



Annual Report to Members for 2023

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR: LEAH COGAN

2023 marks the year that the ground at 305 Rochester (the site of PAL Place) was broken and construction commenced. It was a momentous occasion with representation from city officials, the Mayor, senior executives from OCH, leaders from multiple levels of government, and the tenacious and enthusiastic PAL Ottawa team. All spoke passionately and positively about the project.

But we also all knew that much work was left to be done!

Following the ground breaking, the PAL Ottawa Board and Consultants engaged in a months-long strategic planning process, ignited by construction updates which indicated yet another elongation of the construction period. With PAL Place doors slated to open in June 2026, a review of priority operations and activities was needed to ensure the protection of the Sustaining Fund (voted on by the Board in May 2023), to mitigate financial risk to the organization, and to ensure that when the time came for the doors to open, all essential PAL infrastructure and operations would be ready to be activated so that the artists and arts workers that PAL Ottawa supports and advocates for could settle into their home at 305 Rochester. The planning process enabled the successful alignment of board members around key goals and activities that would act as guideposts to get us through to opening.

Armed with its strategic priorities, the PAL Ottawa Board decided at year-end to move through a Business Planning process to explore models that will give PAL Ottawa the flexibility and autonomy to enact its mandate within a range of partnership models, and to anticipate and mitigate risks as it continues to bravely chart new paths for artist housing in Canada. PAL's identity has taken on new clarity through this process, looking to the areas that it is uniquely positioned to fill.

Alongside this planning, PAL has made major strides in its visibility, particularly with City Council and the arts community. Positive write-ups and artist testimonials, public presentations and community engagement, media attention, and revived arts research, is laying the foundation needed for PAL, as an innovative and integrative housing project, to build the momentum and coalition needed to bring it to life.

Through all of the planning, pivoting, and advocating, one thing has remained central to the work, and that is engagement with current and future applicants. Better understanding the needs of the people we seek to serve continues to be the highest priority, including understanding the services, programming, and built environments that will generate the most meaningful outcomes and quality of life for our residents. We



can't wait to share more details about what we are learning through our various research and programming efforts!

ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

We started the 2023 year with the invaluable support of our Management Consultant, Cate Proctor, our Communications and Engagement Lead, Maddy O'Regan, and our Supporting Cast Coordinator, David Globerman.

The focus of their work has been on maintaining critical operations to boost PAL's capacity leading up to the opening of PAL Place, and to boost PAL's visibility.

David resigned from his role but is still an active volunteer at PAL Ottawa. We are so grateful for the vision and commitment that David has brought to his role at PAL, and are thrilled that he is staying on to help shape support care guidelines and transition of care guidelines for the building.

Cate provided critical support to PAL Ottawa at a strategic project level, providing necessary expertise and insight to build out PAL Ottawa's business plan and assess programming opportunities for Creative Spaces at PAL Place. She also mapped necessary pathways for fund development and grant opportunities to ensure PAL's longterm role and viability within the sector.

Maddy provided support to PAL Ottawa by maintaining our communications channels. She is key to ensuring that PAL's audiences and community continue to hear from us, and that artists and arts workers across the city know that PAL Place exists and is inviting them to join the community.

Alongside our consultants, the PAL Ottawa Board and Committee members continue to exceed expectations! Below you'll see just a glimpse of what these incredible volunteers have been doing to make this project a reality.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Governance Committee is tasked with providing research and advice to the Board on governance issues such as Board structure, by-laws and policy development for PAL Ottawa.

This past year we drafted a new equity, diversity and inclusion policy which was passed by the Board. We did research into different governance models as possible models for the future. We also provided governance input into the strategic issues faced by the Board.



Throughout the year the dedicated team of Marisa Victor, Leah Cogan and Jane Needles met monthly, or as needed, to research and discuss governance and policy issues. A monthly report was produced to report back to the Board on recommendations and action items.

HOME COMMITTEE & SUPPORTING CAST

Considering the quality of life and community of residents at PAL Place.

In 2023, the PAL Home Committee (HC) continued its mandate to provide a framework of orientation, support, and care for future residents of PAL Place. The following progress has been made as measured against the HC's core responsibilities:

- Application list:
 - As of 31 December 2023, 154 applications have been received for a total of 204 applicants (applicants and co-applicants), representing an increase of 28 applications since last year. Nine applications were withdrawn due to relocation, declining health or death.
 - Committee members completed their outreach to applicants in order to bring them up to date on PAL Place developments. Many thanks to Gwen MacKay Smith and Meriel Bradford for undertaking the lion's share of this huge task over the last few years.
- Eligibility criteria:
 - Work is nearing completion on identifying, defining and prioritizing eligibility criteria and will be forwarded to the board for approval.
- Develop tenant contracts, guidelines and a tenant advisory committee.
 - Committee work focussed on identifying models for providing resident support when transition to assisted care is necessary. We established a connection with Perley Health which provides various types of long-term, convalescent and respite care.

PAL Ottawa and the School of Social Work at Carleton University were awarded a Partnership Engagement Grant (PEG) by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) in August 2023. We are working with Dr. Pamela Grassau, assistant professor in the School of Social Work at Carleton University and post-doctoral fellow Lindy Van Vliet, to conduct a one-year study that explores and assesses the needs and preferences of potential residents to support their ability to age in place successfully. A Community Facilitator has been hired to conduct community consultation sessions, lead focus groups and small group interviews, and assist in the drafting of a comprehensive research report based on the collected data.

Supporting Cast Coordinator David Globerman resigned but continues to assist the Home Committee and volunteer for Supporting Cast. We are grateful that Greg Hill volunteered to take over as acting coordinator. Approximately 150 volunteer hours were devoted to assisting a few clients over the course of the year with transportation to appointments, light household tasks and shopping.



PROJECT COORDINATION COMMITTEE

Working in partnership with OCH for a PAL Ottawa residence.

Since last year's Annual Membership Meeting, the primary objective of the Project Coordination Committee (PCC) has continued to be the securement of an Occupancy Agreement with Ottawa Community Housing (OCH). From a strategy session in November, it was agreed that a negotiating team would undertake direct negotiations with OCH to try and secure a final agreement. The team has included Peter Haworth (past Chair and well acquainted with OCH) Stephen Arbuckle (Board member and well acquainted with Housing officials in Ottawa) David Caulfeild (Board member and co-chair of PCC) and laterally Leah Cogan (Chair and well acquainted with housing officials and processes at City Hall).

Following a meeting in December with Stéphane Giguère, the CEO of OCH, the negotiating team drafted a proposed Occupancy Agreement to trigger further negotiations.

In the meantime, a project is underway to develop exterior artistic panels for the building with a theme. Technical support has been provided by Hobin Architecture.

Regular monthly meetings with OCH senior management, which have been suspended during negotiations, are scheduled to resume later in 2024, at which the agenda will include construction schedule, countdown to occupancy and the mobilization of a resident manager.

COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Informing and engaging the artists of the opportunity to live at PAL Place

Our overall communications objectives for 2023 were:

- 1) Expand our public profile and awareness of both PAL Ottawa and our PAL Place project with thoughtful and relevant content and,
- 2) Build and harness community relationships to bring broad awareness to the applicant campaign, specifically to reach and encourage eligible artists and arts workers to apply who are outside our online and media channels.

Networking and relationship building were two key factors in successfully generating multiple channels of support for PAL Ottawa. As these factors suggest, this form of



outreach generates ongoing support through promotional activity, fundraising efforts, and targeted outreach to broad groups.

Throughout the year PAL Ottawa representatives, Cate Proctor (Consultant/Manager), Peter Haworth (Chair of the Board until June 2023), and Maddy O'Regan (Communications Lead) attended events targeting audiences of artists, arts workers, arts organization leaders, and arts supporters. Peter Haworth showcased PAL Ottawa and the PAL Place project to audiences attending two separate GCTC events, and presented at the Ottawa Grassroots Festival's opening night event. Cate Proctor presented to the board of directors of Digital Arts Resource Centre (formerly known as SAW Video). DARC were eager to initiate contact; we leveraged this opportunity to establish an organizational relationship and share information with their members regarding affordable housing at PAL Place. Finally, a presentation to 100 Women Who Care Ottawa generated donations toward our ongoing fundraising effort.

PAL Ottawa was featured in several radio programs, and print and digital media throughout 2023. Peter Haworth spoke with Chris White of CKCU at the Ottawa Grassroots Festival in April. Peter was also featured on Sam Laprade's CityNews show, "An Hour To Give" in May, alongside Campaign Cabinet Member, Brian Toller. They discussed our project and the valued support from the Ottawa Community Foundation, the instigator of this interview.

PAL Ottawa was also featured in multiple print and digital articles, including:

- Ottawa Magazine written by Hattie Klotz; Topic: PAL Place
- CityNews Ottawa and Kitchissippi Times; Topic: Mosaïq Ottawa ground-breaking
- The Hill Times written by Stuart Benson; Topic: 20th Century Boys fundraising concert
- Ottawa Business Journal written by Caroline Phillips; Topic: DiFest, fundraising event

During Spring and Summer months, we connected with local organizations representing artists with disabilities. We spoke with Being Studio's executive Director and chair, intending to give a full presentation to their membership. They decided sharing our information through their internal newsletter was the best method to communicate our message. Cate also presented to Propeller Dance artists and staff, providing information about PAL Place and encouraging online applications to live at PAL Place. We shared design details of the building, including its full accessibility and the number of residential units specifically designed for people with disabilities. The number of units designated for people with disabilities increased from 17 to 22 during 2023. We recognize a longer planning period generally required for people with disabilities, therefore, we are fostering connections to the disability arts community to capitalize on this opportunity for artists with disabilities.



During this time, Fran and Judi Pearl proposed a community partnership between PAL Ottawa and Theatreks. They offered PAL Ottawa fundraising proceeds from their planned excursions to Montreal (mainly) and Stratford, Ontario in exchange for promotional support of these events. This mutually beneficial partnership commenced in September and is ongoing. PAL Ottawa promotes Theatrek excursions through our newsletter; participants are made aware that funds raised support PAL Ottawa.

Through online promotion on various social media platforms, it became clear that testimonials from well-known artists—locally, nationally, and internationally—were content that continually outperformed. This content typically resulted in the highest engagement and was the most likely to be shared online, reaching new audiences, as was one of our primary targets for this year.

In 2023, testimonials were collected and shared from the following artists:

1. Robert Bockstael (actor, director, writer, Ottawa)
2. Don Kwan (visual artist, Montreal)
3. Michael Harrington (visual artist, Ontario)
4. Elizabeth Winkelaar (award-winning wheelchair dance artist, Ottawa)
5. Douglas Bowie (Screenwriter and playwright, Kingston)
6. John Kapelos (actor, L.A)
7. Sugith Varughese (actor, Toronto)

Through robust content and strategic links to our website and monthly newsletters our comparative growth results include from early to late 2023:

Platform	Early 2023	Late 2023	Notes
Website	512	516	Average monthly users. Numbers were consistent.
Newsletter	1,489	1,771	Number of subscribers
Facebook	1,448	1,488	Number of followers
X (Twitter)	253	268	Since the purchase of 'X', PAL Ottawa has pulled back their engagement on the platform.
LinkedIn	0	46	Number of followers



We maintained close connections with OCH's communication staff leading up to ground-breaking for Mosaïq Ottawa on October 16, 2023. OCH released a media release surrounding the ground-breaking event, with a quote from our new Chair, Leah Cogan. As construction continues, regular communication meetings remain activated with OCH.

FUNDRAISING AND MEMBERSHIP

Raising \$2 million from individuals and the private sector.

PAL Place Campaign

The PAL Place \$2 million Campaign was started in early 2021 with the recruiting of a formidable Cabinet with a "quiet campaign" to major donors. The goals were, and still are, to ramp up staffing and programs for Opening; fund Creative Spaces in PAL Place; and establish a sustaining fund to supplement deeply affordable rents for those arts worker tenants in need at PAL Place. The "quiet campaign" to major donors continued through 2023. I am happy to say the Campaign Cabinet to date have managed to raise \$1.6 million. A remarkable achievement which PAL Ottawa is ever grateful to the members of Cabinet for their untiring efforts. During 2023, we began establishing contacts with major donors interested in naming rights to the Creative Spaces at PAL Place with some good prospects. Our Cumulative Major Donor Board was very active during the last quarter of 2023 as you can see in red. [Cumulative Donor Appreciation Board](#) . With the average market price of rents (the basis on which PAL Place affordable rents are calculated) rising rapidly, the urgency to complete our campaign has become even more pressing. It takes a community to do this, so if you have not done so yet or wish to add to your donation, now is the time to join in the fund raising and get us over the top.

TREASURER'S REPORT

During 2023, PAL Ottawa's Treasury focus was on the following key areas:

- Cashflow management. The delay in construction of PAL Place - now extending target completion to mid 2025 - has resulted in a major examination of cash preservation by the Board. Although donations were up by 20% over 2022, our major funding drive has been temporarily paused until closer to project completion. To preserve cash, Operating grants were secured in 2023 to offset operating expenses - contributing \$70,621 to revenue in the year. Interest earned on investments contributed a further \$38,737. Expenses were carefully monitored and controlled - down 22% over 2022. A surplus of \$306,499 was generated resulting in cash and investments totaling \$979,938 at the end of the fiscal year, an 57% increase over 2022.



- Maintaining and updating the master financial model in support of the ongoing discussions with OCH relating to PAL Place;
- Continued improvements were made to PAL's financial reporting for management, the Business & Finance Committee and the Board. This included the preparation of a detailed budgeting scenarios for 2024 - helping to support Board decision making regarding expense management and cash/investment preservation.

THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Working together to care for our own

- PAL Ottawa thanks its Founding Partners – ACTRA, Canadian Actors Equity Association, Ottawa Arts Council, IATSE Local 471, and the Ottawa University School of Music.
- PAL Ottawa thanks PALs in Toronto, Vancouver, as well as Stratford for sharing their experiences and materials.
- Thank you to All of PAL Ottawa's volunteers and supporters for your support and generosity.
- And finally, we are very grateful to OCH for this great opportunity to bring the PAL Ottawa residence into realization.

Together we can, and will, build affordable housing and provide the services required to ensure local artists can live, not in isolation, need or fear, but in dignity within a caring community.

WHERE SENIOR ARTISTS ARE CONSIDERED. CONNECTED. COMMUNITY.