
Themes for the Multi-Use Space Report



JANUARY 11

City of Airdrie

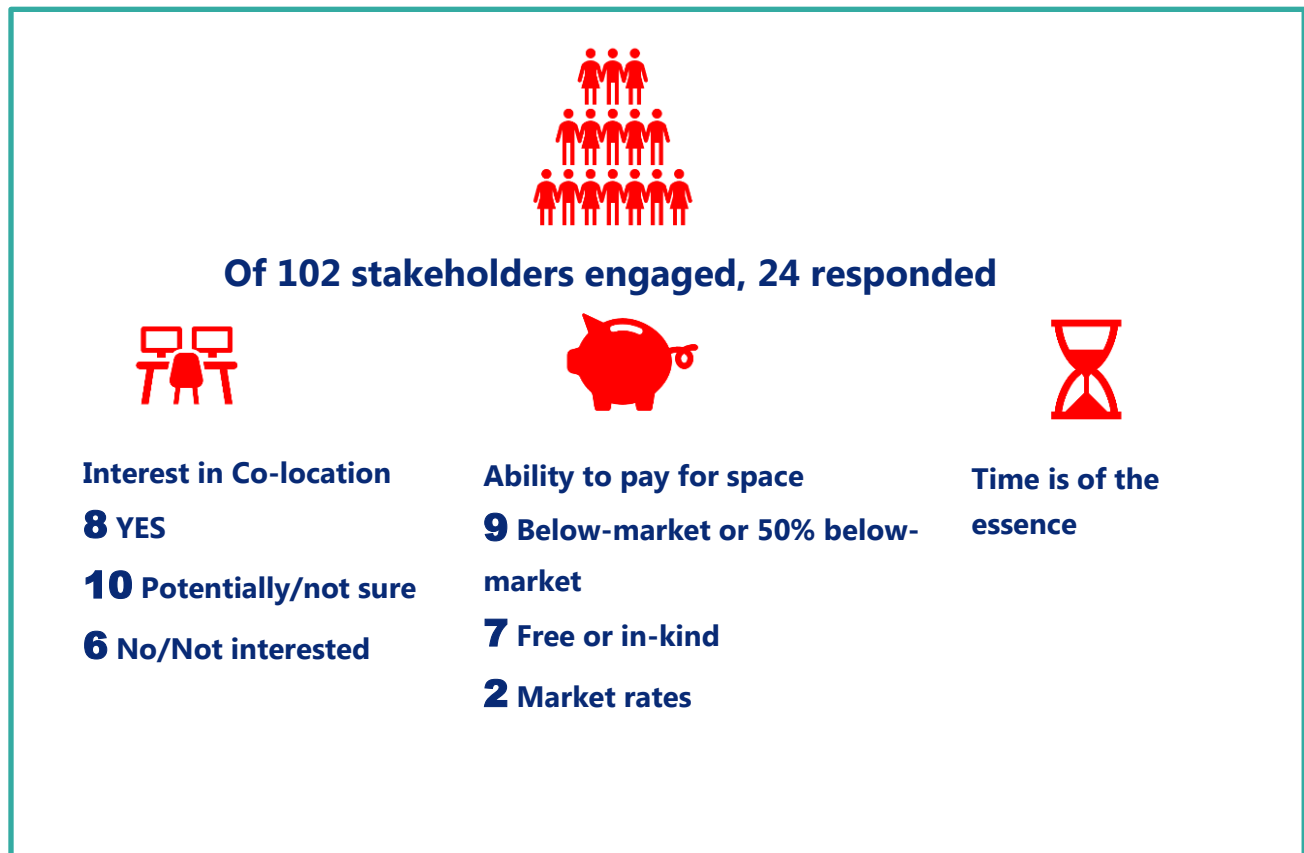
Introduction

PROJECT ENGAGEMENT TO INFORM THE MULTI-USE SPACE

In October 2021, Council approved the Library Functional Program and Feasibility Report presented by the consultants HCMA and RPG. In the functional program, the library gross area of 60,000 ft² was developed based on Alberta best practices and consultation with Library Leadership. Council expressed a desire for up to 25,000 ft² of multi-use space to complement the library. During the feasibility phase of the project, the consultants aimed to understand residents' desire for services and amenities in the multi-use space through a household survey. Below is the feedback provided when asked, "what might increase your interest in visiting the new building and/or become a library member?"



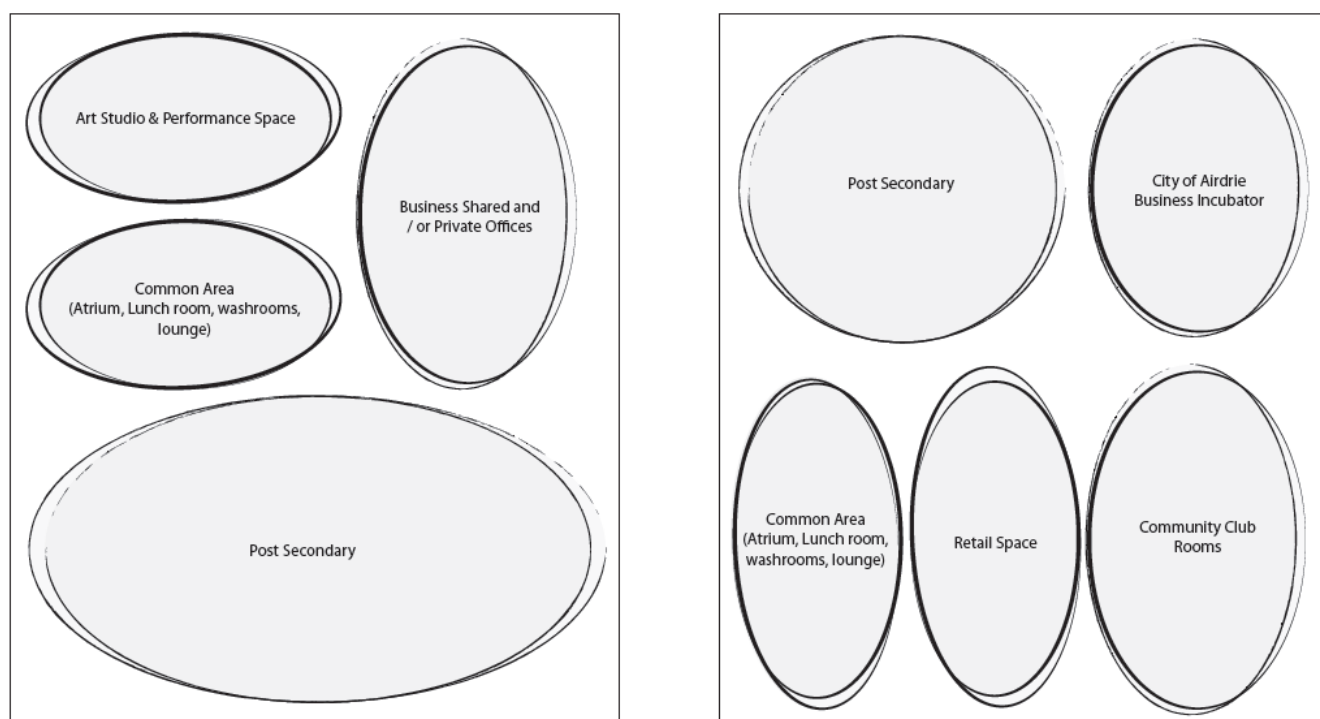
To understand who might be able to provide services to meet the needs of residents identified in the household survey, a targeted questionnaire was conducted with over 102 stakeholder groups and follow-up interviews to assess their state of readiness, interest in co-location and ability to pay for space in the multi-use space.



This targeted stakeholder engagement concluded that:

- A small number of respondents have indicated specific future space needs. Most provided general comments regarding spaces they might use if available. 8 groups indicated interest in space, 10 could potentially use space if available or unsure, and 6 said no.
- Of the 24 respondents, 2 indicated they could pay market rates for performance/rehearsal space, nearly all stakeholders indicated they are able to pay below-market or 50% below-market, in-kind or free
- Of those that are potentially interested in occupancy, timing is crucial as their current leases are close to expiration and would need an intermediate solution

Based on this analysis, the perceived demand for multi-use space was more in the range of 10,000-15,000 ft² instead of 25,000 ft². As a result of the Feasibility Study, two conceptual sketches were proposed by the consultant at a high level.



GATHERING INFORMATION FROM POTENTIAL CO-LOCATION PARTNERS

Council has three key objectives for the Multi-Use Facility and Library project:

1. A facility that has multiple use and activities
2. A facility that is a hub for community development
3. A facility that is a catalyst

To inform which potential uses align with these project objectives, Community Development conducted further interviews with those targeted stakeholders who indicated interest in co-location in the Multi-Use Facility to flesh out their need for space, target audience, program and service delivery methods.

The process involved:

- a series of follow-up interviews with stakeholders who have indicated a desire for space in the multi-use facility (social, community organizations, and public educational institutions).
- An interview with local professional fine arts experts to understand gaps in arts development in Airdrie.
- An interview with select businesses in the creative industries that have indicated interest in using space (studio, performances, recitals).
- An interview with City of Airdrie Economic Development Team Leader and Airdrie Chamber of Commerce regarding business development concepts.

These interviews were conducted between November 15 and December 8, 2021. In addition, Community Development researched spaces in the region that might not be in Airdrie today but has potential to activate the multi-use space to meet the project objectives. The results allowed Community Development to narrow down potential uses for the multi-use space by themes. These uses are clustered based on relationship of activities, connection of services and programs to meet specific goals or outcomes and common use of spaces/shared spaces.

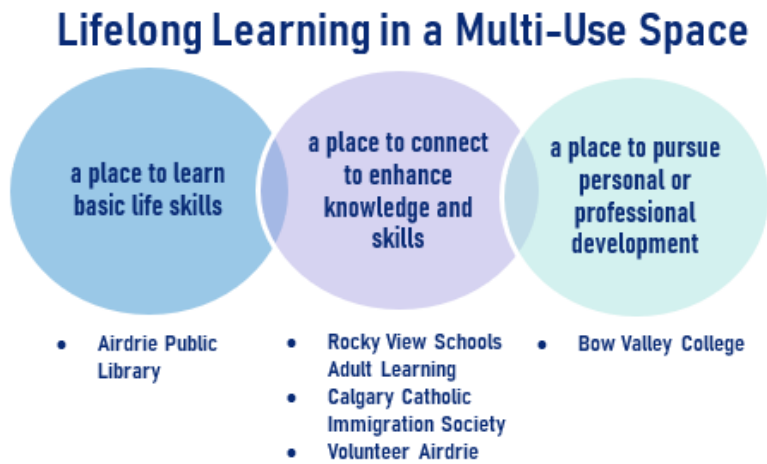
MULTI-USE SPACE THEMES

1. LIFELONG LEARNING USES

The Airdrie Public Library's mission is to, "foster literacy, knowledge and cultural connections. We seek to inspire lifelong learning, imagination and creativity through inclusive programs, services and collection." A common thread in the targeted interviews is the expressed need and desire to provide lifelong learning opportunities in Airdrie.

Lifelong learning is the ongoing voluntary, and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge for personal or professional reasons. Lifelong learning can be informal where people learn basic life skills offered through library programs and pursue opportunities to advance knowledge and skills through lectures, courses, volunteerism or group work. It can also

be achieved in a formal setting where people enhance their skills through post-secondary programs for employment success.



Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS)

Space needs: 300 ft²

Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS) is a non-profit organization which provides settlement and integration services to all immigrants and refugees in Southern Alberta. They have offices and presence in Calgary, Brooks, Okotoks, High River, Strathmore, Rockyview and Willow Creek. CCIS offers lifelong learning opportunities and services connecting new Canadians with local community supports. CCIS provides one-on-one assistance to immigrant clients, group workshops on a variety of topics (driving, filing income tax, community involvement) employment supports, language support and volunteering.

Currently they are using space at Community Links until March 2022, and RVS classroom for group work. They are seeking space office for two staff. Opportunities to host large events in a bookable space would be an amenity that CCIS will use. They are only able to pay through in-kind services.

Rocky View Schools Adult Learning (RVSAL)

Space needs: 300 ft²

Rocky View Schools Adult Learning is part of Community Adult Learning Programs (CALPs). It is funded by Alberta Advanced Education to provide, promote and increase access to foundational learning opportunities in Rocky View County. They are mandated

by Alberta Education to provide learning that support Albertans to gain employment or further their education. RVSAL provides foundational learning courses ranging from basic literacy and numeracy skills, English Language Learning to functional literacy for people with developmental disabilities. In Airdrie, supports for residents with low literacy levels and English Language learners are critical needs.

Currently RVSAL is housed in the Rocky View School Division's Learning Centre building which is not ideal for adult learners. RVSAL would prefer co-location with BVC. They require an office for two staff and access to a shared meeting room for up to 8 people for functional literacy and one-on-one and group English Language volunteer tutoring programs. RVSAL is able to pay 50% below-market.

Bow Valley College (BVC)

Space needs: 4,000 ft² to 10,000 ft²

BVC is a post-secondary institution serving a regional catchment area. Bow Valley College has been in Airdrie for over 25 years. Their main campus is in downtown Calgary with regional campuses in Okotoks and Airdrie. Their strategy is to be a leader in college education that provides learners with a variety of educational programs to ensure employment success. The college currently serves 75-100 Airdrie students annually, not including online programs. In Airdrie, BVC offers the following:

- Practical Nurse Diploma
- Early Childhood Education and Development Diploma
- Health Care Aide Certificate
- Administrative Professional Certificate
- Online programs regional campuses offer are.
 - Early Childhood Education and Development Certificate
 - Recreation Therapy Aide Certificate
- Open Studies Courses are offered every term in the region

The Practical Nurse Diploma is the most popular program in Airdrie.

Currently BVC is leasing from Alberta Infrastructure at the provincial building on main street ending March 2023 with no opportunities for renewal. BVC has indicated their

ability to pay at 50% below-market or greater. Their minimum space requirement is classroom spaces with computer labs starting at 4,000 ft² (2 IT classrooms for 25 students each) with the potential to expand up to 10,000 ft². They need the support of the City for transitional space. Opportunities could be explored for BVC use of meeting rooms above the Genesis Place Arena.

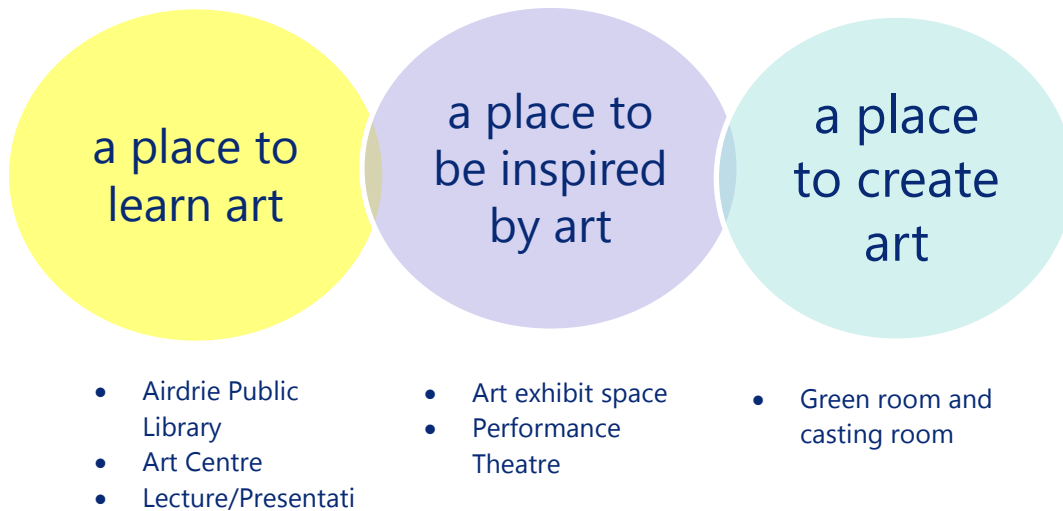
2. ARTS DEVELOPMENT USES

Arts development is arts centered activity, which is created with community members, and enhances and strengthens that community. The Airdrie Public Library offers foundational arts programs that inspire creativity and imagination. Arts development is a form of lifelong learning meaning it occurs along a learning continuum (basic to advance).

Arts organizations, creative industries and professional artists have identified gaps in Airdrie's arts development, namely:

- a place where professional artists can offer arts programs specific to visual arts such as sculpting, drawing, and painting, printmaking, mixed media.
- a performing arts space 75-100 seat capacity for performing arts groups and creative industries.
- A green and studio space to support video production.

Arts Development in a Multi-Use Space



Arts Centre

Space needs: 1,800 ft² - 2,000 ft²

An arts centre is a facility where residents of all ages and artists can learn and create art through sculpting, drawing, and painting, printmaking, mixed media. It can be programmed by the municipality to deliver arts creation or booked by artists to teach art classes. It needs to be fully equipped with storage for supplies, double sinks, adjustable tables, standing easels and drawing donkeys.

The City of Calgary municipally operates, staffs and maintains two arts centres—North Mount Pleasant Arts Centre (1,800-2,000 ft²) and Wildflower Arts Centre + dance studio (4,500 ft²). Residents can register for arts programs or book the spaces for custom events. Professional Artists can book these art centres for private use and instructions. There are no dedicated public facilities in Airdrie that can accommodate these arts development needs.

Art Exhibit Space

Space needs: 750 ft²

An Art Exhibit Space similar to the ones located in the Calgary *Central* Library are spaces for artists, community groups and organizations to submit their work from paintings to 3D sculptures. Priorities are given to artwork that provides educational and cultural enrichment, encourages lifelong learning, and connects communities on a rotation basis.

Performing Arts Development

Space needs: 600ft² – 1200 ft²

Of the 63 creative businesses that received the targeted survey, 5 home-based performing arts, music and voice lessons businesses indicated a need for a moderate sized (50 to 100 people) bookable rehearsal, recital and performance space. 2-music performing arts not-for-profit organizations have echoed the same need for a moderately sized performance venue. The BCT auditorium is too big for some of their events or unavailable during the day due to RVS use. With the right acoustics, tiered seating and lighting, sound equipment and a piano, this performance venue will support a variety of community performing arts activities.

Video production

Space needs: 400 ft² (per room)

3 home-based video production companies have indicated the need for a bookable medium size room similar to the casting room at the Calgary Central Library. This studio room will be used to shoot videos, editing and a green screen for interviews. High speed internet, acoustic treatment and theatre lighting would be important elements of this space. Videographers typically bring their own equipment and so access to loading/freight elevator would be essential. There is an expressed need for a 50-100 people lecture/performance space to present videos to a larger audience and teach classes.

3. SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT USES

Entrepreneurship and Business Development in a



Entrepreneurship and business development

Space needs: 2,500 ft² to 3,500 ft²

In line with Airdrie's Economic Strategy, Economic Development has identified a need for a dedicated space to allow synergistic businesses to connect, create and co-locate creating a marketable destination for entrepreneurs and business owners to gather and grow. Currently this is a concept for consideration and more research and feasibility analysis will need to be undertaken to understand operational and space requirements. The Airdrie Entrepreneur Common would be one central space providing 7 focused supports:

1. **Shared business resources and resource space:** Shared resources include day-use offsetting fees or membership accounts for hot desks, boardroom rentals and technology use for business owners with a focus on home-based or growth businesses. This is a place for businesses to find information, resources and connection.
2. **SMARTstart and AdvanceSMART offices:** A dedicated office and access to a shared board room for the delivery of the SMARTstart entrepreneurial training program and the (new) AdvanceSMART mentorship program, both City of Airdrie services. These programs provide opportunities for lifelong learning because they

support entrepreneurs enhance their skills and knowledge to be successful in business through professional development training. Participants: SMARTstart=20/year, AdvanceSMART= 8/year (initially), plus 30+ mentors/year. Programs have weekly meetings and events. This space is used by City staff, program partners, and program participants and mentors. It would formalize the program as having a “home” and provide an important place for connection in an increasingly online world.

3. **Conferencing space:** dedicated space that allows access for partnered programs to increase businesses use of technology and host relevant webinars, speakers series and training that supports the business owners, especially those of various language bases, industry gathering, and showcase displays. Space for Airdrie’s five business & networking groups to meet.
4. **Small retail space (pop ups):** available for entrepreneurs (and youth entrepreneurs) to showcase and sell their wares, acting as an incubator for businesses, with a focus on home-based businesses. This could also be extended outdoors with market/vendor style spaces.
5. **Visitor servicing centre:** To accommodate and facilitate exceptional visitor experiences and create meaningful interactions, this center offers visitors the services they want in a manner that is easily accessible and highly personalized.
6. **Airdrie Film Liaison Office:** The Airdrie Film Liaison services is dedicated to providing a film-friendly environment with a one-stop centre to collaborate with producers in identifying locations and qualified personnel, provide efficiency to processing film permits and coordination with municipal services that meet the safe and respectful needs for all parties, and establish local connections and garner community support. This is an area of growth for the region/Alberta that Airdrie is positioned to tap into.
7. **Future downtown business association office:** As outlined in the Downton Plan, activation of the downtown will be necessary to draw shoppers, visitors and businesses. The plan outlines an action to provide seed funding/resources to develop a Business Association or Business Improvement Association. This dedicated space will allow the BIA to have a home to deliver their services and programming.

Airdrie Chamber of Commerce

Space needs: 2100 ft²

The Airdrie Chamber of Commerce is a member-driven, volunteer-led organization, and is the hub for interests of businesses in Airdrie. For more than 40 years, the Chamber has stood for promoting, representing and enhancing the interests of Airdrie's business community. The Chamber represents over 500 regional businesses and are projecting 750 members by 2025.

On average the Chamber serves about 25 people per day. Their goal is to acquire a downtown location to increase visibility and attract more walk-in business. The Chamber is seeking a large Boardroom space which could accommodate 25 people, 6 offices or smaller meeting rooms and medium size reception and welcoming area kitchen/coffee station area and storage area. The front reception area could showcase local business and general information regarding Airdrie's Economic and Tourism opportunities. The Board room could be shared with other organizations to host webinars, speakers series and training that supports the business owners. This organization could share common spaces, such as auditorium, classroom space and washroom facilities within the Library with other user groups.

4. COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION USES

Airdrie Over 50 Club

Space needs: 12,000 ft²

The Airdrie Over 50 Club is a not-for-profit tenant in the Town and Country Centre occupying over 1,200 ft². They host year-round activities for up to 270 seniors such as cards, carpet bowling, pool, shuffleboard, table tennis, painting, crafting, and social activities targeted at seniors. Pre-Covid activities included ballroom dancing, music and jam sessions, along with other weekend activities. The Over 50 Club have highest recreational use of their space during day-time. Some evenings are scheduled for card games but often space is rented to community groups. Weekends are typically under used. The Over 50 Club would like to have a location in the Downtown area to increase access to public transportation, visibility with the intent of becoming more accessible for all Airdrieonians. Access to computer labs, theatre and performance as well as space to host larger events was identified as a current gap for seniors. Accessible parking for large events hosted by the club is important for the viability and growth of this club. The Over 50 Club is requesting 12,000 ft² that would include separate spaces: gymnasium, multi-

purpose room, billiard/shuffleboard room, arts crafts and needlework room, woodworking room, kitchen, washrooms, and office. Currently the Over 50 Club pays \$10/year to lease at Town and Country Centre and cost-share a portion of the utilities. They have an annual operating expense of \$42,000 with revenues with 18% of their revenues from memberships, and the remaining collected through program fees/attendance and rental of space to other groups. They are able to pay below-market or free in the Multi-Use Space.

Volunteer Airdrie

Space needs: 2,000 ft²

Volunteer Airdrie (VA) is a non-profit organization that seeks to develop greater sense of belonging and connection through skill and community-building volunteer opportunities. VA delivers a variety of youth development programs, a volunteer-based programs for seniors. With 1,184 registered volunteers, VA matches volunteers with community opportunities. VA coordinates quarterly seminars with volunteer managers.

Currently Volunteer Airdrie leases commercial space at market rate within a 3-year term. They need one office space for their program manager, storage and two office spaces. Their primary use is for youth programming, and organization meetings. Accessibility, access to outdoor space, loading area for events would be ideal.

SUMMARY

The total space requirements for the various uses are equivalent to 34,550 ft² as shown in the table below:

Lifelong learning Uses	10,600 ft²
• Calgary Catholic Immigration Society	300 ft ²
• Rocky View Schools Adult Learning	300 ft ²
• Bow Valley College	10,000 ft ²
Arts Development Uses	4,350 ft²
• Art Centre	2,000 ft ²
• Art Exhibit space	750 ft ²
• Performing Arts/Lecture/Presentation Hall	1,200 ft ²
• Video production	400 ft ²
Small Business Development Uses	5,600 ft²
• Entrepreneur Common (Economic Development)	3,500 ft ²
• Airdrie Chamber of Commerce	2,100 ft ²
Community Organization Uses	14,000 ft²
• Over 50 Club	12,000 ft ²
• Volunteer Airdrie	2,000 ft ²

Certain common spaces such as recital/presentation space, pop-up display space, large board room/meeting room and IT classrooms could be shared by different user groups.

Lifelong learning was a key theme that was presented by Calgary Catholic Immigration Society, Rocky View Schools Adult Learning and Bow Valley College from the perspective of English Language Learners to support new immigrants and residents whose primary language is not English improve their English proficiency through informal and formal learning and gain meaningful employment. In Canada, 42% of adults have low-literacy skills. Rocky View Schools Adult Learning provides foundational learning to residents to improve their literacy levels. This is

a stepping-stone to help residents obtain necessary education at post-secondary institution such as Bow Valley College for gainful employment.

Arts development is arts centred activity, which is created with community members and enhances and strengthens that community. A theme that has come up in both targeted stakeholder interviews and the household survey is the desire for a space where people can learn art, be inspired by art and create art. There are not many arts organizations in existence in Airdrie. Interviews with professional artists indicated a place for professional artists to teach art such as an art centre and showcase art through an art exhibit space would bridge the gap in the artistic development of Airdrie. Creative businesses such as dance studios and not-for-profit organizations indicated a need for a mid-size (75-100 seat) performance space. There is a growing film and video production industry in Airdrie that could use a green room and studio space.

Economic Development has identified a need for a dedicated space to allow synergistic business to connect, create and co-locate creating a marketable destination for entrepreneurs and business owners. The Entrepreneur Common would have various spaces that would improve small business development through shared business resource space, SMARTstart and AdvanceSTART office, conferencing space, small retail space (pop-ups), visitor services, Airdrie Film Office, future downtown business association office. The Airdrie Chamber of Commerce is interested in providing programming to support the business community.

Over 50 Club and Volunteer Airdrie have both indicated a desire to provide their services at the Multi-Use Space. The Over 50 Club requires 12,000 ft² as they feel they have outgrown their space. A larger space would allow them to permanently set-up their equipment for various recreation activities. Volunteer Airdrie require office spaces for 3 staff and programming spaces.

Most stakeholders who have expressed interest in space have indicated being able to pay below market, 50 below-market, in-kind or free. Bow Valley College needs an interim solution for space to be able to co-locate in the future Multi-use Space. Administration will explore opportunities at Genesis Place. Some uses are more aligned with the project objectives than others. For example, lifelong learning and arts development uses might meet the objective to make the facility a hub for community development. Small business development might contribute the facility as a catalyst, the trade off might be less community development. Community organization uses may provide social type services in the downtown but likely will not achieve the vision for a dynamic and innovative facility or catalyst.

