

Deputation to Norfolk County Budget Meeting

Tuesday, April 28, 2026

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL, AND STAFF

Subject: Location Decision for Lynnwood Arts Center

Introduction

Since its reopening in 2022, Lynnwood Arts has grown into a vibrant cultural hub in Norfolk County. Fundamentally, we believe that a thriving Arts center provides great value to the community and to tourism and serves as a component of Simcoe's downtown revitalization. Since last summer, the Lynnwood Arts Board has been working with staff and, more recently, council members to decide on a path forward. Our primary challenge is that the current term of our lease has made it impossible for us to raise capital, as grant funders require a minimum of 5 years of outstanding on a lease. This resulted in two options: either staying in our current location or moving to the Archives building.

At the last council meeting on April 14, a motion was made to put us into default due to our inability to raise capital funds. We are all in agreement that we would like to resolve this issue as quickly as possible, but we would like Council to consider this proposal from the Lynnwood Arts Board in lieu of placing us in default.

In preparation for this proposal, we have conferred with Norfolk staff (4/21), Councillors Van Paassen and Masschaele (4/17), and Councillor Duthie (4/23) to seek their input.

Option 1 – Staying at Lynnwood

This has always been our preferred option as it allows Lynnwood to stay in its historic home. It ensures ongoing custodial care for the building, removes future capital requirements for Norfolk County, and provides Lynnwood and the community access to arts programs in this beautiful, historic property.

Knowing that we had an expensive list of our repairs, our original option 1 had requested a level of financial support from Norfolk that we felt would enable us to address all capital programs and grow programming, without significant financial risk. The Norfolk staff report from March 10 indicated savings of \$246,800 over the next three years. In consultation over the past week, we have identified some suggestions that might be more acceptable to Council and to the public.

Component	Rationale	Original Proposal	Possible Alternatives
Transfer of ownership to Lynnwood	If we own the building, then we can manage the required capital projects	Purchase for \$1	Exercise our first right of refusal to purchase for \$288,000, Norfolk provides an interest-free 20-year mortgage. Lynnwood pays off in time.
Norfolk to provide capital reserve fund	Recognition of our shared responsibility to date for capital repairs	\$250,000 from Norfolk	The county provides \$100,000, representing their portion of the outstanding foundation repair.
Norfolk to provide annual operating funds in support of the arts	This is common across the arts community	\$50,000 annually	The county potentially provides between \$0 and \$30,000 annually in ongoing arts support.
Provide an exemption on property taxes	We are a charitable organization	100% exemption	The County provides a grant for equivalent to our property tax assessment.

All discussed alternatives increase Lynnwood's financial risk. It was clear that we are far apart on what can be offered and on our goal of finding a solution that ensures continued financial stability. Given this, we have decided not to pursue staying at Lynnwood.

Option 2 – Lynnwood Moves to the Archives Building

The Lynnwood Arts Board would like to formally request that the Norfolk Council consider supporting our move to the Archives building rather than placing us in default.

The components of which are:

Lynnwood Arts would:

- Waive 'First Right of Refusal' to purchase building for \$288,000
- Pay up to \$9,100 annually to cover a portion of utilities and maintenance
- Continue to provide access to art and programs to Norfolk residents at the Norfolk Archive Building

In recognition of the potential proceeds of the sale of the Lynnwood building, the County would:

- Charge Lynnwood \$1 per year in annual rent
- Complete the move of Lynnwood and the public art collection to the new location with space assigned for gallery space, art storage, and general storage as per the attached. We feel it is important that the art be co-located with the exhibition space to ensure proper custodial care and eliminate transportation issues.
- Complete all capital improvements per previous communications
- Provide annual operating funding of \$30,000 to offset the loss of Board of Education tenancy and donor impact

Per Norfolk staff analysis from March 10, this represents savings of between \$633,400 and \$733,400 from 2026 to 2028 and allows additional income, to be determined, from the proceeds of the building sale.

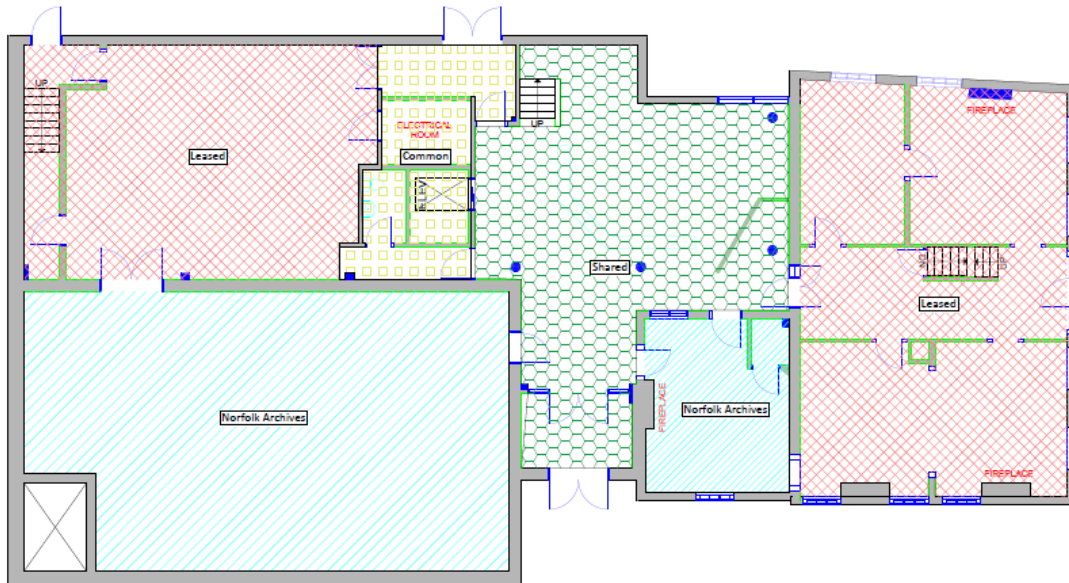
The Public Art Collection



There has been quite a bit of discussion around “ownership” of the Lynnwood Arts collection as it relates to this location discussion. Norfolk staff reports have been clear that the collection is public art held in public trust. Meaning it cannot legally, ethically or institutionally be sold or used as loan collateral. This is true regardless of whether Lynnwood Arts or Norfolk County owns the collection. Either one of us would be better described as a custodian of the collection, entrusted with its care and safety on behalf of the donors who contributed the pieces or the funds for additions to the collection. These facts make ownership of the collection immaterial to the current discussion of where Lynnwood will be located.

On the other hand, who “owns” or provides the collection's custodial care makes a practical difference. The group providing custodial care would be responsible for providing resources to care for the collection and for paying insurance premiums. *This is a matter that needs to be resolved, and we would ask for 60 days for Lynnwood Arts to work with Norfolk staff to fully resolve, once and for all, who legally owns the collection.*

Leased and Shared Space for Lynnwood Arts at the Archives

"Client":	The Corporation of Norfolk County	Floor 1 Version: FP1A	<p>This work product has been prepared by Extreme Measures Inc. pursuant to a contract with the Client for the sole benefit of and use by the Client. No third party may rely on this work product without the receipt of a reliance letter from Extreme Measures Inc.</p> 	
Project Name:	Eva Brook Donly Museum			
Address:	109 Norfolk Street			
City, Prov/State:	Simcoe, Ontario			
Date Created:	26/01/2010	Date Revised:	26/01/2010	 Tel: 416.323.2858 Fax: 416.323.0855 mail@imeasures.com www.imeasures.com



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