8.1 CHANGING THE CONTRACT

The contract may be revised during the project provided a complete analysis of the effect of any proposed change is submitted and agreed upon in writing by both parties. This analysis would include an assessment of the impact on target dates and costs.

Questions on this proposal call may be referred to:

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SIoux NARROWS – NESTOR FALLS SPECIAL EVENTS INFRASTRUCTURE

FINAL REPORT

July 15, 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Township of Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls is exploring long-term opportunities to enhance community event infrastructure and create a flexible, year-round gathering space that serves residents, visitors, community organizations, and special events. While the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival remains an important cultural, tourism, and economic driver, stakeholder engagement identified a broader need for expanded event space to support a wide range of community activities, including fundraising events, recreation programming, workshops, social gatherings, tournaments, celebrations, and other community-led initiatives. Although the Arts Festival currently operates successfully from the former curling club/maintenance facility, the shared use of this building creates operational challenges and limits opportunities to improve accessibility, amenities, vendor capacity, and year-round arts and cultural programming.

Urban Systems reviewed existing site conditions, completed stakeholder engagement and a vendor survey for the Arts Festival, undertook precedent research, prepared a weighted site selection matrix, and considered high-level capital and operating costs. This work confirmed the need for a central, accessible, secure, and weather-protected facility with improved washrooms, lighting, power, internet, storage, kitchen amenities, and flexible indoor and outdoor spaces that can accommodate a variety of community uses throughout the year.

Stakeholder discussions highlighted the important role the existing Community Hall plays as a community hub. The facility currently hosts events organized by the Recreation Committee, including the Spring BBQ, Breakfast with Santa, workshops, and social gatherings, as well as fundraising and special events hosted by groups such as the Men's Club and Bassin' for Bucks. These activities contribute significantly to community well-being, volunteerism, local fundraising efforts, and the social and economic vitality of Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls. Many stakeholders noted that additional event capacity and improved amenities would strengthen the community's ability to host larger events, attract new programming, and support future growth.

Five potential locations were initially considered: the current curling club/maintenance facility, Veterans' Memorial Park, Government Dock, the Sioux Narrows Community Hall, and the Four-Season Recreation Facility. The evaluation was narrowed to the two most feasible options: the current event location and the Community Hall. The Community Hall emerged as the preferred option as it offers the strongest balance of location, servicing, flexibility, community benefit, cost-effectiveness, and long-term functionality, while allowing maintenance staff to remain in their current location.

The preferred concept recommends renovating and expanding the existing Community Hall into a multi-purpose, year-round community event centre that serves as the host venue for the annual Arts Festival held during the August long weekend. The concept includes approximately 4,000 square feet of new indoor event space in addition to the existing 4,000 square-foot hall, a 2,000 square foot covered outdoor gathering area, a 5,000 square foot outdoor patio, improved pedestrian and vehicle circulation, accessible parking, and

enhanced outdoor amenities. The facility would provide flexible space for community events, cultural programming, conferences, fundraisers, festivals, markets, tournaments, and other year-round activities.

The rough order of magnitude cost estimate for the proposed 4,000 square foot Community Hall addition and renovation is approximately **\$1,012,000** with a 30% contingency recommended at this early stage. For outdoor spaces, a preliminary 30% allowance of the building construction cost has been assumed, resulting in an estimated **\$300,000** for outdoor improvements. This allowance should be reassessed as the design is refined, given the amount of hardscape proposed, including plazas, parking, circulation improvements, and covered outdoor spaces. Annual operations and maintenance costs for the expanded facility are estimated at approximately **\$44,000 to \$72,000 per year**, with a recommended planning benchmark of **\$60,000 per year**. This estimate includes utilities, janitorial services, routine maintenance and repairs, insurance, exterior maintenance, equipment upkeep, programming, marketing, and long-term capital renewal. No separate staffing allowance has been included, as the expanded facility is expected to have minimal incremental staffing requirements and can largely be managed through existing Township resources, with additional support only required for larger events or special programming. Rental revenue, currently estimated at approximately **\$2,500 annually**, could reasonably increase to approximately **\$5,000 to \$10,000 annually** with expanded event space, improved amenities, and increased year-round use.

Expanding the Community Hall provides a practical and community-focused path forward that builds upon existing infrastructure while creating a modern, flexible event venue for a wide range of community needs. Beyond supporting the continued success of the Arts Festival, the proposed facility would strengthen Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls' capacity to host community events, fundraising initiatives, recreation programming, tourism activities, and cultural gatherings, creating a lasting asset that supports residents and visitors alike for years to come.

1.0 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Township of Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls recognizes the important role that community facilities play in supporting recreation, arts and culture, tourism, community programming, fundraising activities, and special events throughout the year. Existing facilities accommodate a variety of uses; however, growing demand and evolving community needs have highlighted the opportunity to enhance event infrastructure and provide a more flexible, accessible, and functional gathering space for residents, organizations, and visitors.

The Sioux Narrows Arts Festival, now in its 64th year, is one example of the many events that contribute to the community's cultural vitality and attract visitors to the area. Currently, the festival operates from the former curling club and maintenance facility on Panorama Road, a multi-use building that also serves municipal operations. While the venue has supported the festival successfully for many years, its shared use, limited amenities, and constrained capacity underscore broader challenges associated with hosting community events and programming within existing facilities.

Recognizing the need for enhanced event space, the Township commissioned this study to evaluate options for a long-term community event facility that could support a wide range of year-round activities while building on existing municipal assets. The Municipal Strategic Plan identifies the importance of investing in community infrastructure that supports arts, culture, recreation, tourism, and community development, while providing flexible space for local organizations, special events, and community gatherings.

To inform future decision-making, Urban Systems was retained to assess potential facility options through stakeholder engagement, a needs assessment, precedent research, a site selection matrix, and high-level capital and operating cost analysis. The study's objective was to identify a practical, cost-effective solution capable of meeting current and future community needs.

Community and stakeholder engagement included the following activities:

- Presentation and discussion with Township Council and senior staff
- Discussion with Township maintenance staff
- Presentation and discussion with the following community organizations
 - Bassin' for Bucks
 - Sioux Narrows Seniors Centre / 50+ Activity Centre
 - Sioux Narrows Recreation Committee
 - Nestor Falls Recreation Committee
- Presentation and discussion with the Sioux Narrows Arts Council
- Survey of the Sioux Narrows Arts Council vendors

2.0 INVENTORY OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

Early in the project, stakeholder engagement led to the identification of five potential sites for a year-round community event space. They are as follows:

Township's Maintenance Facility

The Township's maintenance facility is used year-round for municipal operations, equipment storage, and maintenance activities and used once a year to accommodate the Arts Festival August long weekend event. During the festival, the maintenance equipment is cleared from the building to make room for vendors. The facility provides approximately 8,000 square feet of indoor, securable space with a large concrete pad. The outdoor space is used for storage of materials and small maintenance equipment. The facility does not have indoor washrooms or running water, instead port-a-potties are provided close to the facility. While the site functions well as a short-term venue for the festival, it is not ideally suited to serve as a dedicated year-round community event facility.

Memorial Site

Veterans' Memorial Park is located along Highway 71 in Sioux Narrows. The area behind the park could provide a central, accessible location for a new structure to host the festival. The site is largely forested, which would require extensive site clearing for a new event space. From desktop analysis some areas appear to be wet/marsh-like and further investigation would be needed to determine suitability to build here.

Government Dock

Government Dock is centrally located in Sioux Narrows, with access from Highway 71 and proximity to key amenities, including the Northern Ontario Sportfishing Centre (NOSFC), which is located south of the dock with direct access from the highway. The Centre provides over 4,000 feet of indoor space however the space is currently occupied with museum exhibits and very little room for an expansion, so an addition or new structure would be needed to fully support the festival on this site. Outdoor space is also very limited along the waterfront (space operates as a boat launch and parking), and an additional structure would be required here to provide enough space for the festival and may require the purchase of additional properties to provide sufficient space for the new event venue.

Sioux Narrows Community Hall

Sioux Narrows has an existing Community Hall that supports events throughout the year, including programs and activities for a wide range of users such as the Sioux Narrows Recreation Committee that delivers regular events and programming, community workshops, social events, Bassin' for Bucks, and the Men's club. The facility currently provides approximately 4,000 square feet of indoor space and includes a full kitchen and licensed bar area. However, community groups have identified several upgrades that would improve the hall's functionality and ability to support larger events such as a water filtration system,

improvements to washroom accessibility and expanded kitchen facilities with an additional commercial oven and cooktop to accommodate growing demand from event organizers. Enhanced outdoor amenities, including an upgraded BBQ and picnic area, would further support community gatherings and seasonal events.

While the existing hall continues to serve the community well, its limited capacity can be a constraint for larger events and fundraising initiatives. Expanding and upgrading the facility would increase its flexibility and usability, allowing it to better accommodate community organizations, cultural events, tournaments, fundraisers, and visitor-oriented activities year-round. These improvements would provide benefits well beyond a single event, strengthening the case for investment by demonstrating broad community support and long-term value for residents and visitors alike.

Four-Season Recreation Facility

Sioux Narrows has a Four-Season Facility located approximately 2 kilometres southeast of the core town area. The facility is used for farmer's markets, events, and sports throughout the year. This facility provides a large amount of semi-sheltered space, however it is open-air and more difficult to secure. As a potential Arts Festival venue, the facility may face scheduling conflicts with existing recreation programming, which currently occupies the space throughout the year.



Figure 1: Map of potential event infrastructure sites in Sioux Narrows

3.0 NEEDS ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

The needs assessment was informed by input from the Sioux Narrows Arts Council, Township maintenance staff, festival vendors, and community stakeholders. Through interviews, workshops, and survey feedback, participants identified current strengths, challenges, and priorities for future investment in a special events space. The findings highlight the operational needs of the Arts Festival, the requirements of maintenance operations, and broader community aspirations, providing a foundation for evaluating potential improvements and developing a preferred long-term solution.

3.1 SIOUX NARROWS ARTS COUNCIL

As the body primarily responsible for organizing the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival, the Arts Council was able to outline the needs of the event, including shortcomings of the existing venue and desired qualities of an ideal space for the festival. Key needs expressed by the Arts Council included:

- A central location within the town that can be easily accessed, with adequate parking and minimal traffic issues
- Fully accessible facility that can accommodate people with disabilities
- A large, securable space that is protected from the elements, ideally with space for ~55 vendors (the current space allows for 46 booths, and the festival has a vendor waitlist every year)
- Good, bright lighting
- Access to electricity and Wi-Fi for each vendor stall
- Access to food for vendors and attendees, currently provided by food trucks
- Space for performances and a children's activity area
- Accessible washrooms and running water

3.2 TOWNSHIP MAINTENANCE STAFF

Maintenance staff expressed a strong preference to remain in their current location, noting that it is centrally located, appropriately sized for operational needs, and provides convenient access to the community. Discussions with staff indicated that the existing site functions well from a logistical and day-to-day operations perspective, reducing the need for relocation or significant changes to service delivery. Maintaining the current location was viewed as the most practical option, provided that necessary improvements can be made to support long-term functionality such as indoor washrooms and other upgrades to make sure that it complies with the building code. The scope of these upgrades will require further discussion and evaluation with maintenance staff to better understand current needs, identify deficiencies, and determine the most appropriate path forward.

3.3 ARTS FESTIVAL VENDOR SURVEY

A survey of 31 vendors at the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival found that vendors primarily desire a venue that is conveniently located, secure, and large enough to accommodate all the vendors. Survey participants expressed that the washrooms and Wi-Fi connectivity were two flaws with the curling club/maintenance facility venue. Bright lighting, access and accessibility, Wi-Fi, and an enclosed indoor space were the top priorities for the vendors.

3.4 COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

Local community organizations expressed interest in growing the Arts Festival through increased collaboration with local groups and businesses. However, discussions also highlighted a broader community need for an expanded event and gathering space that would support a wide range of activities throughout the year. Stakeholders noted that the existing Community Hall serves as a vital community hub, hosting Recreation Committee events such as the Spring BBQ, Breakfast with Santa, workshops, and social gatherings, as well as fundraising and special events organized by groups such as the Men's Club and Bassin' for Bucks. These events play an important role in supporting local initiatives, strengthening community connections, and contributing to the social and economic vitality of Sioux Narrows.

Most stakeholders felt the Arts Festival is successful in its current location, citing efficient operations, strong vendor participation, and the benefits of a secure indoor venue. At the same time, concerns were raised regarding parking, traffic, accessibility, washroom facilities, internet connectivity, storage, and the condition of the shared curling club building. Stakeholders also spoke to the challenges of securing funding for essential community infrastructure and identified opportunities to improve the facility's ability to support both festival activities and year-round community use for other groups, events, and activities.

While most participants supported incremental improvements over major redevelopment, there was strong interest in increasing capacity for events, improving amenities, and enhancing long-term functionality. Priorities included additional vendor space, upgraded kitchen and washroom facilities, secure storage, enhanced outdoor gathering areas, and greater certainty regarding the facility's long-term availability. These improvements would not only support the continued growth and sustainability of the Arts Festival but would also provide lasting benefits to the many community organizations that also call for an enhanced event space as a gathering place throughout the year.

4.0 PRECEDENT RESEARCH SUMMARY

To help inform the development of potential solutions, a review of comparable event facilities and community venues was undertaken. The precedent research explored how other communities have successfully accommodated markets, festivals, and special events, with consideration given to site layout, vendor capacity, accessibility, amenities, operational requirements, and year-round functionality. The findings provided valuable insights into

design features, facility programming, and operational approaches that could be adapted to support the long-term needs of the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival while reflecting the scale and character of the community.

4.1 LE MARCHÉ ST. NORBERT FARMERS MARKET

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Constructed Completed: 2018

Indoor Event Space: ~12,000 square feet (room for 70 vendors)

Outdoor Event Space: ~58,000 square feet

Approximate Cost: \$550,000

The St. Norbert Farmer's Market structure consists of a light metal frame with a canvas canopy. The canopy is a four-season facility, with large openings (overhead doors and man doors) with fans to create airflow in the summer and heaters to keep the space at 15 degrees Celsius in the winter. Aside from the farmer's market, the canopy is also available to host events throughout the year.

The structure is secure and lockable, and protected from the elements. It is also surrounded by a large outdoor event space that provides room for many more vendors as well as food trucks, performances, and activities. Electricity is provided for all vendors, and natural light shines through the canopy during the day. Seasonal washrooms are located at the site (retrofitted C-Can). Gravel surface parking is provided adjacent to the site with a heritage museum with extra picnic space located to the south and a splashpad with additional picnic area located to the north. Controlled pedestrian crossings provide a safe access across Pembina Hwy.



4.2 PINERIDGE HOLLOW MARKET HALL

RM of Springfield, Manitoba

Construction Completed: 2022

Indoor Event Space: ~5,500 square feet (room for 32 vendors)

Outdoor Event Space: ~8,200 square feet

Approximate Cost: \$800,000

The Pineridge Hollow Market Hall is a mass timber structure that provides indoor and outdoor space for a farmer's market and events throughout the year. The structure does not have an HVAC system but uses large sliding doors to provide airflow in the summer. In the winter the hall can be flooded and used as a skating rink.

The structure is secure, lockable and provides protection from the elements. It is surrounded by a large gravel pad that allows room for events and more vendors, as well as two buildings filled with shops, a restaurant, and washrooms. The structure has a bright interior and specialty lighting to provide ambience in the evening and provides electricity to vendors as needed.

The design of the structure emphasizes aesthetic quality to provide a suitable backdrop for weddings, markets, and a variety of other events.



4.3 BOUNTIFUL FARMERS MARKET

Edmonton, Alberta

Construction Completed: 2019

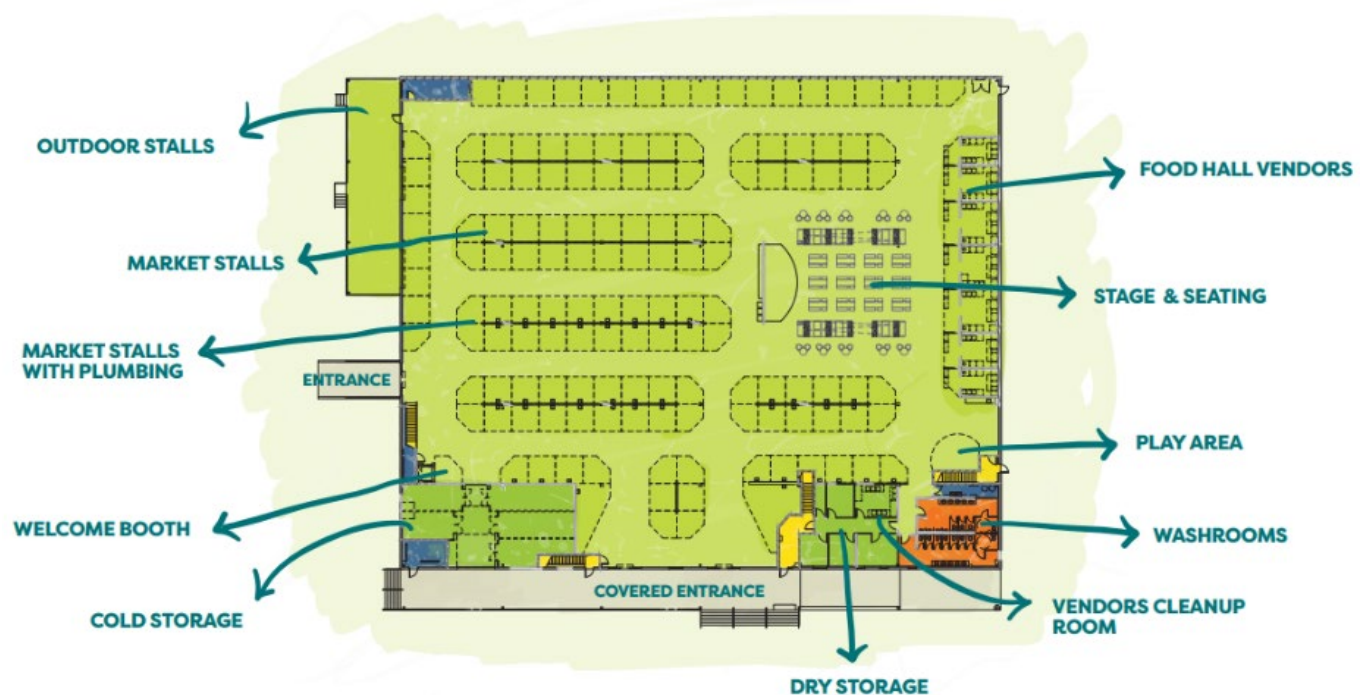
Indoor Event Space: ~46,000 square feet

Approximate Cost: Not publicly available

The Bountiful Farmers Market is a year-round indoor public market located in Edmonton. Established within a repurposed warehouse building, the market provides approximately 46,000 square feet of indoor market space and accommodates more than 120 local vendors. The facility operates year-round in a climate-controlled environment, with each vendor stall equipped with a dedicated 15-amp electrical outlet.

The market offers a fully equipped commercial kitchen that vendors can use to prepare food for sale on-site. It also includes a spacious food hall with a variety of restaurants, family-friendly gathering spaces, flexible event areas, and an outdoor patio.

The design emphasizes openness, natural light, and a welcoming atmosphere, creating a destination that functions as both a marketplace and community hub. Beyond retail activity, the facility hosts cultural programming, special events, and entertainment. The combination of food, shopping, and social experiences has helped establish the market as one of Edmonton's premier indoor public market destinations.



5.0 RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

The Community Hall was identified as the preferred option through an evaluation of existing and potential sites informed by stakeholder engagement, Arts Festival vendor survey results, precedent research, a weighted site selection matrix, and feasibility considerations. In addition to exploring a new location for the annual Arts Festival, sites were evaluated on the potential to accommodate community year-round use for several groups, organizations, and events. Key factors included location, vendor capacity, accessibility, amenities, available space, infrastructure requirements, capital and operational costs, and the ability to support long-term event needs for the broader community. Based on these criteria, the Community Hall emerged as the strongest overall solution, offering a practical, cost-effective, and sustainable approach that builds on existing infrastructure while supporting the future growth of the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival and other community organizations and events.

5.1 EVENT SPACE SITE SELECTION MATRIX

A site selection matrix was developed to evaluate potential event space locations against a set of weighted criteria, providing a structured and objective basis for decision-making. The matrix evaluated options against a series of criteria grouped into five categories:

- **Access & Location** – proximity to services and attractions, pedestrian and cycling connectivity, parking availability, and accessibility.
- **Site Capacity & Functionality** – the ability of the site to accommodate events of a certain footprint and size, flexibility for multiple event types, and circulation / access requirements.
- **Environmental & Physical Conditions** – drainage, flood risk, solar and wind exposure, and site preparation requirements.
- **Infrastructure & Servicing** – availability of power, internet, washrooms, water, and lighting.
- **Community Compatibility, Safety, Cost & Feasibility** – compatibility with surrounding uses, noise considerations, community benefit, emergency access, capital costs, and long-term operating and maintenance costs.

Criteria were weighted based on their importance to the event space program and site requirements, ensuring the evaluation considered not only site attributes, but also long-term operating and maintenance costs. Sites were then scored from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating poor performance and 5 indicating excellent performance against each criterion.

While several locations were initially considered, the evaluation ultimately focused on two viable options: the Township's maintenance facility, which currently hosts the Arts Festival, and the Community Hall. The Government Dock and Four Seasons Facility received limited support, while Memorial Park was considered likely to require a level of investment beyond what was feasible at this time.

Sioux Narrows Event Space Site Selection Matrix

		Site Location Options				
		Option A: Maintenance Shed	Option B: Memorial Park	Option C: Government Dock	Option D: Community Hall	Option E: 4-Season Facility
Category	Criteria	As is with minor renovations	New development	New development	Major renovation / addition to existing structure	As is with seasonal structures
Access & Location	Close to services or attractions	4			4	
	Pedestrian & cycling connections	4			4	
	Parking availability (on or near site)	4			3	
	Accessibility	5			5	
	SUBTOTAL	17			16	
Site Capacity & Functionality	Useable event area (size & layout)	4			4	
	Flexible space for multiple events	3			5	
	Site circulation & access	5			5	
	SUBTOTAL	12			14	
Environmental & Physical Conditions	Drainage / flood risk / bedrock	5			5	
	Wind, sun, & shade conditions	4			5	
	Tree clearing / site prep	4			3	
	SUBTOTAL	13			13	
Infrastructure & Servicing	Power availability	5			5	
	Internet access	4			4	
	Water / washroom access	1			4	
	Lighting (existing or temp. capacity)	4			5	
Community Compatibility	Compatible w/ surrounding uses	5			5	
	Noise & adjacent residential	5			5	
	Net overall benefit to the community	3			4	
Safety	Emergency access for fire / paramedic	3			4	
Cost & Feasibility	Capital costs	4			3	
	O&M costs	4			5	
	SUBTOTAL	38			44	
TOTAL		80			87	

Scoring Legend:

- 1 = Poor
- 2 = Fair
- 3 = Good
- 4 = Very Good
- 5 = Excellent

Figure 2: Event Infrastructure Site Selection Matrix

Participants generally preferred the Community Hall option, provided that any future renovation or expansion could accommodate at least the same event capacity as the current location for the annual Arts Festival. The Community Hall was also viewed as offering greater flexibility to serve a broader user group and better suited to support future community needs while building on existing infrastructure.

The Township maintenance facility lacks several amenities typically expected in a modern event venue, including indoor washrooms and running water, with portable washrooms currently required during events. Township staff also indicated a preference to remain at the existing site due to its important role in supporting municipal operations. From a redevelopment perspective, the existing metal Quonset building would likely need to be removed or substantially replaced, with the concrete slab being one of the few site elements that could potentially be retained. As a result, converting the property into an event centre would require relocating the maintenance facility and would effectively involve constructing a new building on the site.

Based on the matrix evaluation, the **Community Hall** option achieved the highest overall score, driven by its flexibility, servicing capacity, and long-term functionality. It was also favoured because it could function as a dedicated, stand-alone event facility, eliminating the need to share space with maintenance operations for the annual Arts Festival event. This aligned with feedback from maintenance staff, who expressed a preference to remain in their current location rather than relocate.

Although it was not identified as a preferred short-term option, Memorial Park was strongly supported as a long-term vision. Participants expressed interest in a purpose-built event venue at this location, with comparisons made to a Pineridge Hollow-style facility that could become a signature community gathering space. Additional information on comparable project costs could help assess the feasibility of this option in the future.

5.2 PREFERRED OPTION SITE CONCEPT

To accommodate community events such as the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival and other events throughout the year, renovation and expansion of the Community Hall would be necessary. The maintenance facility currently provides ~8,000 square feet of indoor space, while the Community Hall currently only has ~4,000 square feet of indoor space.

As illustrated in **Figure 3**, the concept plan proposes improvements to the Community Hall site, including expanded indoor event facilities, enhanced outdoor programming areas, and improved circulation and parking, creating a more functional event venue for the Arts Festival and other community gatherings. The proposed layout builds on the existing 4,000 square foot Community Hall by introducing approximately 4,000 square feet of indoor space, a 2,000 square foot covered outdoor area, and a 5,000 square foot outdoor patio area.



Figure 3: Proposed Site Concept for Expanded Community Hall

Indoor Space

The renovation and addition to the Community Hall would address the needs and wants as identified in the vendor survey and stakeholder feedback such as washrooms, wi-fi, power accessibility, and a secure, year-round facility. The design of the new addition could incorporate natural lighting and sustainable building materials, as well as emphasize the aesthetic character of Sioux Narrows – Nestor Falls. Upgrades could include accessible washrooms, a commercial oven and stove top and water filtration system.

Outdoor Space

The outdoor patio area and covered event space adjacent to the Community Hall expansion creates a centralized event hub with a mix of indoor and outdoor spaces that can accommodate a variety of vendors, activities, and community gatherings throughout the year such as food trucks, BBQ and picnic areas, performances, special events, and children's activities. Site circulation and accessibility is accommodated with dedicated pedestrian routes, vehicular access, a drop-off loop, and a parking area providing 26 stalls, including four accessible spaces close to the outdoor space. The proposed parking and circulation network is intended to improve visitor access while supporting event operations and loading

requirements. A landscaped greenspace adjacent to the drop-off area provides an attractive arrival point with the potential for site signage for added visibility from Highway 71.

Overall, the concept demonstrates how the existing Community Hall could be expanded into a multi-purpose event venue that supports increased vendor capacity for the Arts Festival, as well as other events, enhanced visitor amenities, and year-round community use while maintaining a central location within Sioux Narrows.

5.3 OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

The Community Hall expansion is expected to introduce additional operational and maintenance requirements to ensure it remains functional, well-maintained, and capable of supporting events and community programming year-round. These requirements will be influenced by the final building design, construction materials, mechanical systems, programming schedule, and facility management approach. As such, the following assessment provides a qualitative overview of anticipated operational and maintenance needs intended to support future planning and identify key considerations for long-term management and programming of the facility.

Facility Operations

The expanded facility would function primarily as an event and community gathering space, supporting not only the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival once a year, but broader community events, workshops, performances, markets, and other cultural programming throughout the year. Day-to-day operations could be integrated with the Township's existing management of the Community Hall, limiting the need for additional full-time staff. Event setup, facility bookings, cleaning, and security could be managed through existing Township staff resources or supplemented with contract services and volunteers during larger events such as the Arts Festival.

Utilities

The expanded building would require ongoing management of electricity, heating, internet, water, and wastewater services. Utility requirements will be influenced by the final building design, operating schedule, and level of year-round use, with opportunities to improve efficiency through modern building systems and materials.

Maintenance

Routine maintenance activities would include janitorial services, washroom upkeep, preventative building maintenance, HVAC servicing, snow removal, grounds maintenance, and maintenance of technology and internet infrastructure. As an expansion to an existing municipal facility, many maintenance responsibilities could be incorporated into current Township operations, improving operational efficiency compared to developing a stand-alone facility on a new site.

Event Staffing and Security

Most events hosted within the facility would require limited staffing beyond standard facility management by the Township's administration team. Larger events, including the Arts Festival, may require temporary staffing, volunteer support, or contracted security services to assist with event setup, crowd management, and facility monitoring. The secure, enclosed nature of the facility would reduce risks associated with weather exposure and equipment storage while also addressing event organizer concerns regarding security.

Programming and Marketing

Realizing the full value of the expanded facility will require ongoing programming and marketing efforts to encourage year-round use and community participation. Programming may include festivals, markets, workshops, cultural events, performances, arts programming, community gatherings, and facility rentals, which would require coordination, scheduling, event planning, and partnerships with local organizations and businesses.

Marketing activities would support event promotion, facility rentals, and community awareness through digital advertising, social media, community calendars, signage, print materials, and tourism channels. While some of these responsibilities could be incorporated into existing Township communications and event management functions, additional support from community partners, volunteers, or contracted services may be beneficial for larger events and special programming initiatives. Effective programming and marketing will be important to maximize facility use, attract visitors, support local businesses, and strengthen the facility's role as a year-round community asset.

Long-Term Considerations

A dedicated event facility would simplify operations by eliminating the need to temporarily convert municipal maintenance space for event use. The expanded Community Hall would provide a flexible venue capable of supporting a broader range of activities throughout the year, helping strengthen community programming, cultural initiatives, tourism, and local events.

6.0 COST ESTIMATES

6.1 CAPITAL COST ESTIMATE

The following rough order of magnitude (ROM) estimates are based on precedent research and the 2026 Canadian Cost Guide from Altus Group.

For an addition to the Community Hall in the form of a large, simple, climate-controlled structure accommodating a variety of events, the estimated cost per square foot would be \$253. This estimate accounts for the remote location of Sioux Narrows but does not account for any "soft costs" such as legal fees, design services, insurance costs, or environmental testing.

The estimated construction cost for the proposed 4,000 square foot Community Hall addition is **\$1,012,000**. Given the conceptual nature of this ROM estimate, a contingency allowance of 30% is recommended to account for design development and potential cost variability. Costs associated with renovating or upgrading the existing Community Hall are not included in this estimate.

For upgrades and additions to the proposed outdoor spaces, a preliminary allowance of 30% of the building construction cost has been assumed. This percentage is commonly used for conceptual estimates where outdoor improvements consist primarily of landscaping and site enhancements. However, the proposed concept includes a significant amount of hardscape infrastructure, including a plaza, pedestrian areas, parking, circulation improvements, and covered outdoor spaces, which may result in costs that differ from this typical range. As the design is refined, the proportion allocated to outdoor improvements should be reassessed to better reflect the specific scope and mix of hardscape and softscape landscape elements proposed. Based on a 30% allowance this would be approximately **\$300,000** in outdoor improvements. This estimate accounts for the remote location of Sioux Narrows but does not account for any “soft costs” such as legal fees, design services, insurance costs, or environmental testing. Opportunities for cost savings may exist if the Township is able to undertake construction of the outdoor improvements in-house rather than through a conventional design-bid-build approach.

6.2 OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE COST ESTIMATE

The proposed Community Hall expansion is expected to have relatively modest operating and maintenance costs compared to the overall capital investment, particularly if designed as a simple and efficient multi-purpose event facility. Anticipated operations and maintenance costs include facility operations, staffing, facility maintenance, utilities, programming, and marketing activities required to support year-round community use. The actual operating model and associated costs will ultimately depend on the final building design, construction materials, mechanical systems, programming schedule, and staffing approach.

To support long-term planning, this assessment provides a high-level estimate of anticipated operating and maintenance costs based on the Township's current rates for comparable municipal facilities and benchmark research for comparable operations and maintenance costs for multi-use facilities in Northern Ontario. This estimate is intended for budgeting and grant application purposes and accounts for northern Ontario conditions, including higher heating and snow management requirements, limited service providers, and potentially higher contractor travel costs. Costs may be moderated by integrating the expansion with the existing facility, allowing shared staffing, administration, and utility systems. However, actual annual costs will depend on final building design, energy efficiency, intensity of use, programming levels, and the condition of existing building systems.

For a 4,000 sq. ft. expansion to the existing Community Hall in Sioux Narrows - Nestor Falls, an appropriate planning-level estimate for annual operations and maintenance is

approximately **\$44,000 to \$72,000 per year**, or **\$11 to \$18 per sq. ft.** This estimate reflects expected costs for utilities, janitorial services, building maintenance and repairs, facility staffing, insurance, exterior maintenance, equipment upkeep, and contributions to long-term capital renewal. Based on comparable northern Ontario community and recreation facilities, a mid-range benchmark of **\$15 per sq. ft.** is recommended, resulting in an estimated annual O&M cost of approximately **\$60,000 per year**.

Facility Operations

The expanded Community Hall would operate as a year-round community event centre supporting meetings, workshops, performances, markets, fundraisers, cultural programming, special events, and facility rentals. The facility currently generates approximately **\$2,500 annually** in rental revenue. With additional event space, improved amenities, and expanded programming opportunities, rental revenue could reasonably be expected to increase to approximately **\$5,000–\$10,000 annually**, depending on facility use, rental rates, and the level of programming and event activity. This estimate is intended to provide an order-of-magnitude understanding of potential revenue opportunities and should be refined as the operating model is developed.

Staffing

The expanded facility is expected to have minimal incremental staffing requirements and can largely be managed through the Township's existing administrative and facility management resources. Additional staffing, volunteer support, or contracted services may only be required for larger events or special programming. Given that no additional permanent staffing is anticipated, a separate staffing cost allowance has not been included in this assessment.

Maintenance

Routine facility maintenance is anticipated at approximately **\$25,000 annually**, including preventative maintenance, minor repairs, servicing of building systems, and upkeep of indoor and outdoor facility components. An additional **\$6,000 annually** has been allocated for cleaning and janitorial services to maintain the facility and support year-round use. Insurance costs are estimated at **\$5,000 per year** based on comparable municipal facilities.

Utilities

Annual utility costs, including electricity, heating, internet service, water, and wastewater, are estimated at approximately **\$16,000 per year**. Utility consumption is expected to increase relative to current Community Hall operations due to the addition of approximately 4,000 square feet of climate-controlled space and actual utility consumption will depend on the final building design, operating schedule, and level of year-round use. However, energy-efficient building materials, lighting, and mechanical systems could help reduce long-term consumption. Increased year-round use of the facility would also maximize the value of these operating expenditures by supporting a broader range of community activities and events.

Programming and Marketing

Ongoing programming and marketing will be important to maximize facility use and support community events throughout the year. While the Township does not currently maintain a dedicated budget for these activities, a preliminary allowance of **\$8,000** is recommended for the development of rental packages, promotional materials, and other resources to support facility bookings, event promotion, and community awareness.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The review of existing conditions, stakeholder input, vendor feedback, precedent research, and site evaluation confirms that expanding the **Sioux Narrows Community Hall** is the most practical and flexible option to support the long-term needs of the community and provide a dedicated venue for the annual Sioux Narrows Arts Festival as well as broader community events. This approach builds on existing municipal infrastructure, improves accessibility and amenities, increases event and programming capacity, and reduces operational challenges associated with the current shared-use maintenance facility for the Arts Festival.

While further design development, costing, and operational planning will be required, the preferred concept provides a clear foundation for future decision-making. With thoughtful implementation, the Community Hall expansion can strengthen the Arts Festival, support year-round arts and cultural programming, and enhance the hall's role as a central gathering place for Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls.

APPENDIX A: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT RESULTS



SIoux NARROWS – NESTOR FALLS SPECIAL EVENTS INFRASTRUCTURE

ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY REPORT

March 30, 2026

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PRESENTATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This section provides context about the project to inform interpretation of the summarized engagement results.

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND AND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

In February 2026, Urban Systems engaged users and community stakeholders in order to better understand issues and opportunities related to the future of the Township's maintenance garage and it's use as Arts Festival infrastructure. Community and stakeholder engagement included the following activities:

- Presentation and discussion with Township Council and senior staff
- Discussion with Township maintenance staff
- Presentation and discussion with the following community organizations
 - Bassin' for Bucks
 - Sioux Narrows Seniors Centre / 50+ Activity Centre
 - Sioux Narrows Recreation Committee
 - Nestor Falls Recreation Committee
- Presentation and discussion with the Sioux Narrows Arts Council
- Survey of the Sioux Narrows Arts Council vendors.

2.0 FINDINGS

2.1 ARTS FESTIVAL VENDOR/ARTIST SURVEY

To support an understanding of the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities associated with the current Sioux Narrows Arts Festival venue, a short survey was distributed to past vendors with the annual event.

2.1.1 Respondent Information

A total of 31 people responded to the survey.

Most survey respondents have been involved with the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival as artists or vendors for less than ten years. Fewer than one-third (30%) have been involved for more than ten years.

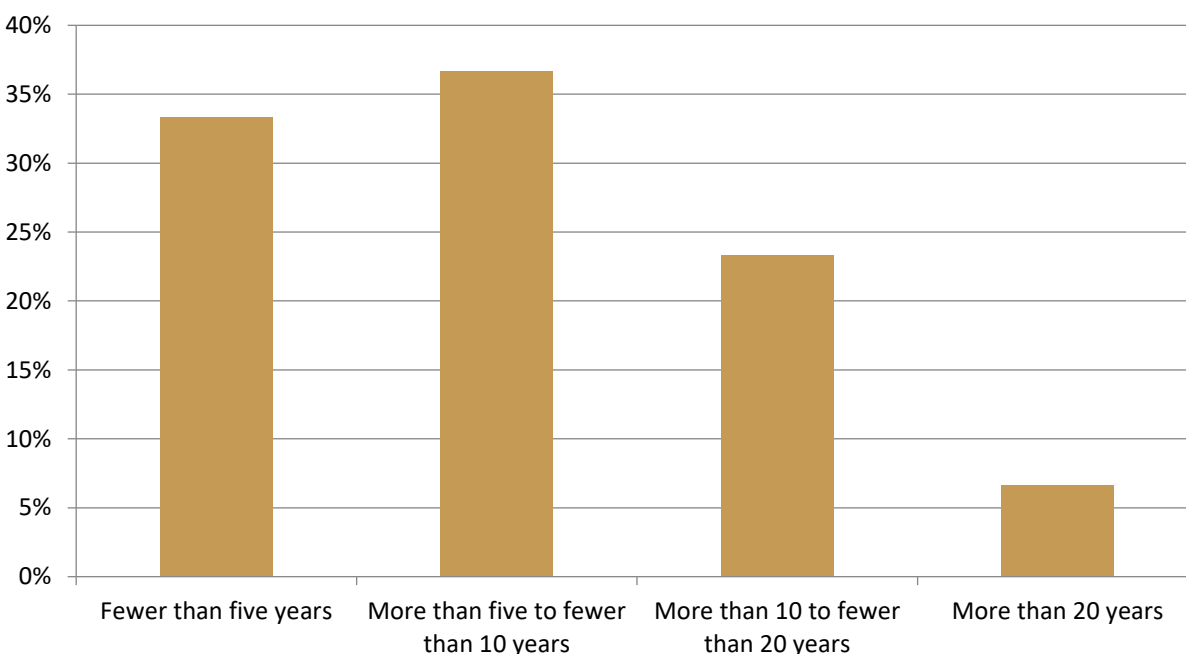


Figure 1: How long have you been an artist/ vendor at the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival? (n=30)

More than half of respondents (52%) are aged 65 or older, while only about 10% are aged 45 or younger.

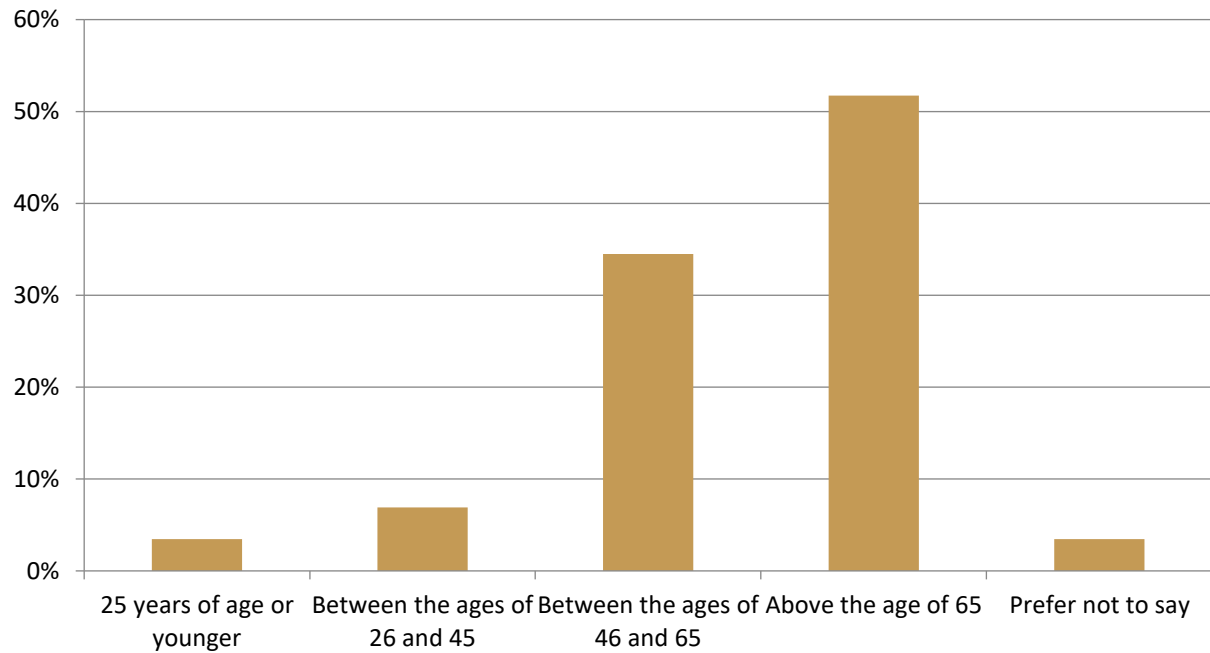


Figure 2: What is your age? (n=29)

Nearly two-thirds (63%) of respondents reside in Ontario, with another third residing in Manitoba and just 3% residing in the United States.

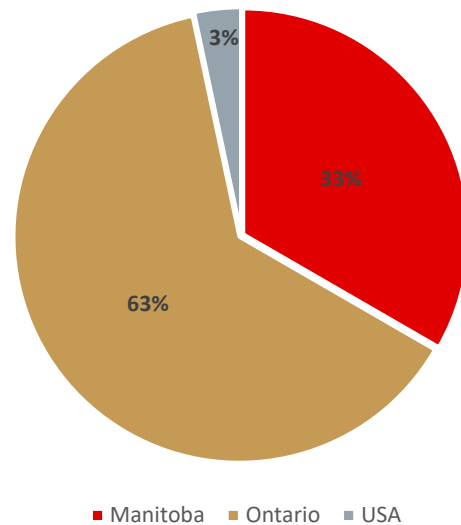


Figure 3: Artist/vendor home location (n=30)

2.1.2 Arts Festival Infrastructure

Respondents were asked to rate several aspects of the current SNAF facility from poor to excellent (on a scale of 0 to 5). The weighted average ratings of all respondents are shown in [Figure 4](#).

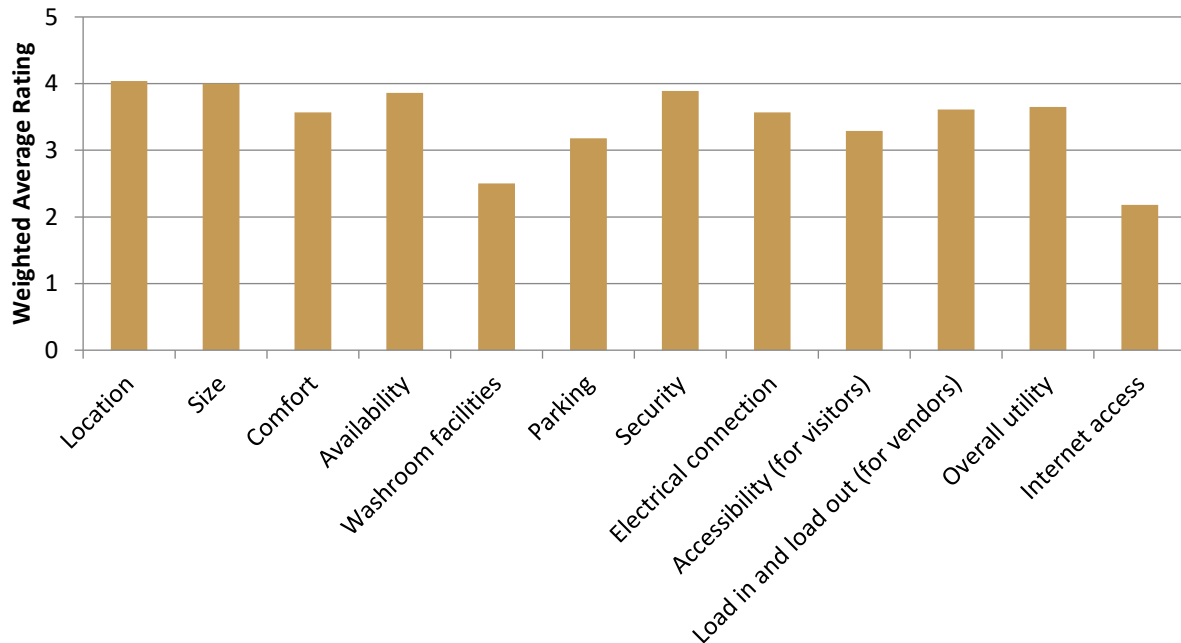


Figure 4: Thinking about the current venue for the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival, please rate the suitability of the following aspects from poor to excellent (n=28)

The cumulative results show that the current venue's location, size, security and availability received the highest weighted average scores. The current venue's internet access and washroom facilities received the lowest weighted average ratings. Most aspects of the current venue received weighted average ratings of between 3 (good) and 4 (very good).

Respondents were also invited to provide additional comments about the current venue. The main themes mentioned in the additional comments include the following:

- Internet is not great, but doesn't pose a major obstacle
- Transportation from the highway to the venue is an issue
- Proximity to the docks is a strength; some visitors arrive by boat
- Accommodations can be a challenge for vendors

Respondents were asked to use three words or phrases to describe their ideal venue for the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival. The most common themes in the responses provided were a light, bright space (well-lit, natural lighting, sunny), an accessible space, a space with good internet and phone connectivity, and an indoor or enclosed space (see [Figure 5](#)

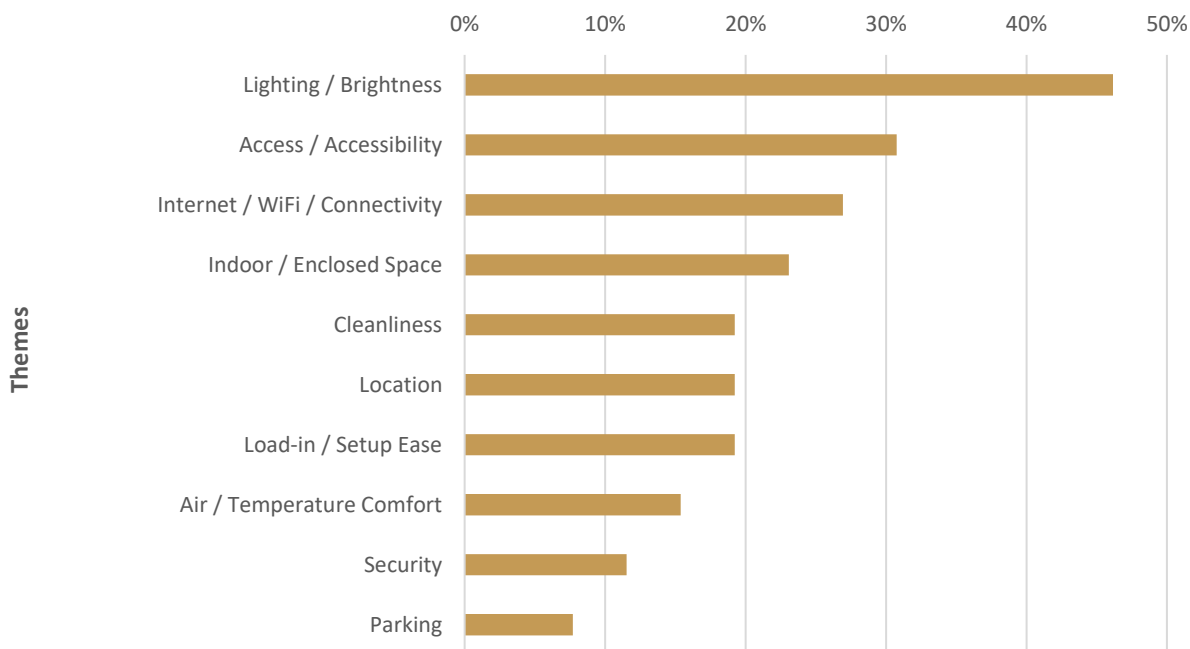


Figure 5: Please provide up to three words or phrases that describe your ideal venue for the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival (n=26)

To understand how vendors and artists valued different ideal venue characteristics, the survey asked respondents to rank a list of six priorities. The highest ranked priority in this context was a convenient location for the venue, followed by a large space able to accommodate more vendors and visitors and a secure venue. A venue with more modern amenities, such as washrooms, was collectively ranked 4th, while more storage space and expanded availability beyond the August event weekend were the two lowest ranked priorities (see [Figure 6](#)).

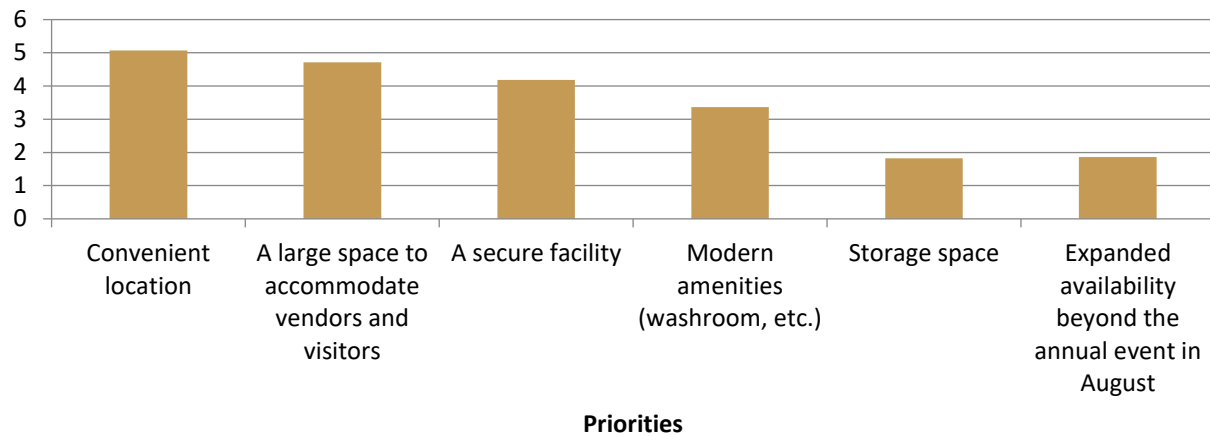


Figure 6: Thinking about your ideal arts festival venue, please rank the following priorities from highest to lowest (n=28)

Finally, survey respondents were asked to share any additional thoughts about either the current venue or their ideal venue for the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival. The following themes were the most common in 16 responses to the final question:

- The current venue works well for the SNAF despite some rough edges and respondents expressed gratitude for the hard work of the Arts Council and those who help run the festival each year.
- The current venue could use some upgrades to be a better space for the festival, including a more even and level transition from the entrance to outside, better backdrops for the vendor stalls, and greater ease in using electronic payment platforms.

2.2 FOCUS GROUPS

2.2.1 Township Council and Senior Staff: Summary

Meeting Date: February 24, 2026

Location: Municipal Office

Participants: Gale Black (Council), Steve Salvador (Council), Matt Rydberg (Council), Holly Chant (Council), Heather Gropp (CAO), Maureen Hanson (Clerk Treasurer), Brooke Hatfield (Community Engagement), Jeff Port (Planning).

MEETING NOTES

- **Project Introduction and Stakeholder Engagement:** Jeff introduced the project focused on evaluating and improving special events infrastructure to support the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival, outlining the engagement process with various community groups and the project's goals, while noting the absence of key documents due to a colleague's illness.
- **Project Goals and Scope:** Jeff explained that the project's main objective is to assess opportunity infrastructure to support the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival, considering both short-term and long-term plans, and to provide recommendations for improvements and maintenance.
- **Stakeholder Engagement Plan:** Jeff described the engagement process, which includes meetings with community groups, recreation organisations, and the Arts Council, as well as distributing a survey to vendors to gather input on current challenges and future aspirations.
- **Assessment of Current Festival Infrastructure:** Jeff and participants discussed the current state of the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival infrastructure, highlighting operational strengths, logistical challenges, and the effectiveness of existing facilities based on recent observations and feedback.
- **Operational Strengths:** Jeff observed that the festival setup was efficient and well-managed, with smooth vendor and attendee flow, and noted that the location and existing facilities contributed positively to the event's success.
- **Logistical and Facility Challenges:** Participants identified issues such as traffic congestion, limited parking, and the need for better internet and ventilation, while also discussing the potential for gradual improvements rather than large-scale redevelopment.
- **Stakeholder Feedback:** Jeff solicited input from attendees on what is working well and what could be improved, emphasising the importance of understanding both current successes and future needs to inform recommendations.
- **Future Facility Options and Comparative Analysis:** Jeff presented examples of special events infrastructure from other communities, such as the St. Norbert Farmers

Market and Pine Ridge Hollow Market, to inform discussions about potential upgrades or new facilities for the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival.

- **Comparative Facility Models:** Jeff described the features of the St. Norbert Farmers Market and Pine Ridge Hollow Market, including their size, amenities, and vendor capacity, to provide context for what could be achieved in Sioux Narrows.
- **Applicability to Local Context:** Participants discussed the relevance of these models, considering factors such as the scale of local events, the need for year-round usability, and the potential for shared or multi-purpose spaces.
- **Budget and Feasibility Considerations:** Jeff acknowledged that while these facilities offer valuable insights, budget constraints and the absence of detailed cost estimates would require careful planning and prioritisation of improvements.
- **Building Use, Ownership, and Maintenance Discussions:** The group debated the future use and ownership of the curling club building, considering the needs of the Arts Festival, maintenance teams, and the broader community, and explored options for repurposing or upgrading existing facilities.
- **Stakeholder Needs and Preferences:** Jeff and participants discussed the competing interests of the Arts Festival and maintenance teams regarding the curling club building, with suggestions to provide a new facility for maintenance and repurpose the existing building for the festival.
- **Repurposing and Improvement Options:** Ideas included transferring ownership or responsibility for the building to the Arts Festival, making gradual improvements such as painting and landscaping, and ensuring the building remains a community asset rather than an underutilised space.
- **Insurance and Liability Considerations:** Jeff raised concerns about the insurability of the building and the need to address liability issues, suggesting that any transfer of responsibility would need to be supported by appropriate insurance arrangements.
- **Economic and Community Impact Considerations:** Participants examined the broader economic and community implications of festival infrastructure decisions, including the importance of supporting local businesses, managing vendor mix, and ensuring the festival's long-term sustainability.
- **Local Business Support:** Jeff and others discussed the potential impact of an influx of external vendors on local businesses, emphasising the need to balance attracting visitors with supporting the local economy.
- **Vendor and Event Management:** Concerns were raised about the risk of the festival becoming dominated by non-local vendors, with suggestions to prioritise local participation and manage the event to retain economic benefits within the community.
- **Next Steps and Action Items:** Jeff outlined the immediate next steps, including further meetings with community groups and maintenance teams, gathering additional feedback, and developing options for council consideration.
- **Further Stakeholder Engagement:** Jeff planned to meet with maintenance and community groups to clarify facility needs and preferences, ensuring all perspectives are considered before making recommendations.

- **Feedback and Communication:** Participants were encouraged to provide additional input via email after the meeting, and Jeff committed to incorporating this feedback into the ongoing planning process.

NEXT STEPS

- **Maintenance Facility Requirements:** Have a conversation with the maintenance team to determine their willingness to move to a new facility and clarify their requirements for a better building. (Jeff)
- **Arts Festival Building Usage:** Consult with the Arts Festival group to gather their feedback on the current building, including what improvements they would like and their willingness to take responsibility for the facility if it becomes their dedicated space. (Jeff)
- **Building Upgrade Costing:** Obtain cost estimates for potential upgrades to the new facility behind the current building, including the addition of walls and other improvements needed for broader usage. (Jeff)
- **Grant Application Preparation:** Bring forward grant applications and review legacy selection options for the current year to support facility improvements or related initiatives. (Jeff)

2.2.2 Community Organizations: Summary

Meeting Date: February 24, 2026

Location: Sioux Narrows Community Hall

Participants:

Barb and Steve Salvador	Bassin' for Bucks
Kevin and Jackie Kast	Sioux Narrows Rec Council
Eric Kris Tittlemier	50+ Activity Centre
Lucy Mallick	50+ Activity Centre

MEETING NOTES

USL led a discussion with the group regarding the current state and future aspirations for the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival infrastructure, referencing examples from other communities and considering the needs for event space, facilities, and community engagement.

- **Current Arrangement Review:** Jeff prompted the group to reflect on what is working well with the current arrangement for the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival, as well as the challenges faced, encouraging input on positive elements to retain and areas for improvement.
- **Examples from Other Communities:** The group discussed infrastructure models from other communities, such as the Pineridge Hollow Market, to compare features like indoor and outdoor event spaces, vendor capacity, and amenities, aiming to identify best practices for Sioux Narrows.
- **Facility and Space Requirements:** Participants considered the size and features of existing and potential event spaces, including the need for secure, year-round facilities, washrooms, and flexible vendor arrangements, referencing the current SNNF building and outdoor area.
- **Community Engagement and Stakeholder Input:** USL emphasised the importance of gathering perspectives from various stakeholders, including local business owners and community members, to ensure the infrastructure meets the needs of all involved in the festival.

Challenges and Opportunities for Festival Growth: The group explored the challenges related to expanding the festival, such as funding, maintenance, and infrastructure limitations, while also discussing opportunities for growth and improvement.

- **Funding and Maintenance Issues:** The discussion highlighted difficulties in securing funding for essential infrastructure, such as landfills and wastewater management, which are critical for supporting festival growth and community development.
- **Exploring Growth Scenarios:** The team discussed the need for some level of growth, considering both large-scale and incremental improvements, and acknowledged the importance of planning for sustainable development.

Event Programming and Community Activities: USL facilitated a conversation about the types of activities and programming that could enhance the festival experience, including workshops, arts events, and collaborations with local organisations.

- **Workshop and Activity Ideas:** The group discussed the value of workshops and interactive activities, referencing past successful events and considering how to incorporate similar programming into future festivals.
- **Collaboration with Local Groups:** Participants mentioned the potential for partnerships with local organisations, such as churches and arts collectives, to diversify festival offerings and increase community involvement.

2.2.3 Township Maintenance Staff: Summary

Maintenance staff prefer to remain in their current location as it is centrally located and appropriately sized. It requires washrooms and other upgrades to make sure that it complies with the building code.

This requires further development and discussion with maintenance staff.

2.2.4 Sioux Narrows Arts Council: Summary

Meeting Date: February 24, 2026

Location: Municipal Office

<u>ATTENDEES</u>	<u>COMPANY</u>	<u>EMAIL</u>
Susan Hovi		
Mark and Kathy Valentini?		
Denise Johansen		
Kathy Kauhl Johansen		
Mark Johansen		
Brooke Hatfield	Township of Sioux Narrows – Nestor Falls	
Jeff Palmer	Urban Systems	
Not in attendance: April Welter, Chloe Fadden, Gayle Bouvier, William Mcfarlane		

MEETING NOTES

- **Project Overview and Stakeholder Engagement:** USL outlined the project's scope—an infrastructure analysis for special events in Sioux Narrows, with a focus on the Arts Festival—and described recent consultations with Township Council, event stakeholders, and maintenance staff, inviting input from participants.
- **Project Scope and Timeline:** USL explained that they were hired to conduct an infrastructure analysis for special events, particularly the Arts Festival, in Sioux Narrows. The project includes reviewing existing infrastructure, exploring other event models, and recommending future options. The project will be completed before the upcoming municipal election and in advance of the blackout period after June.
- **Stakeholder Consultations:** USL described recent in-person meetings with Township Council, the Bassin for Bucks group, Sioux Narrows and Nestor Falls Recreation Committees, and senior town staff, gathering feedback on infrastructure needs and event requirements. The current meeting was dedicated to the Arts Festival group to ensure their perspectives were captured.
- **Participant Introductions:** Participants introduced themselves, sharing their backgrounds and involvement with the Arts Festival and related community activities, establishing the breadth of experience and perspectives present.
- **Survey for Broader Input:** USL announced that a survey link would be sent to Susan for distribution to vendors and members, aiming to collect additional written feedback due to time constraints and to ensure input from those unable to attend the meeting.
- **Current Venue Assessment: Strengths and Challenges:** Participants discussed the strengths and limitations of the current curling club venue for the Arts Festival,

covering booth capacity, parking, accessibility, shared use with maintenance, and the impact of venue features on event operations.

- **Booth Capacity and Waiting List:** Susan reported that the curling club accommodates 46 booths, with interior booths slightly smaller than those along the wall. There is typically a waiting list, and the ideal capacity would be around 55 booths to avoid turning away interested vendors.
- **Parking and Accessibility Issues:** Available parking is primarily for vendors and those with accessibility needs, with attendees required to walk up a hill. Past complaints about the walk and incidents involving health issues were noted. A shuttle bus was previously used but discontinued due to cost, and attempts to use golf carts were halted due to insurance and road regulations.
- **Traffic Management and Safety:** Traffic congestion and safety concerns have been addressed in previous years by involving the OPP for traffic control and the men's club for managing vehicle flow. Residents on nearby roads have raised concerns about access during the event.
- **Shared Use and Storage Challenges:** The curling club is shared with the maintenance department, resulting in storage of equipment and other items in the event space. This creates aesthetic and cleanliness challenges, with artists needing to cover unsightly items and contend with oil stains and uneven flooring.
- **Venue Suitability and Security:** The indoor, lockable nature of the curling club is a major draw for artists, providing security and protection from weather. However, the venue is described as unattractive and lacking in amenities such as running water and accessible washrooms.
- **Alternative Venue Considerations and Comparative Models:** Participants discussed alternative venues—including the Four Seasons facility and examples from other communities—highlighting their features, limitations, and relevance to the Arts Festival's needs.
- **Four Seasons Facility Limitations:** Participants agreed that the Four Seasons facility (behind the Township Office) is unsuitable for the Arts Festival due to its location on a high-speed road, limited parking, narrow shoulders, and lack of indoor space. Weather exposure, lack of wifi, and inadequate power supply were also cited as concerns.
- **Comparative Event Spaces:** USL presented the St. Norbert Farmers Market and Pine Ridge Hollow Market as examples, describing their size, year-round operation, secure and lockable spaces, washrooms, and flexible layouts. These models offer inspiration for potential future venues in Sioux Narrows.
- **Desirable Features for a New Venue:** Participants expressed interest in features such as a hard surface for setup, ample parking, secure storage, accessible washrooms, and flexible space for both indoor and outdoor activities. The importance of a central, in-town location was emphasised.
- **Operational Needs and Event Logistics:** Participants detailed operational requirements for the Arts Festival, including electricity, lighting, internet, food provision, washrooms, and the management of performances and children's activities.

- **Electricity and Lighting:** Each booth in the curling club has access to electricity, which is essential for artists' lighting and fans. Recent upgrades improved overall lighting, but artists often bring their own lights to achieve the desired effect. Power supply has generally been sufficient, though there have been issues in the past.
- **Internet Access:** Susan resolved previous internet connectivity issues by using a personal Starlink system, which supported multiple users during the event. This solution was effective for vendor transactions and communications.
- **Food Provision for Artists:** Artists require on-site food options as they cannot leave their booths during event hours. Attempts to coordinate food orders from local businesses via volunteers proved unworkable due to long queues. The event now brings in food trucks, balancing support for local businesses with artists' needs.
- **Children's Activities and Performance Spaces:** Children's activities are typically held in a tent outside, but there is interest in having an indoor or container-based space for weather protection and storage. Musical performances and entertainment are held at various venues, including the fishing centre and community hall, but not at the main event site due to space and facility limitations.
- **Future Planning: Needs, Aspirations, and Uncertainties:** Participants discussed their vision for an improved or new venue, emphasising the need for more space, better amenities, central location, secure storage, and certainty regarding future use of the current facility.
- **Aspirations for a New or Improved Venue:** Participants described their ideal venue as centrally located in town, with increased booth capacity, secure and attractive facilities, ample parking, accessible and permanent washrooms, running water, and improved airflow or cooling. A hard surface and even ground were also highlighted as important for setup and accessibility.
- **Storage and Multi-Use Space Needs:** There is a significant need for secure, centralised storage for event supplies, historical documents, musical instruments, and art equipment, as current storage is scattered across private homes and various community buildings. A multi-use space for art exhibits, workshops, and music lessons was also identified as a priority.
- **Uncertainty About Future Venue Use:** The current arrangement allows use of the curling club for this year only, with no commitment beyond that. This uncertainty is causing concern among organisers and artists, who require advance notice to plan and retain participants. Participants requested a clear decision from the township before the festival.
- **Interim Solutions and Advocacy:** Given the time required to establish a new venue, participants advocated for an extension of the current arrangement or a compromise to ensure continuity. They emphasised the importance of communicating the festival's needs to council and the urgency of a decision before the municipal election.
- **Data Collection and Next Steps:** USL coordinated the distribution of a survey to gather further input from artists, council members, and stakeholders, and discussed the sharing of event statistics and the timeline for report completion.

- **Survey Distribution:** USL has sent the survey link to Susan, who will distribute it to last year's artists, those on the waiting list, and relevant council and music contacts. The survey aims to capture additional feedback for the infrastructure analysis.
- **Event Statistics Sharing:** Brooke agreed to provide event statistics from the previous year, including attendee demographics, to support the analysis and recommendations.
- **Report Timeline and Communication:** USL reiterated the need to complete the report before the municipal election blackout period and committed to sharing a summary and the meeting recording with participants. The survey should be completed promptly to inform the final recommendations.

NEXT STEPS

- **Distribution of Meeting Survey:** Send the survey link to all artists who attended last year's festival, relevant Arts Council members, and selected individuals with longstanding involvement, ensuring it reaches those with direct experience of the event. (Susan)
- **Provision of Festival Statistics:** Send the statistics from last year's festival, including attendee demographics, to USL for their report. (Brooke)
- **Advocacy for Future Venue Commitment:** Bring up the need for a clear decision from the township regarding the future use of the current festival venue, to provide certainty for the Arts Council and participating artists. (Brooke)
- **Sharing of Music Contacts for Survey:** Send the email addresses of Ed and Len, who are managing music for the summer, to Susan for inclusion in the survey distribution. (SNAF)

APPENDIX B: STAKEHOLDER PRESENTATION

SIoux NARROWS SPECIAL EVENTS INFRASTRUCTURE



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT | FEBRUARY 2026

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INTRODUCTIONS

Name

How long have you been involved in the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival?

AGENDA

- Introduce the project and its goals
- Hear from you about:
 - What is working well with the current arrangement for the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival? What are the challenges?
 - When thinking about the future of the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival, what are your key goals and aspirations?
- Share examples of special events infrastructure in other communities

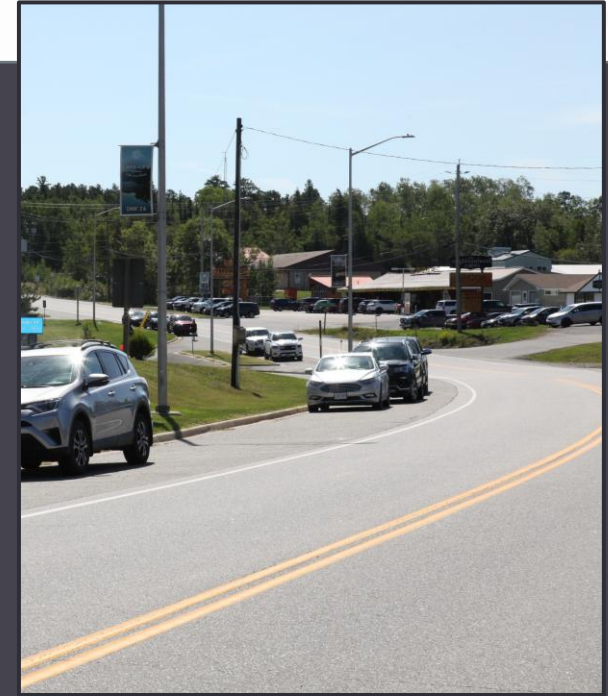
PROJECT BACKGROUND



UNDERSTAND
EXISTING
INFRASTRUCTURE



EXPLORE OTHER
MODELS FOR
SPECIAL EVENTS



RECOMMEND
OPTIONS FOR THE
FUTURE

THE CURRENT ARRANGEMENT



THE CURRENT ARRANGEMENT





31

NO
DOGS

NO
PARKING
THIS
SIDE

KUBOTA





LE MARCHÉ ST. NORBERT FARMERS MARKET

Indoor event space: 12,000 sq.ft.

Outdoor event space: 58,000 sq.ft.

Total : 70,000 sq.ft.

FEATURES:

- Year-round event space
- Secure (lockable)
- Washrooms
- 70+ indoor spaces
- 100 outdoor spaces
- 4', 6', 8' table indoor space
- 10' x 10' outdoor space
- Food truck & event space
- Electrical outlets



WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

PINERIDGE HOLLOW MARKET

Indoor event space: 5,800 sq.ft.

Outdoor event space: 8,200 sq.ft.

Total : 14,000 sq.ft.

FEATURES:

- Year-round event space
- Secure (lockable)
- Washrooms
- 32 indoor vendors
- 54 outdoor vendors
- 9.5' x 10' indoor space
- 5' x 10' indoor space
- 8' x 10' outdoor space
- Food truck & event spaces
- Electrical outlets



OAKBANK, MANITOBA

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NOTES & COMMENTS

- Add here

WHAT IS GOING WELL?

Thinking about the current venue and the last few years of the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival, what are the key positive elements that you would like to see continue in the future?

WHAT COULD BE BETTER?

Thinking about the current venue and the last few years of the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival, what are elements that you would like to change or improve in the future?

NOTES & COMMENTS

- Large tent over an entire parking lot
- Could use more storage
 - One shed at the current venue
 - Storage is a problem at the community hall. Likely an issue for others.
 - Heated storage would be lovely.
 - Galleries set up in various buildings.
 - Indoor/outdoor venues. No gallery wall in town for a permanent installation. Fishing Centre has better access than Town Hall (although it's seasonal).
- Single, central location
- Music workshops and concerts, workshops, art supplies, demonstrations
- More booths (something like Pine Ridge Hollow) to not have to waitlist people

WHAT COULD BE BETTER?

Thinking about the current venue and the last few years of the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival, what are elements that you would like to change or improve in the future?

NOTES & COMMENTS

- More airflow, better ventilation
 - Vendors generally want to be closer to the entrances for more airflow; central booths can be quite warm
- Needs to be secure
- Not the most aesthetically pleasing venue; there are lots of public works tools and materials left in the venue during the festival
 - Lots of ugly things stored
 - Can be hidden by the vendors
- Running water, better washroom facilities
 - There used to be a part of the curling club that had a kitchen and washrooms; demolished in the 1990s
- Improved accessibility (wheelchair access)

WHAT COULD BE BETTER?

Thinking about the current venue and the last few years of the Sioux Narrows Arts Festival, what are elements that you would like to change or improve in the future?

NOTES & COMMENTS

- A downtown venue with less walking required
- A hard ground surface for ease of setup
- Better parking; more parking
- More even ground surface around the building entrance
- Sea can / shipping container facility
- A venue that doesn't have more and more oil or other contaminants on the floor (from Public Works / Maintenance use)

ANY OTHER THOUGHTS OR QUESTIONS?

Is there anything else that we should be aware of as we think about recommendations for SNNF and potential future investments in infrastructure to support special events in the community?

NOTES & COMMENTS

- Musical / theatrical performances during festival:
 - Artists gathering on the Friday evening – would be nice to have entertainment
 - A band performance on the Saturday (at the Fishing Centre)
 - A performance for kids (magician, children's music)
- Community hall is the venue during winter
- Sports Fishing Centre was not designed for performances
- Ideally the Arts Festival and performance space(s) would be located together?
 - Especially located in town, would allow greater attendance for both
 - Would also get more use outside of the Arts Festival weekend

ANY OTHER THOUGHTS OR QUESTIONS?

Is there anything else that we should be aware of as we think about recommendations for SNNF and potential future investments in infrastructure to support special events in the community?

NOTES & COMMENTS

- Church in town has hosted music, arts and other events, but not during the Festival itself
- Uncertainty around future years leaves the Festival in limbo – need more certainty, ideally before the festival this year (2026).
 - Hard to keep artists coming if the venue is not confirmed.
 - Artists have been asking about the future of the Festival
 - Need a yea or nay decision
- A new venue would take a long time to be established, so need a compromise in the meantime; can't wait for the new Township Council to be elected/seated.

A light gray background featuring a faint, stylized map of a city street grid. The grid consists of numerous thin lines representing streets, with some lines forming circular shapes that likely represent roundabouts or traffic circles.

CLOSING

THANK YOU

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