



NEW WESTMINSTER

What We Heard:
Anvil Centre 10-year Review
Public Engagement Verbatim Report

May 2024

Anvil Centre 10-year Review

Public Engagement Verbatim Report

May 1, 2024

As part of reporting back to City Council, staff, and the community what we heard through the Anvil Centre 10-year Review Public Engagement process, this report includes the full notes and verbatim written responses received from participants across engagement activities.

Please see the [What We Heard Engagement Summary report](#) on the on Be Heard New West project webpage for a full report of the engagement activities completed, the key themes we heard from participants, a summary of survey input, demographic information about participants, and next steps.

Verbatim input has been compiled on the following engagement activities:

1. [Drop-in Events](#)
2. [Community and Interest Group Workshops](#)
3. [Online Survey](#)
4. [Intercept Surveys](#)

Verbatim input is also available on Be Heard for the online [Discussion Forum Week 1](#), [Discussion Forum Week 2](#), [Discussion Forum Week 3](#), and the [Ideas Board](#).

Verbatim Drop-in Input

Staff hosted two public Drop-in Engagement Sessions at Anvil Centre, on February 19 (Family Day) and February 29. Participants were invited to share their input by sticky notes on information boards, or through a short interview with Public Engagement staff.

Post-It Note Comments on Information Boards:

What would you suggest to help make Anvil Centre feel more welcoming and community-focused?

- Plants / green the inside space more
- Artwork! (especially hanging in the air / upper spaces)
- Yes!! More art in the open. Love idea of hanging art
- Plastic-free at Anvil :) (eco-friendly initiatives)
- Advertising events in PRINT please (not all online – no local paper now)
- Greater advertising (on social media) so we're aware
- A library please
- Free shuttle from downtown NW to here :)
- Better signage about events
- More art. More fun and free events
- Additional less formal seating
- Better coordination with Parks & Rec programs
- One Card – free or discount for Rec
- More summer courses
- More fun stuff (music + art)
- Paintings
- Fireworks + parade
- Kid friendly
- Inclusivity
- Snack place
- More staff
- More kids programs

What additional programming or services would you suggest for Anvil Centre?

- Library @ the Anvil please!
 - Love this idea!
 - Second this
- Library or reading area
- Interactive art exhibits. Free art classes like the medicine pouches on Family Day =)
- Adult dance socials
- Joint seminar with NW Library =)
- More free networking events for small businesses
- Should have more fun family activities
- Indigenous whale picture on building (Native murals class)

- More community music events!
- Programming for young children (0-3 yrs) i.e. drop-in play, reading, art class, etc.
- More kids programming + low cost cultural events
- More adult programs! For people with NO KIDS! :-)
- More theatre / acting programs please :-)
- More community events for New Westminster residents
- Job fairs, kids lessons, youth lessons, adult lessons
- More kids / youth / adult activities. I.e. swimming, yoga, taekwondo, basketball, etc.
- Face painting. Drop-in for sports and other activities
- Mini library for holds pick up
- Kids STEM programs
- Kids STEM programs
- Love Family Day!!
- Open studio space for painting
- Women meetings
- Drama club
- Drama club
- Cultural events
- Women meetings
- Film camp
- More + different tech programs
- Women + tech
- Daycare space
- Books!
- Books!!
- Books!!
- Plays x 2
- Museum x 2
- More yoga classes
- Music + drama
- Art camp

Interview Notes: (engagement staff asked questions of drop-in participants, and wrote down their responses)

Q: Tell me about a recent experience you had here at Anvil Centre. What did you like? Anything you would change?

- Theatre performance; kid performing. Toilets are clean. Like windows and lights
- Open lab – 3D printing. Circuits are fun. Fantastic program. Theatre programs are a favourite. Great parking, accessible location
- Family Day – really enjoyed the activities. A place you'd want to come back to. Felt comfortable.

- I always like that Anvil is here; a community space. Activities for small children. Love having it. Need more for older kids / young teens. Love the New Media Gallery. Lack of things for ages 12-14.
- Family Day. Last year there was more. More would be better.
- Family Day – my first time here. Nice, clean, accessible, staff guided us. My child enjoyed the lab upstairs.
- Mostly come for special events. I like it because it's close; we live at Quayside. This is only community space that's walkable
- Used to come for Family Day, etc. Really enjoyed the performances on ground floor. Used to be more activities.
- Convenient location. Come on Family Day.
- Lanterns – that was fun.
- Come a lot to museum, dance lessons for kids, family events. Like having this building here; one of the coolest buildings in New West. Multicultural event would be nice. More community outreach.
- Theatres and local artists – really enjoy
- New Media Gallery is great.
- Art exhibits – knowledgeable staff. Interesting activities; seen all age groups through. Interactive classes are great. People are hungry for art. Choir, art-making, theatre, etc.
- I live in the neighbourhood. Would be nice to have a fitness facility. I've taken a number of programs. Museum and New Media Gallery. Poor experience with theatre program (sent in my feedback on the program).
- Great facility. Really have a lot in one facility. Came from Kamloops and it's all spread in different buildings
- Come here often for museum. Did an art class last year (child). Facility really nice and clean. Only downside is not advertised enough. Wish more people knew about it.
- Good place. Convenient location. Can't get lost. Easy to find.
- Here for private event. Space is nice, high quality.
- Have been coming for my child's guitar lessons. It's great. Parking is not cheap. Would be great to have more parking available. Some of the rooms are very small. Just found out about the museum recently.
- Really good. Convenient location. Programs for all ages. Welcoming atmosphere. Washrooms. Lot of cultural activities and trade shows. Serves a wide range of needs. Accessible location! Brought it to the people. Other facilities are too far, like the pool, etc.

Q2A: How would you describe the identity of Anvil Centre? Are there any values or characteristics you would use to describe the facility?

- “Not cultured enough” to go in NMG. Not welcoming experience. Wasn't willing to teach; too high brow. Bit of an identity crisis. “School annex” daytime

- Didn't realize this is a public space. Walked by hundreds of times. First time here apart from being vaccinated
- It's a little on the sterile side. Some brighter art; signage.
- Allowing food / vendors. Weddings under 100 people. Event focused.
- Something doesn't feel "alive"
- People think of a community centre as an old place and NW seen as lots of older buildings – Anvil is showing clean and fancy is also New West

Q2B: Anvil's tag line is "where culture, community and commerce meet." How does this line up with your experiences and perceptions of the facility?

- Was here for cultural; don't know about commerce. Have kids in after-school musical theatre program and were treated very corporately, not community. They were not respecting musical theatre. Little flexibility – would have been nice to have a drink here; should have beer and wine provider/contract. We went to Piva for a drink.
- Aesthetic of exterior is very corporate. Feels like a building HQ
- Not familiar with commerce. Culture for sure. I know to come here for culture
- I like when there's cultural and arts stuff. Can just walk in and don't have to plan to come; can just pop by. I like the library book drop and would like a holds pickup
- Don't come very often. We live in Queensborough so have to have a reason to come.
- Lots of different people living here. Outreach and different things to offer. Cultural dance.
- More flexibility for community – not just for non-profits. Co-working space. Community events.
- Does not have community feel. Don't feel welcomed / this is not for me
- Accessibility and location is fantastic. Feel welcomed
- Weakest link is community. Commerce – not sure how often it's booked.

Q3: Do you have any suggestions about how to make Anvil Centre feel more welcoming and community focused?

- Would be lovely to have a bar or food outlet available. Compare to "playhouse" in Vancouver – is there a non-compete clause (with businesses around)? Small library or kid corner. Drop box is good. Public piano on ground floor. Pop-up concession with local business. Big exposure from chairs, not really private (have tried to work out of Anvil). "Didn't feel like I was supposed to be here." Soft play room for kids
- Not continual activity in the building so it feels empty at times. But do not agree that this is not welcoming and inviting
- No. I always feel very comfortable
- More banners, like street festival banners. Do you have any spaces to rent? Festivals for South Indian community, right now are only in schools.

- More signage. Sometimes not clear if public or private. Sandwich boards saying “come in”
- More interactive things for the kids. Previous years on Family Day there was much more happening. Family things with things for younger kids. Still love it here. More plants, greenery. Things on the walls. Local art work. Music; local musicians. Info on community events.
- I don’t find it unwelcoming. Never came in and felt unwelcome. Nice, open space; like that it’s open.
- Priced out. Combo of price and function. Selling of water bottles is bad. Co-working and networking space, through partnership
- Bean bag chairs, plants – things that spark curiosity. Hanging art pieces – attraction in the atrium. “Green it up.” Rotating public art
- I love it. It’s nice, has style. Feels open and modern aesthetics. Attended conferences here too. Those are good, staff are nice. Most is good. Lab space. Would be nice to have fitness facility. Used to have chairs right by the entrance and I liked that. Put some extra chairs there. Having to take extra time to walk to the further chairs is not good for people with mobility challenges. I like the idea of a library here. More programming for kids. Parent and tot. Acrylic painting keeps getting cancelled because registration is too low – find ways to make it work (different times, combine ages, etc.). Yoga for adults not during the work day.
- Overall in NW starting to feel a sense of community. Always interesting to come into modern buildings. Couple of times I’ve been here have been great. It’s easy to find your way around. Re: suggestion it feels a bit cold – it’s the architecture; there’s a lot of wood to warm things up. It’s a bit of a daunting building at first. So many stairs. It suits a more progressive vibe for city and art in particular. But the programs fill up so fast! I can walk here, so it’s great for me. Good you have other facilities around the city.
- Would like more: art class, yoga class, more programs to bring in all kinds of people and word of mouth. The building does look quite fancy. I’m shocked to know it’s a City facility
- I feel very welcome. I feel warm; I feel at home here.
- Change street level entrance and access. Signage and placemaking outside to cue this is a community space and not private.
- My No. 1 is parking. I like the kids things / activities here. Great facility. Museum should let schools know and do field trips. We’re at Connaught school.
- Passes for low-income households; offer that in New West. Promotes health / overall health, makes it inclusive. People who are low income – what about them? They should also have a chance to enjoy. City had a poverty coalition – have more of that. Discussions with people from different walks of life. More programs set up for artists. Help them get off their feet. Art shows for emerging artists. Galleries shouldn’t just be for Picasso-level artists.

Q4: How do you find out about what is happening here at Anvil? How can we best share information about the offerings here?

- Wouldn't know from the street things were happening today (Family Day). I am tapped in.
- Usually hear it through Parks & Rec, so if there are events not through Parks & Rec I don't know about them
- Add the Visitor Info sign outside. Everybody recognizes that sign.
- We come in and hear about what's on from desk staff. And once we knew programs were here we looked online. For museum, maybe a sign saying it's free – we were surprised it's free. Go to the fireworks festival (at the Quay) at the end of August and tell people about Anvil Centre there. Tell them there's free exhibits and low cost programs
- I'm on the Massey list so I get info about the theatre. See things on City comms sometimes but not as much as Massey. Used to see more when Record was in print.
- Usually only find out through friends.
- The new outreach program that the City's starting (Crises Response) – maybe have the outreach people here once a week as a pop-up.

Verbatim Notes: Community and Interest Group Workshops

The City hosted two Community Workshops and an Interest Group Workshop as part of this engagement. The purpose of these sessions was to briefly share the context of the engagement, and then offer a respectful, facilitated space where participants were able to engage in a discussion. Public Engagement staff led and facilitated the workshops, and took notes to capture the conversation and participant input. Below are the raw notes captured at these workshops.

Community Workshop 1 (virtual): Tuesday Feb. 13

Anvil's tag line is "Where Culture, Community and Commerce Meet". How have your experiences at Anvil Centre lined up with these three areas?

- Went to community gallery opening about fibre art and the only people there were the artists. There was nobody else. People at the front desk did not know that was happening. Think we should do more. Hard to get that information out to people. That's a problem. (Record newspaper now is only online)
- Drives me crazy that Anvil not busier. Went to Shadbolt Centre and Place Des Arts and those places are buzzing. The people at the front desk are not advocates for the centre. No ticket booth when you go to an event. Needs to be more welcoming and warmer. Drives me crazy – I walk by there every day and the main lobby looks

empty. Think we can do a lot more to engage the community and have things happening all the time there. Could have an art gallery on the ground floor

- I completely agree with that feeling. I work from home and go there often but sometimes it's only me there. I have meetings and invite people to join me there and they prefer to go to a noisy coffee shop. They feel like they can't come to Anvil. Not a familiar space for people from New West. People from New West don't feel comfortable there
- I would like some posters in the windows so people walking on the street would know what's happening inside. Large posters, colourful posters.
- During the winter celebration the whole place felt different, felt much more welcoming. Whole bunch of activities going on – school groups singing, bands and musicians. Space was split up into 3 sections with labyrinth. Was fun to walk around. When it was gone it feels cavernous. It's very echo-y and exposed. There are ways to help it feel more intimate.
- Remember going to a meeting about year 5 of Anvil and it was crazy because arts community didn't feel welcome and remember someone saying as artists we make noise and we're a bit messy. Seems like Anvil wants to be clean and quiet. If you want to make a place welcoming it needs to be a bit messy and noisy. Feels almost like a library. Place Des Arts or Shadbolt, it's buzzing and lots happening. You don't see that at Anvil Centre and it's a missed opportunity. You're sharing building with Douglas and don't see the students coming in either. Missed opportunity. It's a fantastic facility and missed opportunity. I remember was trying to do a jazz festival in New West and I had to go to 5 different people. Someone else for practice rooms, other rooms. Responsibilities are divided up and you can't go to one person to plan something. At that time the prices at Anvil were most expensive in Vancouver. For rentals. At that time they felt such a new and fantastic centre we can charge more than anywhere else. Pricing was out of line and added to that feeling that only certain people can come here.
- I had exactly the same issue with the film festival. For 10 years the festival was at Landmark because 3x the price at the Anvil Centre theatre. If we wanted to have food we had to hire the Truffles company. The food is good and coffee good, but price is really high for a non-profit. I'm organizing an exhibition in the Community Gallery next year and artists are Latin American and we wanted to have cultural food but the menu doesn't match and we can't bring in our own food. Those little things that make it feel unwelcoming.
- I'm an artist and theatre artist. Used it both as an artist and community member. Been to shows, theatre performances, Museum, New Media Gallery, other cultural events. Know the theatre staff well and have no complaints about them. They're wonderful. My feeling is the promise of the Anvil Centre has not lived up to the reality. Main part of it, the design happened years ago, so it is what it is. It feels like an airport or a hotel. I'm frustrated by fact there's never anything put in windows or put in main space to give it colour and light. Seems to me the use of the main floor as convention centre is main priority and everything else is in the background.

Before COVID they were offering community choir and it was wonderful experience but the director and accompanist were treated badly and ended up leaving.

- They were tangled up in red tape.
- Bureaucracy takes over. I know artists and performers who have also expressed frustration in the workshop and use of the space. They've been kept out of participating in things or bringing in events. I have to agree that the price of the rental and refreshments when you want to rent the space is also high for community groups. Other community groups, like Royal City Music Theatre – they tried to hold auditions in the space and weren't able to. Everything seems to point to it's not being used as community space.
- Best way I've heard it described is Fortress Anvil. Nice place but you can't get in there.

Do you have any specific suggestions for making Anvil Centre a more inviting space for the community?

- Reducing red tape. Streamlining the access or approval. Instead of having to see 5 people you only have to see 1 or 2. Making it more physically welcoming. Putting things in windows, hanging things from ceiling. When people walk by they say what's going on in there, let's go and see.
- I would take the wonderful people at the front desk who are security folks and turn that into a reception desk of people who are advocates for what's going on in the space who can give you info and also sell you a ticket. Rather than going up the stairs to see someone sitting with a laptop to get a ticket. Also let the local artists in and let them put things in the space. Could do movable art displays on the ground floor. That would bring people in
- There is an issue there in priorities. Sometimes I feel the priority for the Anvil Centre is the commercial part. For Culture Crawl, we always have to wait for last week or two weeks before to know if we can be on the ground floor or have to be on 3rd or 4th floor. I understand they want to make money but to plan your show you need to know more than 2 weeks before. Is the priority the commercial part? If that's the priority, then let's focus on finding a different space for the artists. If the City doesn't have the spaces let's find somewhere else. But if we want to make Anvil a community centre, then the commercial shouldn't be the priority. I understand the value of sports, but if we don't show to everyone the artists have a special place in the city maybe we should do something else then. I feel like we are not investing in the right spaces. Look at the spaces for the classes – beautiful spaces with good lighting but it's only half a floor of the whole building. The commercial part gets more space. We have so many good artists in the city and want them to have a space
- Coming back to the mandate of Anvil – the City has made a committee of Arts, Culture and Economic Development – the City has recognized the importance of art

and culture as an economic driver in the city. Not an either/or. We are an economic driver.

- Some groups get support from the City – i.e. grants for Vancouver groups (orchestra) but the local groups don't know they can get those grants / financial support.
- About the Museum – I know it's all down to advertising. I took a friend from Vancouver recently and she thought it was wonderful. But why is nobody in there? Nobody knows. How would you know there's a museum in there? Maybe need something old in the window (an artifact). I think they expect everything to be on the main floor. Going back to New Media, I've been told many people come to the openings and it's very crowded, people from outside New West. How do they know about it?

What other platforms or methods would be most effective in sharing information about Anvil Centre with the wider community and beyond?

- My career is in marketing – it's hard to find out what's going on in the City. Have to go to several websites. Consumers want to go to a single place to find out what's going on, buy their tickets and go. Every event has its own system – for Jazz you have to buy from Piva. Concert band can't use the facility. Lots going on in the city with Massey, etc. It's hard to find out what's going on. Don't know where to go. If you make it hard for consumers to find info they'll forget it or go somewhere else. Suggestion to get all the arts organizations and have a website separate from City website to have everything going on in city. My suggestion is to put your consumer hat on and try it yourself to figure out what's going on in New West and see how many sites you have to go to.
- Very unfortunate when Record stopped being printed, because that's how I found out about what was happening. In the weekly review of What's On. We need to find some way to make things as accessible as it was with a physical printed report of what's going on.
- Over Christmas the Royal Canadian Theatre Company performed at Massey and at Surrey Arts Centre. The Surrey Arts Centre did not promote as a venue so they had to do it themselves. Massey did a wonderful job of promoting the show. And they did way better at Massey than Surrey. So it's possible to get the information out. Maybe meet with the folks at Massey and see how they do things.
- The difficulty you have is there's different media for the older crowd who are decrying loss of the Record and the younger folks who have never opened a newspaper. And in between people are busy, have kids and mortgages who say just don't make me work so hard to find out what's happening.
- We do get emails from Anvil to say what's going on but no info about things that are independently put on as opposed to promoted by Anvil.
- One – social media component. I don't know who's responsible but need to train artists and performers to promote themselves. New Media Gallery is successful

because they've found a niche, exploited the niche and they're loyal. Have to train everybody to do the same thing. Or better. Other thing is to have a system that's consistent – I can find this information here and at the same time. Consistent timelines. In Vancouver there are posters on poles everywhere – we don't have that here. Boards and poles where we can have posters. I was speaking with guy in Vancouver who does posters and he said minimum is 1,000 posters for an event that he will place. I can't imagine that in New West to have space for 1,000 posters. If we had a consistent space for posters. Need to find a place for posters.

- I see posters in coffee shops.
- You wonder why Anvil itself doesn't have a big billboard saying coming soon! Artists shout and say come on in. Anvil Centre says no. When I talk to people at Place Des Arts, they put in a request for proposals, what do you want to do here. They have a call, a deadline and they put out their fall program. Take a risk, let the artists take over, and you'll find it's not so scary. We could make that place dance! Rather than an ice cube. Take a risk and let the artists in!

Other comments:

- Anvil Centre has such potential. Fantastic place. You can get there by skytrain. Such potential. For 10 years it has sat there and not living up to potential. My desire is not criticism. It's the unfulfilled potential. The community doesn't have ownership of Anvil that you'd like it to have.
- One thing was theatre – I love the flexibility of the seating. That it can be a coffee shop, a cabaret, a stadium. The lack of backstage access and wings it's only suitable for concert, etc. You can't have big musical like Guys and Dolls. We tried to do a group performance there and it was so challenging. Not enough room for the cast, etc. "Multi-useless space" was the term we used. Speaks to the kinds of performances you can get in there. Suited for a limited range of performances. One or two-person show. It's very adequate for that.
- Remind people who make decisions, if you look at map of Lower Mainland, New Westminster is the geographic centre. We can be a regional arts centre. Let's not make this a convention centre that does arts. Let's make it an arts centre that does meetings. Can be an arts hub.
- I completely agree. It's kind of sad. The feel of belonging doesn't exist. It's hard work. People have high expectations, they were really involved, and 10 years later, there are only 5 people here at this workshop. It's kind of sad.
- I think it all boils down to advertising. Need colourful, splashy advertising wherever you can put it up. Not sure what you can do about posters. Anybody has a window? It's very frustrating because I really enjoy the things I do there and they just seem to fade out. Life drawing people were from Burnaby. How did they find out? But hard to register
- Business community doesn't feel connected to Anvil either. Don't have package deals – dinner and a show. The business community as well is not connected.

- I'm wondering if the feeling was if we build it they will come. It's there, now people will use it. No, you have to tell people about it and keep telling people about it. There are huge windows and never see anything on them.
- Again it's the priority. Is the priority of the City what's happening inside? Go and ask people if they see it as a convention centre, or an arts or community centre? People will say convention centre. People feel it's a convention centre. Everything is clean and sterile. Needs to be a bit messy. Lifespan of the rotation ads on the monitors facing outside is not enough time. No time for reading. Not enough time to read the name and date. I have tested it. Need to work on the monitors. Rotate them, change the timing. Put art outside on the windows. For Culture Crawl we wanted to have art on the windows and couldn't – they wanted to wait until the last minute. But there was good traffic at Anvil because we promoted well. There is no music outside. The music that's inside should also be outside.
- Are you saying you can't get promotion for Culture Crawl because City is waiting for a conference to come in?
- Yes, we have to wait. Priority is the commercial. If the space is rented the week before, we have to move upstairs.
- It's a policy thing – you have to leave the space open
- That's why I'm asking what is the priority? Art or commercial? I am thinking about moving the Culture Crawl to the Army and Navy instead. We had to do install the same day because they had an event night before.
- Culture Crawl is biggest event in the city in the year and can't get a commitment.
- Bring the Community Art Gallery down to the lobby. Nobody goes upstairs to look at the art up there. Only if they are going to theatre. If nothing on at theatre there's nobody at gallery. City needs to make commitment to local community. Not being able to commit to local arts community until days before major event tells us where we stand. We'll go to other places. (Music group) goes to a church instead of Anvil because they can store things etc.
- Theatre/Arts staff are excellent – we know they're working on it. Believe me, I love the Anvil Centre. I feel the potential for the city and everybody. I really love this town. Look at the fans you have here. We will be the first fans for arts at Anvil. We will be there.
- I did the lantern making and it was wonderful. Young children were helping out. It was great. Happens once a year. Free event. Lots of children there.
- How are you getting the news out about this engagement and events?
- The proof is in the pudding. Enough asking, enough evaluation. Do something please.

Community Workshop 2 (in-person): Thursday Feb. 22

Anvil's tag line is "Where Culture, Community and Commerce Meet". How have your experiences at Anvil Centre lined up with these three areas?

- It's wonderful the experiences that we've had of music and art on 3rd floor. Those experiences have been exceptional. Nobody driving by knows this secret that this is an arts centre
- Only art I see publicly is in the library. I was in the gallery once when waiting to go into a play and don't know if they've managed to adjust the seats or not but seats in that theatre have significantly less leg room than Air Canada. I don't go there for plays anymore because so uncomfortable
- That theatre is great for being able to see things but really hard for people with accessibility issues b/c if you need to go to washroom have to go all the way to the front. If you have to go during play everyone sees you. In terms of my access to Anvil, there are free things like museum, but for the things that cost some folks have issues accessing. Maybe wondering like the community pass (for Parks and Rec) maybe we could do that for performances too here. City of Vancouver does something like that for Goh Ballet etc. It's a hidden gem but might be hard for people with financial barriers.
- How many people know the museum is free? Not sure people know that. I see signs on window along Columbia Street what's on but if it said free admission I didn't see that.
- Right now it doesn't feel like where community meets. It's where commerce – convention people meet. Culture in some hidden places, behind the scenes. But don't see community. Reflected even in the turnout for these sessions. I understand for Arts New West when we want to use the facility for arts crawl we can only use it if it hasn't been booked by anyone else. Or they put us in an away spot. Primary is where commerce meets and culture is happening upstairs.
- I made a presentation and handed it to Council. One idea was to have walls you can move. I walk by Anvil and don't see anything. It's so austere. For artists it drains us. To have paintings, sculptures, etc. and wheel them in and away when needed
- Or could let the people at the convention look at the art
- It's something you can do. We do it all the time in the movie industry. We move walls in and out all the time. Don't have to spend a lot of money on it. So when people walk by they see art. Bring the upstairs downstairs. I think Anvil Centre has to make some bold moves that can work with the convention centre
- For community too I think there's a cost barrier. We used to use co-op's room for our strata meeting and we were trying to find an alternative during Covid. Looked at the price here and thought oh we're not doing that. If you had a deal
- Any analysis of events that are public vs private focus? That would tell us where the balance is
- As I'm listening I'm feeling a bit frustrated because I'm hearing same things we heard in 2016 (when doing Arts Strategy). We talked about a pass for the city. Felt like convention centre with a few things sprinkled in so we're not cold corporate people. We were tasked with activating the space and every idea we had was shut down. Because would cost some money. You can't claim to be serving the community when you're squeezing the community. Community engagement isn't

really a high earning situation. What we discovered is people in NW are hungry for art. People want more. Why won't you give us more. When we gave that feedback back it was like, 'well it's a convention centre'.

- I go past here all the time and I don't know how many conventions there are but I never see anybody in the lobby
- Let's be realistic in terms of what we can bring in for corporate business. It's infuriating how often the Anvil sits empty and not activated. If you know there's nothing going, why don't you call up Arts New West, others and go hey let's figure out how you can use the space. A quartet practicing in the atrium during the summer with the door open. That would bring people in. Hearing the same things from 2016. This is still a problem?
- I wanted to find out what's going on in the theatre, and I typed in Anvil Centre and there is no information. Not even a link. You have to go to Anvil Theatre webpage.
- Arts things here don't get good advertising here. You can't only advertise in NW for things at Anvil. I've never seen an ad in Vancouver for something here.
- Surrey going to be bigger than Vancouver and huge audience right there
- NW is so compact and skytrain station, lot of things that can draw people to NW as arts location
- You're right about the advertising – when there were fireworks at Quay it was in Daily Hive and tons of people came
- So easy to get here. Right next to skytrain. Not easy to get to other venues in Vancouver. Good access for people who are differently abled. We're not exploiting it.
- I agree all around and would especially like to add in with the community and differently abled. In summer, Anvil is a cooling centre. My apartment hovers at about 30 degrees. I know Anvil is here and know intellectually I know anytime Anvil is open I can come in and read a book, etc. but it has never felt like a welcoming space for me to exist in, even though I know it's here for me to exist in. Last time I felt community in Anvil was when we were all getting covid shots. That was community endeavor. At some Columbia festivals on the street, no car days, etc. Anvil has not always been open and welcoming. Participation of Anvil in community events has been lacking. Yes, it's here, it's ours but it's also like don't wipe your feet, don't stay long
- Even with food truck festival and there were things here on ground floor nobody was promoting the museum etc. on 3rd floor
- Also with Piva, before the restaurant was in, a couple of student art exhibits were in that space and that was fun. Doors were open, people wandered in off the street and was engaging thing between community, students, artists and lovers of art. Would love something like that to continue
- Another idea I threw out was that easels, tables would be accessible and without having to go through the rigmaroles people could display their art. Come down Columbia Street and see people displaying art, selling art, buskers. Creation of relationship. There's a wide sidewalk in front of Anvil, Hyack Square right across the street.

- We're always talking about how we don't have third space. We have home, we have work, we have places to go spend money. Anvil has opportunity. We're in the centre (of the region). New West is best.
- Very central
- I go to library often and armchairs in library are always full of people. You can't find a spot in there. Would be nice if there was something downstairs where you could come in with their knitting, etc.
- So many good things popped out. What I'm hearing is an awareness issue. Shouldn't be promoting only in New West. We're the hub between Surrey, Burnaby, etc. Could there be some media like Daily Hive to build events. These events like food truck fest, car free days etc. I've enjoyed those as well but awareness isn't there (of Anvil?). Anvil has such big windows. How come don't see art when we pass by it? Not obvious it's an arts centre. Commerce can sometimes be an issue and drawing artists from other places. I wonder if a gift shop could help fund classes etc. A selling place for local artists. I also love NW swag, tote bags, etc. Like NW tote bag. I have a question about the funding.
- I do not believe that commerce and art are antithetical. But I do think Anvil has always had an identity problem. There's a certain level of if we fully engage artists in the community isn't that a rabble for corporate we want to pull in. There's a tension there. A decision needs to be made that Anvil serves community first and believe that will bring in the corporate. We're in this age where it looks good to support community. Believe there has been pandering to corporate needs and making that primary. Until those two masters are settled there's always going to be an issue.
- To emphasize the idea of third space. 70% of NW residents now live in apartments and with new towers it will be even more. Demand for those third spaces will be even higher. As City allows more development in the core it really needs to think of this space as a community space. Time to stop asking community for doing a bit more promotion, do a bit more advertising. You have to decide – are we going to change the parameters and say 50% of space will be for community at affordable rates. Will we move from security guard in dark space to someone at entrance who is more like a greeter at community centre. Let's stop pretending
- Agree with you on awareness and this being community space. Why do we have two different brochures. We have parks and rec brochure but lot of events aren't advertised in there. Arts workshops are in a separate Anvil brochure. Confused about why two different
- I had no idea there were classes here until I saw printmaking class when I walked by. So whatever brochure
- I signed up for two arts classes that we cancelled because low registration. Get sense the advertising is an afterthought
- Since when does corporate not connect with art? Corporations need art so why can't we have art being displayed on the many panels? And the artists in NW can sell their art to the bodies that do conference centre. Even with conferences happening, having some sort of trolley that brings in the art.

- Brings away the art when there's a conference.
- So it's visible most of the time and then the odd time there's a conference it gets tucked away
- The community. Anvil just never felt like part of the community. Felt very corporate. Didn't seem to incorporate us. That's the challenge the people in Anvil have to make. How do we as community people look at it and proudly say we've got the Anvil.
- Do you know how many conferences are booked in a year? I never see it. Feels like nobody uses convention centre
- Why isn't there a head of programming for Anvil Centre? Someone in charge. When you try to get info there's never a person in charge. It's so nebulous and just seems to go into static. Anvil doesn't seem to have someone in charge who knows what's going on. The ship is just going and nobody's at the helm. That would solve a lot of problems. Someone at the helm would be able to have a plan about how to bring in more corporate bookings, more art stuff, etc. Getting Anvil embedded in community, if that was their job. What's going on in New Media Gallery, how can we promote this? There's something similar at Emily Carr, let's partner
- Convention centre people are very powerful at Anvil. I've heard. Everyone else is a sideliners
- But how much money are they making? I don't see conventions spilling out onto the street.
- If a captain saying what's going on in theatre, at archives, etc.
- If you are having a convention, why not put the coffee next to museum so people have to explore to get their coffee and they get exposed to what else is there
- Unfortunate the design became very corporate and arts got lost. Haven't seen delivery on the concept
- I haven't met a theatre person who doesn't hate the floor in the theatre. It's not sprung. Beautiful, useless floor. Really limits what can come in there. Went from ability to bring in lot of shows to being able to bring in like 6. My understanding is the consultant told them it was a bad floor idea and they did it anyway. Whole point was to bring in money
- That's a great example and there's lots of examples when I look at the space this was built as convention centre. First venue I've been in when there was carpet in hallways where art classes being held. Also no space to store instruments for classes, etc.
- No chalk in the dance studios. Did you talk to anyone who practices these art forms? No you didn't
- That's a wonderful idea to have that person who's in charge of diversifying. Addressing all these limitations. Needs to be brought back to a place where community
- Find ways around it. Partner with Fringe and do satellite.
- With NW being so central. We can say "we're the centre".
- We are literally the centre
- New West is best

- We could have that as marketing. Used to be considered a dark, dangerous place.
- But if going to do lot of performing arts need to convince places around here to stay open later. Come out and can't get a drink or coffee anywhere.
- Leads me back to commerce. How is Anvil building relationships and encouraging businesses to stay open. What are we doing to incentivize with Downtown BIA to realize a more happening, jumping downtown core. Bigger question but Anvil does have a place in it. Feels like so far Anvil has absented itself from it
- Wide sidewalks I think of cafes. People can sit
- With the wide sidewalk there could be a mobile coffee trailer.
- You go to Hanoi and when the evening falls the cafes spill outwards
- How do we incentivize that? How does Anvil play a part in that? I had this idea that Anvil could sponsor a storefront contest. There was a bridal shop where the displays were interesting. What if Anvil sponsored something like that
- Or an art installation with mannequins that started here and then next chapters of the story would be in storefronts
- I don't think Anvil's name is in anyone's mouth
- I think people know it's here but nobody uses it
- Used to call it the Advil Centre because always gave us headaches

What aspects or features of Anvil Centre help it feel welcoming and community-focused? Are there any barriers or factors that prevent you from feeling drawn to Anvil Centre?

- I find it really odd. Where the reception on the main floor. You have to walk in and you have to know. It's not just naturally there. In an odd location. It's a weird feeling. Can I go there? Can I talk to them? The placement of that is very odd. Who are they facing? They're not facing the public. Doesn't feel welcome to me.
- They're facing convention hall
- I know they're friendly and will answer my questions. But doesn't feel natural and welcoming
- To build off what you're saying, in many Smithsonians it's a circular desk where people have to flow around. It puts them in the role of greeter and helps to control traffic on busy days. Simply putting in a different configuration of greeting desk would be great.
- Agree having someone there to greet you would be great. There's no signage showing you how to get to Museum, to New Media Gallery
- The gang on the desk it's exhausting for them. People wandering in and looking lost. Leaning out and saying "hi" is awkward
- Spent lot of time working in downtown buildings and where they're located is exactly where security is for office buildings
- They're lovely people but every time I come in I'm like I'm supposed to be here
- I felt that when I came in too tonight. Some things like: the cooling centre. Some of the music performances. The cross Canada ones. Also the archives sometimes host

workshops. I attended the Chinese Canadian one and that brought me in. Some things I would like Anvil to keep. And some things I would like them to do more

- I went to New Media Gallery opening last week and there was over 100 people there. But it's hidden. Behind closed doors
- New Media Gallery is a gift. Doing amazing things. I don't think NW knows how valuable it is. How rare and precious. That's never been emphasized.
- I can guarantee nobody knows about it
- New Media Gallery is my favourite part of Anvil by far
- I remember the suspended bubble exhibit and I just wanted to tell everyone
- It's always immersive things. It draws you in. It blows my mind it's not emphasized in marketing
- The level of service you get there is also above and beyond
- Tour by curators doesn't happen anywhere else
- I didn't know you could sign up for a tour. Should also be by donation so people actually attend. Have it in the community brochure. There's a community tour you can donate to but it's also free. It's amazing the New Media Gallery
- One of my favourite exhibits at New Media was it was a room of balloons in flight. You were shoved in and you were wandering around in space of balloons all around you.

Question 4: Where do you currently find information on what is happening at Anvil Centre?

- When I find out about Anvil it's because I'm on New Media gallery mailing list. Is there an Anvil newsletter?
- It's compartmentalized. You can get it for theatre, for individuals things
- Should be something that has everything at Anvil this month
- Would it even be something the City could send out with city thing that goes out this week
- Could even have a link go here for Anvil Centre roster
- For me I did find out about some of the events on the e-newsletter but to me it's not prominent enough.
- This thing tonight I'm friends with one of the curators on Facebook and that's how I found out about it.
- For anyone who thinks Anvil is a convention centre, why would you go and engage on a convention centre

Interest Group Workshop: Tuesday Feb. 27

Anvil's tag line is "Where Culture, Community and Commerce Meet". How have your experiences at Anvil Centre lined up with these three areas?

- I can say from a cultural perspective, at least from what I've observed in particular at the theater part of it, it's been quite spotty. I would like to see a little bit more

cadence or some sort of more discipline in the programming because it's really hard to get any traction there. I see a lot of shows have gone in, we're just not getting enough people coming to the show, which is sad. The only other cultural thing I would suggest about it that: Is it a place for culture, business, and community? I see quite a few conferences there.

- I'll just speak to community a little bit. Our members deal with vulnerable populations. And we have had some incidents over the years where when we talk about it being community, it hasn't been a safe place for some folks and not because they're coming to cause problems but just because of who they are and how they represent themselves. You know, we've had (people) been asked to leave the venue because they didn't feel they should be there. They were involved in the art exhibit and were actually asked to leave by security. So there's been incidents like that which kind of leaves a bad taste in the mouth. And because I live in the downtown, you know, I'm very cognizant of the fact that we don't have a gathering space in the downtown. And when you say community, I look at community very differently than others may. We don't have a neighborhood house. We don't have a community center. We don't have any place for people to gather. So how community is interpreted is very different depending on who you are. It's great for the arts community. It's great for different communities, but it doesn't go to everybody like that.
- Yeah, I think defining what each of these words means to the city would almost be helpful in a sense. Not that that's something you can do right now but I think that for everyone here, the stakeholders, those definitions might be different for ourselves than they are for the city. To speak to the commerce piece a bit, the only thing I can contribute to that is that as someone who works and advocates for the business community in New West we do tend to have events at the Anvil Center. You know, there's one this evening. Because that's the place, right? Like that's it's conveniently and centrally located and it is also, it's a venue that kind of speaks to the business community in a sense, like essentially it's probably the vibe we want to give off when we invite the business community. But I'm not too sure that that speaks to other communities as well.
- Can I ask you something on that point? I tried to do a whole speaker series there. I've put on 2 wine festivals there. And one of the consistent pushbacks we've been getting is that it's just too expensive.
- Right. Yeah.
- You know, a charcuterie board, for example, I think is \$200. You know, I'll bring your own food in. I put our AGMs there and we stopped doing our AGMs, they would do them downtown (Vancouver), the Four Seasons, or whatever, the one of the hotels downtown now because the food for the price you're paying is just horrible. So I mean, I hate to just be blunt about this, but the feedback I've been receiving, when I continue to try and do the speaker series is that it's just too prohibitive. We just can't do it. And so as a result, we end up getting this beautiful space that just often sits empty. It's not cheap to put these events on there. It would be nice if that went back

somehow into the feedback that we certainly would love to use the space more, but it's super expensive.

- Yeah, prohibitive is the word for sure. And the mandatory nature of having to have in-house food only. For events doesn't really align with buying local and shopping local and supporting our local business owners. So, there's some conflicting ideologies there for me, where, you know, on one end, we hear that the city really wants to help the local community and there is literally a local BC event there tonight. But we can't use our own local providers to help put on these events. It's certainly a fitting venue and you know if they can make it work and we can all make it work it's great, but for myself the Anvil Center is not a location I consider for anything. Because of just how challenging I know it will be to pay the bill.
- And that's why we stopped that series. And then the only other elephant in the room is the fact you have to use unionized labor there for everything. Like it's super expensive and I can remember when we did the festivals there, pre-COVID, it was prohibitive and all the money that we made was going to the Royal Columbian Hospital charity. So it's not like I was trying to make a profit from this, but to have people just come in and, you know, empty garbage cans was \$35 an hour. It's really difficult to try and make ends meet when you're paying, you know, rack prices for everything from food to labor. So, you know, as a consequence, you end up getting a beautiful spot that sits empty, right? Or it's not fully empty, but sometimes doesn't get utilized. So we've just stopped doing the speaker series there because of that.
- And you're both talking from a business perspective. So think about this from a non-profit perspective. It's impossible.
- Oh, it's impossible.
- So normally my events and things that we do, the City donates the space but then I can't do food because I can't afford the food. I can't afford the budget for the food. I found out some interesting ways to get around that. If you're doing cultural specific food, then you don't have to use their caterer. But, but that's the only way that you can get around that piece. But, but, you know, the fact that that is a contracted service that you're required. I think that contract that they have with Truffles. I think that's problematic for if you really want to talk about community and you want to bring community in.
- I can't really speak to the commerce aspect, but more so the cultural aspect. So, you know, the number of times that I've been, to the Anvil Center in the last, I don't know, 4 or 5 years, maybe more than that, primarily to attend the New Media Gallery, which, you know, it's funny because I was there, last weekend for the opening of their show. And, you know, the last few times I've been to see the artist talk prior to the opening of the show it can feel a bit like a rock concert. Because the last one, not this one, but the one prior. I think there was over 250 people, which for an art opening is, you know, on a Saturday afternoon is pretty unusual. Building that reputation over the past number of years for the level of the programming and the curation that's happening at the New Media Gallery is has been quite extraordinary to witness. So last Saturday when I was at the new show someone who has been

part of the cultural community in Vancouver for a long time said oh, this is a gallery that nobody knows about. And I'm thinking, you know, I, spent a lot of time and effort like making sure that people do know about it because the quality is so extraordinary of what they manage to do in a relatively small space and, you know, sort of tucked up on the third floor. And so if you don't know that the New Media Gallery's in the Anvil center, it's not always the easiest thing to find. So I think you want to champion that programming as much as possible. And how to do that when you're in Vancouver. So a lot of times when I'm writing about the New Media Gallery, you know, I'm emphasizing how easy it is to get to New West. If you're based in Vancouver, it's a 25 min sky train trip. So there are some accessibility and commuting kind of issues I think that come to bear when you're trying to bring in audiences that aren't necessarily based in New West and to make it seem as easy as possible to bring in the largest amount of people to see what's happening there. So I'm doing my part. And I guess sometimes I just wish like there was a way to make the gallery somehow a little bit more visible because it's up the stairs and around the corner.

- So I have had the privilege of working with Museum staff through a partnership with a local middle school and the New Westminster Museum and Archives. So we've been doing this for 2 years. We built a program where our students come down, they take a field trip. And the museum staff, they provide support to our kids and creating a classroom exhibit. So yeah, that's my connection.
- In my experience I've worked very closely with New Media Gallery staff. I've been teaching for 7 years now. And then I came to the Anvil Center before that with my family. And then I brought my students there, and I've been doing that for a couple of years, I think in terms of building a sense of community. It's been a really positive experience for me. New Media staff have led the workshops with my students beautifully. I know there's a bit of cost associated with my students, which was fine. And we figured that out. I also think it's great because a lot of my students didn't even know that that place existed. I agree with (name) that it is kind of tucked in and hidden away. I know that their response is always like, oh, what is this building? What is it for? So I think that's kind of my feedback, but in terms of building a sense of community, it's been great. Whenever we come, we step outside. I let them go thrift store shopping. We go get food, they walk along the water and we do all of that. So that's been really great. I would say the same. And with the recent project that I did with them, I forget the name of the guy who did the actual workshop but he was so amazing. We were working with, again, newcomers and refugees and there was a language barrier and he was just so culturally sensitive to everything the process and working with them the whole time was just so good. I agree with you guys about the food and that whole issue, but we kind of like worked around it a little bit. But I definitely would say that that was a barrier even in my project. We got some funding from the City but it was definitely not enough to cover if we wanted to cater and get food for the kids. So we kind of just did our own thing and left the

building. Just in terms of working with New Media Gallery, it's been really good for us.

- From my perspective as an organizational leader in New West, I would say there is room for culture and community when there are no conferences or conventions. In my perspective conferences and conventions have taken priority because of course it makes money. I organize the (event name) and with Anvil Centre being a prominent cultural hub in New West you would think this event would be an automatic shoe-in to the space but it is always a battle. We are only given space if there is not a conference. Conventions are given the larger space and the priority. This is a long standing community event with great reputation of bringing people together, but again culture and community falls below the commerce part of the puzzle.
- I think one of the key parts in that tag line is “where they meet” and I think that has been really missed as well. I think the gallery is an amazing space, but unless you are going to the gallery I don't think a lot of the convention traffic or business traffic is getting exposed to those areas. I don't know what it would take but getting more people and bodies into that area would be good because there is a lot of great activations in the Anvil Centre that are being missed by these conference visitors for example. The word community is challenging because you can look at it from a lot of different perspectives. A lot of the small businesses and nonprofits that I would consider to be the New West community aren't able to get into the Anvil Centre, and it is primarily a price point issue. Not very accessible from a financial perspective. I get that is an economic driver and that is an important part of the puzzle but they are missing a big piece not letting our local nonprofits do their events in the space that would help Anvil connect into the surrounding community more.
- I've had a really cool, lucky experience with the Anvil through my work at so I am a bit ignorant with some of the permissions others have mentioned. I have not been in that spot myself so I am just listening.
- I would have to say commerce is the primary thing Anvil is known for. Not only am I a business owner I am also a resident and an artist. From these perspectives I would agree with what others have said because Anvil is not accessible. When I was involved with the beginning focus groups struck to set up the Anvil Centre there were so many great conversations about the art gallery. And to be frank it is a very difficult space to hang because the walls are curved and as always commerce seems to come first. We host events that are not at the best timing because of other events that are happening at Anvil. It is formidable in terms of the price point goes. There are multiple art groups within New West. When we are talking about community, I don't understand the City's rules or bylaws that govern this but the Anvil does not partner with really anyone in the community that has been my experience. But this is one of the biggest disappointments I have had as a resident and a business owner because it is a beautiful space it could be so vibrant and busy with locals which would draw in tourism and more people within the community. But I would say

Commerce comes first as you have heard and Community and Culture last unfortunately.

- From my own perspective and experience. I can effectively say I don't know much about Anvil, and what I do know is of the NMG and the workshop run in the Lab. And I can say that has been very effective for me and my students and colleagues who go to see the work. I am thinking of this in silos and that some silos seem to be working for some groups, but the overarching effectiveness of what the centre is going to offer across culture and commerce and community doesn't seem to be an effective umbrella for delivery from what people are saying. But I keep going back to thinking that there is effective delivery in parts for some people. So some of the parts seem to be working but not the entirety. The other thing I was thinking about listening to everyone talking is the amount of people I have spoken to locally who don't know where/what the Anvil Centre is, and if I saw the NMG there is no way people know. So there is definitely this lack of knowledge that this is an available space for all to come to. So the encouragement of community is based on knowing where these things are and knowing they are available to you. Whether there has been extensive publicity or not, the communication level of "this is for you" before commerce or big business that is something over the years that has not been picked up on.
- I think that summarized what we are trying to say very well. That there are so many things that individually work really well. But there is just that missing connection of going back to "where they meet". Somehow people feeling welcomed to want to go into those spaces and how the arts that are in there and the programming that is in there can be more accessible to the general public and to the community, I think is a really important missing piece.
- I would say the community has almost given up on that space, they have not felt welcomed in that space. I am in that space almost weekly and I feel on edge like who is going to approach me because they are always questioning why are you here. There is always that kind of feel to it. Like I have to check in with the security even though it is a concierge desk, it feels like a bit of a security check-in. And I am there all the time, so I can only imagine what the average living or visiting NW feels when they see this beautiful concrete marble space. I know I have personally tried, and tried, and tried to get artwork in those windows over the last 6 or 7 years. It has happened once. And it was amazing people actually stopped and looked at the space and looked into the windows, and I was able to witness that. But it was something that had to be fought for and I don't know why there is such a hesitancy to create a community feel, and I am quite confident it is because of the conferences and maybe they don't want to see artwork in the windows... I don't know what it is. But until there is a rebalance I don't anticipate any changes happening. In a perfect world I think we would reverse the floors, where conferences and conventions could be on the 2nd 3rd floors; and all the arts and culture could be on the main floor in a perfect world. Because the NMG is one of a kind and our community should be celebrating and there are incredible things

happening in that space but there isn't that welcoming feeling drawing people into the space. There are these invisible walls that are there and there is this big cavernous space that people don't feel like is for them. There are simple things like having more artwork in that lobby area that could have a great impact on that community feel and giving local artists and small businesses some space within that giant lobby that is always empty.

- It is very very unfortunate. My father is longtime resident in NW and the only time he has been in the building was during Covid when we got our vaccines and despite living here for 25-30 years he had no idea what the Anvil Centre was. He got in there and the first thing he said to me was "it's like a mausoleum" and it just felt very cold. Mind you this was a very difficult time but the feeling persists unfortunately. I think the only time I have seen the Anvil Centre truly come alive in the lobby festival was during the winter festivals, and that was great. But the thing is I don't know how many people attended that type of event and again it is always so dependent on the conferences and other things going on, and that really is a sad thing. And I would also like to see art there.

How would you describe the identity of Anvil Centre, both in terms of physical presence and the experiences it offers?

- Yeah, a word I would use to describe the identity of the Anvil Center in terms of the physical presence and also the experience would be responsive. In my experience working with Museum staff they have really created an experience for our school that's unique to us and responsive to the needs of our students. And they've taken advantage of the well of opportunities within the space to do work that engages our entire community. So not just our students, but they've done some fantastic programs and have really listened to what we need. And have created something that is again responsive to our needs. So in terms of the identity I would say it's responsive because they're listening. They're listening to what the needs of the community are and they're creating an experience that that really is catered to those needs. And in terms of the physical presence, it's ever-changing. Every time I go into the Anvil center there's something different. And they are using the feedback of their community and ensuring that the Anvil center is really reflecting that, and our students notice. Our teachers notice. And we're hoping that we can have more of our parent community start to take advantage of this amazing space that's literally a few blocks away from my school. We are we are just so lucky to have this in our community and have a community partner that invites us in and is responsive to us.
- I will chime in. Thank you for your points. They're much more positive than I think I'm going to be. I find the identity be very confusing to be honest with you. I don't know if it's community place. I don't know if it's a place for commerce, for conferences, which they're trying to do. I find the museums to be incredibly scattered. We've got a historic museum. We've got some indigenous art. We've got

the New Media Gallery, which I love, I'm a huge advocate of. Then we've got a lacrosse museum. I find that really confusing. And so it just seems like we're sometimes trying to be everything to everybody and maybe that's what ends up happening when it's a municipally-run facility. But what I'm seeing is an identity that's just quite hard to grasp to be honest with you. And then same with the theater because there's no actual champion advocating specifically for the theatre, i.e. a CEO, because it's a sub-segment of the Massey (Theatre). I feel as though it's sort of a "me too" as opposed to, hey, this is a great place to be.

- Often times when I talk to people outside of New West who are familiar with the Anvil Center and what it looks like, but not necessarily what is going on inside it. It is described as looking like it's out of place. Due to the historic nature of Columbia Street, which serves a purpose and that's great. But I think that because of its aesthetic, it's confusing for people who don't already know what's going on in the Anvil Centre to feel like they should look it up and discover what's going on because it truly does look like this convention center. The museums, even though everything is listed outside, you just don't know that those things are there. I think that it is confusing for anyone who doesn't know what it is. And I'm not sure that the aesthetic encourages folks to discover what it is.
- I think I'll add to that, because I think corporate and cold when I think about Anvil Centre. If it wasn't for the warm relationships I have with people like (Museum staff), I probably wouldn't even be in the space. I've been involved in helping curate 2 exhibits at the space. Yeah, there's signs outside, but do people really know what's there? You have to find things and everything is kind of meandering. We did the opening for the housing values exhibit and the exhibit was tucked away at the very back of the museum that people have to find. And then there's another space that looks like a typical museum exhibit. But you know things are just hidden away unless you explore or you know what's there. Even better signage outside, something bright like when they did that wall with the signs that have the ever-changing pictures with advertising what's going on. That was actually a bonus because I actually found out about a few things as I walked by. But otherwise, you don't know what's going on in there and you just think, well, it is a convention center.
- I know a lot of our venues in Vancouver because I remember when the (name) City theater opened and I don't know if people are familiar with it, but it's basically like a brick front and it doesn't look like a movie theater, right? It looks like a bank or something a bit more kind of corporate. So it has taken probably the better part of like almost 10 years to like basically build up a level of familiarity with the Vancouver audience to know that, oh, this is a movie theater. So I think animating the space outside of and in the immediate environments of the Anvil could maybe help or benefit in order to make it seem more accessible, make it seem like it is something that is there for the community and to give it an identity to people who aren't familiar with it.

Do you have any specific suggestions for making Anvil Centre a more inviting space for the community? What suggestions would you have to help Anvil feel more welcoming, and a more inviting space?

- It looks how it looks. But when Last Monday at the Movies got canceled I thought that was a huge loss. I always wonder why the City doesn't just dump money into marketing and advertising all of the things at the Anvil Centre. Because it truly is this gem. When I do explain to people and all the amazing things that are there, people are so surprised. They have no idea. It's always the same reaction. And they ask me why isn't anyone doing more? And I agree, we try to do as much as we can. Anything bigger that's going to spill over into the street and create that positive spin off for our businesses. We do try to promote, but there's only so much that we can do. And I just don't feel like anything at the Anvil Center truly gets the marketing and advertising that it deserves.
- I'm just going to add on to that. I think that's such a great point. I would agree. I do follow the New Media Gallery and Anvil Center on Instagram, but I feel like creating more reels or things like that to show people, "hey here's this exhibition". When I post me there with my students on my story what we're doing at Anvil, I always have my friends respond, "where is this? What's going on? This looks so cool." Not just photos, but showing snippets of what's going on in the gallery would be so helpful. Getting someone to do the marketing for that.
- Yeah, I'm building on that. I think they do a really good job at advertising school programs because I know they are very, very busy because they're sending out really good marketing materials to the schools here in New West. And I know for me every time I'm in there, I'm just noticing more and more programs. So using platforms like social media; I had no idea that they offered this wealth of yoga classes and just things in the community. So the strategies that they're using for schools really work and I think could help bring in people from other parts of the community for some of the other really good programs. But I know for me, unless I'm in there, I just don't know what's going on and I work a few blocks away.
- I think it has a lot to do with the fact that they rely on Parks and Recreation to advertise a lot of things. And for me, that can be a hindrance, like how many times I've lost my password to get into my (Parks & Rec) account and because of that I have to come back and register later and then when I go back, it's already full. The New West Parks & Rec system for registration isn't always conducive to actually getting people in those spaces. Not just with respect to Anvil, but a lot of the facilities. It is a hard system to work with. I just want to add one more thing about how to make it more inviting. Colour. It's just so corporate. I get that they're trying to bring in conventions, but add some colour to make it inviting.
- Agreed.
- Right now it looks like concrete. And I know that's the intention, but there's ways to add colours so that people will be curious and want to come in and look around. That's just my own thing and I'm a big colour person anyway.

- I think maybe something like the Polygon Gallery did where they have a public art installation at the entrance to the gallery. And there was a quite large scale opening for this piece of public art. It kind of opened up the front of the space and it was so intriguing that I think it drew people into the gallery who wouldn't necessarily feel when walking by that it was a place for them. So I think there is a way for art to be a facilitator for bringing in all kinds of different people. I agree on colour. We tried to do that by putting in Indigenous Neon Reconciliation Explosion in the back (of the Museum in 2022), but we wanted to put that right in the front of the gallery there.
- Just because of the way the sun was coming in, you couldn't put it in (the front) but it would have been a perfect piece and it also would have helped with some of the Indigenous reconciliation aspect of the city. I'm really disappointed that we couldn't actually get that piece put in the very front, but a piece similar to that or something of that line would be perfect. I agree with the points to clarify the advertising just how it works. It's not just Parks & Rec. It's also Massey. So the theater is specifically managed by Massey. I don't know the solution to advertising for arts and culture. It's getting harder and harder to reach people now that we don't have traditional media. And now that we're trying to go through all of these different means of media to try and get out there and get our programs out. I do find that when I go to the Anvil Center and I look at the marketing, it does seem quite scattered. But that's just my perspective. We pretty much had to advertise and do all of the work, so it'd be nice if they had some sort of marketing program for theater and maybe for the cultural programs or just having a central place where people could go to (for info). I find the Anvil Center website to be really hard to navigate and it's not just me. Friends of mine who are older are trying to navigate their way through there and say it's frustrating. I agree with everybody's points here on color and advertising as well.
- I've seen some ideas done in other cities that I think we can steal from. One idea is allowing small businesses and independent markets like the craft market to set up in the lobby on certain days so that there is people in that area. Nobody wants to walk into a space that is empty, because it feels like "ugh I shouldn't be here." Allowing it for study space, if there is free wifi, putting some tables out and marketing it as a space for students to come study. A café would be incredible, again anything that creates some landing space for everyday use and brings in bodies and creates body heat. Once a few people start coming in I think it will encourage a friendlier atmosphere. You don't want to be the only one creeping in quietly. But I think there are lots of opportunities. The entry way is so big it would be nice to see some sitting pods. I think the use of the bathrooms has been an issue and that is unfortunate it hasn't been a more welcoming service to the community. Again with arts I know there is a lot of space we could activate and showcase. There are a lot of people trying to get their products in front of community
- It has been a number of years now, and I guess a question is – is the tourism office still in Anvil Centre? Yes, so one other things that I think could be such a huge shift is if the Anvil Centre actually became a tourism office or space where people can come

n and get directions. There are these beautiful brochures on the wall but again, tourism new west has struggled with this where the concierge at the desk don't have tourism training. This really could be the Welcome Centre of New West, and from there people can go to the quay, they can go up the street, they can go to the different venues in the space. And that is where I think the community, culture, all of that can intersect. Tourism is extremely powerful, we are backed by West Coast Curated. So when you look at the opportunities for promotion we are certainly missing a big opportunity here. Tourism really doesn't have home and Anvil Centre could be it, and that would bring community in. And it is really interesting the social media for tourism NW is one of the places locals go to get information, and now how great would that be if it was actually the Anvil Centre? I think if you are not doing anything physically with the building, that would be a massive shift.

- I appreciate the comments about the lobby a lot too. I feel like there is something missing for me that I can't quite put my finger on. When I have students meet there or when I want to meet someone there, again I am really just going to the gallery – but it feels really awkward to me on the ground floor. And I have engaged with some of the security, while installing work so they got to know me after hours and I really like some of the people there. There are some really nice, friendly people there – so it is not that. But it's... and I don't want this comment to run in opposition to what some people said, but I was thinking yea that lobby is really a space you want to get out of and move through really fast. And there is this kind of this mini lobby space near the gallery where you know 4 people can sit and be. And I was just thinking about other cities' art centres, and in all of them actually, they are very different spaces but maybe it is a place to hang out or a sense that spending time there felt comfortable. But I also side glance the security every time I walk in there like "are they going to say something to me" or someone is looking to check out if I am legit or not. I don't know there is something about it, and I am into minimalist space; I like big open space, but somehow there it doesn't add up. And I agree with everyone that if the lobby was a destination in and of itself, but there are lots of hotel lobbies that look pretty cool and people actually do sit in them sometimes. And I just wonder about some serious thinking on that front or the suggestions folks made are great.
- I like the idea of turning it into a hotel lobby, they have to put a lounge in there with some nice chairs; that is a brilliant idea. That would be very well welcomed in the evenings. I was just thinking I was at the harbor air terminal this past weekend and they have this little coffee shop but also a gift shop and building on what others said about it being the visitor's centre – which it is if you know where to go and ask and look, otherwise very hard to find – but if they could bring those tourism faces forward, advertise that it is actually the info centre through the summer and that there is information available and friendly faces, and then perhaps have a bit of a gift shop or something where we are selling some of the local artist's merch. That might be a way to make people feel a little more comfortable in that area.

- As long as it is on the main floor. Because I spent countless hours building a gift shop on the second floor and the door would always be locked. I spent so much time coordinating that and the door was always locked. And I feel like this is why there is so much frustration with the space, because these ideas have been there. All these conversations were part of the Arts Strategy but where did all those ideas go? I feel like this is just a constant cycle of the same talk. And I am at a point where I am reluctant to have little glimmers of hope for that space, because again it goes into the conferences and conventions. Until the structure of that space is going to change, and I don't think it is... I feel like there are so many walls that are put up all the time. But I love ideas, I think they are exciting that everyone was mentioning. And even a library, there isn't a library near downtown New West, so is that an option in a portion of that lobby space. Having some sort of children's library where kids and families can go hang out. There are tons of families living downtown and I think that would be a huge asset culturally.
- Libraries are the most welcoming spaces in any community. They have that feel to them. So maybe there is that element we can bring into that space.
- It is so funny when you were talking about a gift shop. And I didn't want to bring it up, but in the original plans from day 1, one of the plans was to have a made in New West gift shop and that was supposed to be in the 2nd floor boardroom. And you will notice there are cupboards with glass doors in that room because when Anvil Centre was built that was supposed to be the made in New West gift shop. And we were supposed to have art and artists who were working in those glass walled studios. That was the original plan and then commerce came into in and "we needed a boardroom" and that space was taken away. So I agree if we want a gift shop it has to be on the ground floor. And it is very frustrating because this is exactly the conversations we were having before Anvil Centre was built. And to not see any of this come to fruition is really frustrating because we have some amazing artists and craftsmen, I think we have more artists per capita than any other city in the province. And we as businesses and other organizations are fighting to show that, and the Anvil Centre and the City are really just not on board with that.
- And those cases looked beautiful when they were filled with art, but if only the lights were on and the door was unlocked it would have been lovely.
- I think one of the challenges with the venue is having union staff... I was once told it costs \$12,000 to turn the lights on in the main ball room. We were once upon a time looking to do some free yoga and we were told it would cost \$12K to have staff come in and turn on the lights for that evening. So yeah that accessibility for the art means it would have to be locked up which means someone would need to come in and unlock it. So yeah it is really unfortunate.
- Many years ago I was a prop maker and I used to work on events and the ethos behind setting up an event for a short period of time was to not let foot traffic sit too long. It was not there for lingering, it was not there for what the general public would want to do during the day. It wasn't the welcoming environment for coming out and socializing. So there seems to be a mismatch between the commerce with

these culture and community aspects. There seems to be a different definition by commerce as to what culture is or perhaps what community is. There seems to be that disconnect. But really it is the steering of why these ideas were initially discussed but never came to fruition or did but then problems came up and it was easier to move in the direction of commerce. Now obviously we can say money talks to explain why commerce would take the lead over time, but there also seems to be the grand motivation by those who are running Anvil Centre as to why there is not more leeway or maneuvering to make sure culture or community are not equal or level pegging with commerce. I think we are talking in a bit of an echo chamber about things that could happen or should happen, or nearly happened – the echo chamber goes nowhere unless there is a bigger incentive for people within the roles of anvil Centre to be going “right we are going to make this change.” So I guess my question is back to you – we are here using our time hopefully productively, but what is actually being intended to readdress this balance.

- Can I also quickly just add outreach – this is something I feel I have been desperate to see start. So the link between my school as in I am always bringing my class, and I understand the cost of the LAB, etc. I can understand money constraints. But I think a link between the NMG and schools could be beneficial. I take my students, many for the first time and they enjoy the experience but when I say to them hey there is a new exhibit why don't you go check it out, they don't make that link to think, oh I can just go on my own. I have asked about the educational programs potentially coming into schools to make a more multifaceted project where part of it is at the school, part is at Anvil Centre, in the archive, NWG library, etc.

How can we better share about what is happening at Anvil Centre? Where do you currently find information on what is happening at Anvil Centre?

- I think one of the things, the Anvil Centre and the City send out an email where you can find out what is happening at the facility and I don't think that is the problem. I think the problem is it is not reciprocated. I look at a community like NW where the City will not promote non-profits or other business and I don't know what the laws are around that. But we have a studio in PoCo and the city there has and promotes several non-profits and their art council and they work together to promote events together, so it is a reciprocal relationship. And when I look at that, that is where community is. Community is partially online. But then you take that online community and bring it into the Centre, and by working with the organization that is how community develops, that is that reciprocity. I know this is being done in other communities. And there could be this beautiful synergy between arts and business but they have to be willing to partner with people.
- I agree we have a challenge for that a lot of times, and even events that the City gives grants for they are not allowed to promote. But yes I have seen other cities do that and that certainly helps. I think going back to making this space accessible for community groups to program so that there can be local conferences held by local

businesses will get people through the door. I don't know what it is, but if you have never been to a facility, getting people in through the door is really what is going to move the needle on making it more front of mind to use again next time. And I think we can do that by hosting grassroots events that are community driven. So that you don't have that commuter groups. You get the people that are living here, working here, eating here, walking the streets daily that are using the space. Partnership would be key here. We've talked about a tiered program where we recognize there are those corporate groups that need to come in but could there be that secondary tier that is recognizing the value that these smaller groups bring in helping to drive word of mouth with their neighbours and colleagues locally. As someone touched on earlier I think a lot of community has given up on the venue and you have lost a lot of cheerleaders who would have otherwise been the ones bringing their guests in and inviting those people to use the theatre or watch the performances.

- I agree with that too the city is full with non-profit organizations that are doing amazing things. And the City too often tries to do the work on non-profit groups when they don't have to. I am coming from an arts perspective but I think it applies to any other sector. We are the professionals in our field. Let us do the work. We have connections, we have more personal relationships with the community. The City is this corporate entity that is bound by bylaws and policies, where are these non-profits have such strong ties to the community and great reputations and opportunities for relationship building. And I wish the City would open the doors and let us do the work they pay us to do. Let us take your space and activate it in the way we know the community needs. We have a pulse on it. There is so much expertise that the City is not taking advantage of the work we want to do and it is much easier for us to reach the community. And the City is so bound by what they can communicate, how they can communicate it, where as we are not. We don't have those same boundaries and limitations.
- I was just thinking that the culture community commerce is just another way of saying social, cultural and financial capital and thinking of the value of those things. I think if someone has one of those things they immediately recognize the value of having more than one of those things. You'll see when one person gets to the top of the echelon in one they will go looking for the other. You really need someone who is willing to take risk and face failure or possibly great success rather than being worried about never failing. You've got to have the guts to fail or take a risk at some things.
- The other thing, it has happened to me once where there was a theatre opening and a gallery opening and I wonder if it is culture commerce or community and I don't think it matters. Maybe you just need one of those things to happen simultaneously if that is possible.
- It is so tough with students, I take hundreds of students to the gallery at UBC and it is their first time there for every single one of them. And it really is as someone said about getting people into the door. And I don't think we have a culture of that in North America where people just go, families are taking their kids and they just go

and put their 'I'm going to get confused hat on' and go into that space – but the 'I'm going to get entertained' hat is much more common here so how do we think about making that more normal. And my last thought, I'm just learning about this but for example once a year the City (of Vancouver) gives rentals for the Orpheum for free with the AV techs and all. You may still need to spend \$5-10k on other things but I wonder if it was possible for the City to just open those things up a couple of times a year to groups who would be excited to use the space. Would we rather have the place sit empty? It doesn't have to be that way. And again if we have that social or that cultural capital then maybe the money follows it somehow.

- Part of the original plan for the Anvil was to have the Arts Council in Anvil because it has been in Queen's Park and the whole idea was to have the Arts council there, so I just want to put that plug in there.
- I recently watched the unveiling video of Anvil Centre from 10 years ago and Mayor Wright was saying how Anvil is going to be a beacon in the downtown and there was such excitement and enthusiasm in that video. And I look at some of the staff that were in that video 10 years ago and they have now lost their shine. No one talks about the Anvil Centre with that same excitement anymore. The video was nice to see but also really sad that we have veered off.... What the opportunity really is for that venue. We had high hopes. So it is great we are doing this and can hopefully bring back that excitement, because it truly is a great space.

Follow-up question from facilitator: Do you have anything specific to suggest for arts and culture marketing?

- The media world, which is in an ongoing state of attrition at the moment, is pretty grim. Oftentimes I'm at events where I'm the only culture writer there, and there's a lot going on in the region. It's a really thorny issue. I don't know if I have any answers. It's something that's kind of an ongoing discussion, you know, with a lot of different arts organizations is how best to communicate information when, again, traditional media is not quite as robust as it once was. There are lots of platforms but they're fractured so you know this person has an Instagram blog and that person has a podcast but they aren't reaching a mass audience.
- The challenge of like promoting things, just speaking as a free community event producer. One of the things that we do is go through all the different (online event) calendars, like the Georgia Straight, and submit all the events, but that still takes a really long time for one of my staff to do in the summer to go to all of the websites and submit the events and hopefully it actually takes. I can appreciate that it's super challenging to promote everything right now for sure, which is why I think that the City really should invest in an expert who can do things like clean up the website and make it more user friendly for all of the different aspects of the Anvil Center. And then also just figuring out how best to promote all the different events because there are different scales of events and there are things that are promoted and some that aren't. The digital reader boards that are in the windows, those are great

- I often stop and look at them because that's usually my only way of figuring out what's going on there.

- Which is crazy, isn't it? That's crazy.
- The thing is I'm only going to see that if I'm already a part of the community walking by. Because my office is down the street. The stuff that's happening is great but there's just not enough marketing going on. Just thinking about city-wide events like Shine Bright, where I saw a lot of transit ads. I know that's a city-wide event; it's a really big deal and lighting is very expensive but it does look like there was a lot invested in certain things. Certain events that might be propped up more, but it would be hugely beneficial to promote the Anvil Centre in the same way as well.
- We've had extreme weather, both cold and heat. And a lot of people in the downtown core, not just folks on the street, but also folks in some of the older buildings, really could have benefited from a space where they could have gone to get some air conditioning or get some heat. And the Anvil Center has never been viewed as a place where you could go to do that. I know we set up one little space where some unhoused folks could go and sit and then there was concerns that security was keeping an eye on them to make sure they weren't going to do anything when really they were just trying to get cool. I have this problem with Parks and Rec facilities right throughout the city, not just with the Anvil Center, but when we have extreme events in the community facilities should be opened up to the community for use. And it doesn't matter what's going on. When you think about the number of people who died here in New West during the heat dome and we were not opening up some civic facilities because we were going to have to cancel people's programs. I have a real problem with that. You know, human life is a little bit more important than a program that you can refund somebody for or you could reschedule. My 3 big things were: making this space more welcoming to anybody who wants to come in and it doesn't matter what they look like; the food piece; and this piece. I also live in the downtown core and it would have been great to walk over to the Anvil. My building is concrete, but we don't have air conditioning. But it would have been nice to be able to tell some of the seniors in my building, you could walk over to the Anvil and go hang out and get some air conditioning.
- Yes to everything you just said. When I think of community, I think of somewhere I can go. Whenever, no matter what. And I understand that over the last few years with the climate emergencies the city has been going through some growing pains of figuring out facilities, etc. But I don't see the Anvil Centre as a place where people feel like they can go when they need that respite. And when the weather is like how it is now (snowing), I always go to down to Front Street when I'm leaving the office and, especially if the weather's like this, I let folks know there are the places that you can go to and yes, the Anvil Centre does open themselves up during extreme situations. And the feedback that I get right from the unhoused community is that they're good to just chill outside because of the experiences that they have had (at Anvil). Just being handled by security and things like that. From my own personal point of view, I'm great with the folks that I work with there when planning events

and things like that. But when it does come to the front line staff who you see when you walk in, the front desk staff, I can't say that I have had particularly pleasant, positive experiences when just asking a simple question. Honestly, when you ask that question of "how would you describe the identity of the Anvil Centre?" The one word that like comes to mind first is classist. It feels pretty classist. It's hard when you're planning a multi-block event and you know, stakeholders within that event site are upset that they're not necessarily being asked to be involved, but then when you ask them to be involved they present you with this gnarly bill that there's no way is going to be able to be accommodated. Then everyone loses out. Right? Like that space isn't activated for an event. I have challenges with recognizing how it is supposed to be a community place when, again, my definition of community I don't think it's the same as what this space is intended to be.

- Touching on an earlier point about the confusion around how many different types of museums we have there and the whole structure of the museum and art gallery system within New Westminster. When I look in there, we've got, I hate to call it a colonial museum, but it was kind of an old-school museum there, which I don't think is ever going to leave because of our demographic. We've got a bit of an indigenous gallery there. We've got a lacrosse museum there and we've got the New Media Gallery. And now if you've been to any other galleries in the world, you'll recognize, the New Media Gallery is tier one. It's up there with the Tate, the Pompidou. If you ever go to the New Media Gallery, you're always wanting more. Personally, what I would like to see is some reorganization around those museums so that we could get more focus on what's set up there. We've got an art gallery in Queens Park. Why not move the lacrosse museum there and bring all of the arts and culture to one section? We could certainly put together a very simple and I've proposed this in the past, a contemporary Indigenous art gallery, in line with the New Media Gallery. So just a little bit more cohesion and coordination, some sort of strategic focus on it. It's because it's just so scattered. And I think the very first thing that I would like to see if nothing else out of this, it would be great if we could have somebody do an objective measure on who is going to those museums. Because almost every time when I go to those museums, I feel like I could play a game of cricket in the in the back part. Not necessarily the New Media Gallery, but in those back ones there I rarely see anybody else in there. What's going on on a Saturday when there's nobody in there? Just seems like wasted space to me that maybe we could do more with if we created a better strategic plan on that.

Verbatim Online Survey Responses

The online survey was open on Be Heard New West from February 1 through March 4, 2024 and received 159 responses. The survey included four multiple-choice questions, two of which included an “other” answer option where participants could write their own response, and another optional open-ended question. Below is the input provided by participants who selected “other”, and the responses provided to the optional open ended question.

Note that responses are not edited for spelling and grammar – they are reported exactly as entered by participants.

Question 1A: (If you have not visited Anvil Centre in the last year): What is keeping you from visiting Anvil Centre? Select all that apply:

Choice	Count
Total Responses: 24	
I’m not aware of what is being offered	11
It’s too far from my home and/or work	1
Access is not convenient for me	5
Not interested in the services/programs currently offered	9
My needs are being met at other locations	3
It doesn’t feel like a place where I can visit casually / just go and hang out	15
Other (please specify)	7

A total of 7 comments were provided by those who chose “Other (please specify)”.
Below is a list of these comments:

- “There is no Marque board or signage to market what events are going on.”
- “Safety in New Westminster Downtown”
- “Parking is a problem. I have difficulty walking so cannot use transit system.”
- “Parking downtown New West is always an issue.”
- “Impractical location - I have no routine reason to go into the area.”
- “I am usually with my dog. We have been looking for more dog-friendly indoor spaces to hang”
- “Does not look engaging or interesting from the sidewalk.”

Question 2: (For participants who have been to Anvil Centre at least once in the last year) What brings you to Anvil Centre most often? Select up to three most common reasons for visiting.

Choice	Count
Total Responses: 134	
Program / camp / class	38
Museum / Canadian Lacrosse Hall of Fame	32
New Media Gallery	73
Community Art Gallery (located on the third floor, outside Anvil Theatre)	30
New Westminster Archives	8
Theatre performance	47
Cultural event (i.e. gallery opening, talk, film)	32
Meetings or conferences (as an attendee)	31
Facility renter	5
Conference client	2
To hang out in the building (use the wifi, bathroom, etc.)	8
None of the above / I do not visit Anvil Centre	2
Other (please specify)	7

A total of 7 comments were provided by those who chose "Other (please specify)".

Below is a list of these comments:

- "Volunteer"
- "Tourism centre - get maps and washrooms"
- "Immunization, Lego Exhibition"
- "Healthcare events (my COVID shots)"
- "Have also visited for a show at the gallery, theatre, main floor events, blood donations, vaccination, and occasional bathroom or sit-down respite"
- "Craft fair"
- "Book return"

Question 4: OPTIONAL: Is there anything that could improve your experience at Anvil Centre?

A total of 92 comments were provided by those who chose to answer this optional question. Below is a list of these comments:

- "NMG and the LAB is awesome!! I want to see it expanded; more services offered by Art + Technology division."
- "A little more seating downstairs would be lovely. A small library area where you can pick up reserved books? I would also like to say that the New Media Gallery are an absolute jewel in our city. I couldn't be happier with it. "
- "Art workshops for adults and for kids. More advertisements of events. "
- "As a local parent, I love the Anvil centre and the amenities it provides!"
- "As a senior, available parking in the evening is important to me."
- "attending a theatre event, I fell leaving the event. There was no guard rail to hold on to and going down the stairs was difficult. As a member of Century House, I have heard this complaint from other seniors who would like to attend a theatre event but can't because of this. "
- "Bathrooms - we are always directed to the fourth floor. Also the lack of back door access including for entering the building is really annoying. This should be a library branch! Would love to have permanent library infrastructure here. It feels like a really underused space that does not build or encourage community."
- "better marketing advertising of events. Need a weekly calendar (print out) of events going on in Downtown New West (bars, comedy club, music, anvil). No one knows what is going on. Between the city calendar, BIA, tourism calendars, most events are left off. I suggest the tourism department take the lead on this. New West is quickly becoming a key cog in the centre of the region and should be a regional draw. I believe tourism is responsible for drawing residents from other cities. Marketing of events has not kept up with the rapid change in social media and decline of print. This is not just a New West problem but is happening everywhere."
- "Bring back the wine tasting, so much fun and informative (for the adults). Maybe have a spooky few days at Halloween with games, story telling, face painting and treats (for the kids). Cos play was a hit (young and old teen and adults). Maybe Sept, 30th Indigenous story telling with food tasting and lessons (for everyone). How about old movie day, charge cheap and have 4 showings all proceeds to the homeless or food bank or ? (for everyone). Maybe the Fireman's boot drive can be at the Anvil with smoking hot wings, Red Hots candy and Spicy Popcorn yummy (for the brave) major grocery store might donate for this? This is just a few. Have a wonderful year."
- "Bring in more interesting shows and events."
- "Change the layout of the Lobby, so if no major renovations then tables that can put out there. Make it feel like a community and artistic space. More programming from the New Media Gallery - it is such an excellent Gallery and their offerings are so on point for these times we are in, we just need more of them. And perhaps in more places in the building. "

- "Community access to the conference space, free meeting group space, more festivals/celebrations, more group/private music lessons, childcare, school consideration, less expensive workshops for schools/groups"
- "Entering the lobby feels like i'm entering a business tower on a sunday - often queried by blue shirts about whether i have business in the building. (i am a professional artist, educator, and community governance member. I don't have holes in my jeans.) - what's that about?...The New Media Gallery, and SO'S are rock stars delivering an international-class project. Does New West, and the Anvil Centre, deserve them, or understand how significant their program is?Completely disappointed by the program in the theatre: last Arts Club import I saw: it was like there was an embargo against telling the public about the artists on stage. I wanted to know about the designers! The PuSH collaboration with a dance company a few years ago was a notable exception in the consistently very forgettable program experience. Its not a bad space, in fact there are a number of positive aspects about the design....but who's running it, and why?"
- "Finding more ways of being available to the community. Lower rates for local theatre groups to use the theatre space, have pop up library or other cultural events. allow non-profit the ability to use the space at a reduced rate."
- "Get on Reddit and promote upcoming events in /r/newwest! I don't go to the Anvil Centre as often as I could because I don't know what's happening there."
- "i am so amazed by the New Media Gallery, i feel so lucky to have this incredible gallery in Metro Van. "
- "I appreciate being able to park and use the washroom there when downtown or visiting Piva with senior family members and colleagues. I almost always bring out of town guests to visit the building and Museum when showing off New West! It is so well maintained and staffed, and makes me proud while leaving a lasting impression. I would love to see a permanent display there coming out of the City's 'A Year of Truth' initiative."
- "I didn't know I could hang out there. There is nothing informing or welcoming me to do that. Being under surveillance by security is the opposite of welcoming. "
- "I had no idea there was a theatre, performances, film showings, etc. It would be fantastic to have this space available to community members for clubs or begin regular programs to engage others - themed film series with a regular cadence (anime, independent, foreign, Criterion, etc), video game nights/tournaments, etc."
- "I know a lot of people who live in New Westminster and have no idea what's inside the Anvil Centre. I know no renovations are planned, but can something be done to make that entrance more welcoming. When you go i. you are faced with an empty space, the desk is on the left you see and most people instinctively want to go to the right, when entering a store etc."
- "I love the bright space to work. I would like the bar to open regularly on the weekends and on the 3rd floor(?) have live music (from locals)- not too booming-classical/ ambient. Perhaps ask Douglas/ NWSS music department if they have any performers."

- "I would like to see another library at the anvil centre or another new building. New Westminster has only 2 libraries which is way less than other cities. "
- "I would love to see more Parks and Recreation classes, especially fitness classes and after school classes for kids. It would also be great to have the ability to reserve books through the library and pick them up at Anvil Centre. There are so many people living downtown and it feels like the building could be offering so much more in the way of services to this population. We generally have to drive or take a roundabout transit route to get to the library and the new community centre, but we could have a walkable version of those things via Anvil Centre if the will was there from the city! I would also like to just put in a plug for the front desk staff at Anvil Centre. They always greet everyone with a smile and a friendly "hello" - they are the most welcoming staff that I've encountered in the city!"
- "I would love to see the New Media and Art Gallery be expanded and more services by Art & Tech division"
- "I'd register for art or dance classes if the parking fees didn't double the cost of the program. Even for evening events it does not state on the parking meter that the lot is not patrolled after 8 pm so many people for 3-4 hours when they only need to pay for one hour maybe. "
- "If there is a way to expand the NMG do so please. It is a fantastic gem to have in the area. We love it. "
- "If this space is to continue to serve the community, it must be made more welcoming and inviting. Its cold austerity (and severe security) make it an uncomfortable environment for many. In particular, I know of an incident this past year in which artists featured in the community gallery were hassled by security and forced to leave when *viewing their own work.*"
- "If you aren't prepared to make major changes there's very little you can do to make it more vibrant at a street level. The conference centre on the main level is what prevents it from contributing to downtown vibrancy and community connection"
- "Improved communication between Anvil and Parks and Rec. So many errors for Anvil (New Media Gallery) programming in the Parks and Rec guide, and Parks staff can't answer any questions. Convolutd communication from the Anvil about programming, including having the staff lock all the doors while programming is running, resulting in a mess at pick up time. Also, seating theatre latecomers through the main (downstairs) door is a major irritation. You are walking them right in front of the stage. I don't understand it at all when there are perfectly useable doors at the top of the theatre. It looks unprofessional and is a huge distraction."
- "Increase awareness of programming and events by Improving digital panels and building signage along Columbia and at main entrance. Remove/lower barriers along Columbia to encourage the community to come in esp. during the summer. The valuable frontage along Columbia street can be much more inviting. If necessary install a full height grille in front of wood folding wall, to separate a street facing space from internal conference venue. Activate street space with programming. Furnish with soft seating etc to invite people to come in. Small Reno's

eg. Bring the tourist information Centre out towards the street. Develop local specific information on downtown adjacent attractions eg Fraser Discovery Centre, River market. Work with local businesses to find ways to support them eg. Custom maps of local businesses, downtown website etc. Work with gallery and museum staff to program street level activities and invite public to visit the venues on the 3/F. Consider relocating the building information desk to allow staff to see both entrances and/or supervise street activity. Staff can provide helpful assistance eg. directions to local places, programming etc At 4/F studios, increase number and variety of activities for a wider demographic living in or adjacent to downtown eg. Fitness and cultural programs for Seniors, families, gyms for young adults, movie nights in the theatre etc. Community centred programs will increase public familiarity to the building. Many new people will be living downtown as new projects approach completion. Providing more people with more reasons to come regularly to Anvil Centre will help bring vibrancy downtown and support the local businesses. Hope this helps!"

- "It feels so uninviting. It is often so quiet that you feel like you are intruding when you enter."
- "It is a really unwelcoming space, and is too quiet. It is also out of budget for almost all community groups to access. it feels devoid of any personality. The hours are also weirdly limited. Sometimes you feel like you are the only person in the building. It is fancy and pretty but pretty soulless too. "
- "it would be great to have some kind of more "cozy" atmosphere in the lobby to make it feel more inviting, including a less formal feeling info desk. This venue feels like it exists only for conferences and meetings, so it's hard to know from the outside that there are other community programs taking place inside."
- "It would be helpful if the venue would respond to requests for rental details within a timely manner. I had to go elsewhere after waiting over a week for a response, even after sending a followup request. It was disappointing."
- "It would be nice to have a full library annex."
- "It would be nice to have more programs on the weekends. I would love for my kids to participate more, but as a working parent is hard to meet the programs schedules "
- "keep up the Great work"
- "Kiosk too far around the corner. No colour. "
- "LOVE the new media gallery!!! Would love to see more offering by the art technology division; more drop ins by the gallery for adults i can sign up for!"
- "Make it more welcoming on the first floor. It feels so giant and open and empty all the time, and whenever I go in it feels like I'm being closely examined by whoever's behind the desk or working security to make sure I "belong". "
- "Make the ground floor a more welcoming space, more like a community centre and less like a hotel lobby."
- "More affordable cash bar at Gallery events! "

- "more aware of future events let's say over the next few months. Give me a reason to attend Anvil and other activities"
- "More events!"
- "More fitness classes, especially after typical work hours. Jessie's classes on Thursdays are the best ever!!"
- "More music! The Anvil Centre should have a rock festival and invite Anvil band to perform. Love the jazz, more local bands and more alternative bands. Folk/bluegrass/country fest? I love every street festival. Highlight local theatre by having a performance from the Massey or the one in Queens Park (can't remember name) perform one night at Anvil. Comedy? Just for laughs New West?"
- "More recreation programming for sure! Love that there are various classes hosted at Anvil, especially making use of Sunday which is not a common day for parks & rec programs. The New Media Gallery and Museum are kinda boring and could maybe benefit from offering some sort of regular educational program (drop-in open talks or activities at regular times each week?) that encourage visitors to come back frequently... especially if it's for younger kids, as it's great to have an indoor activity option in our rainy city! History discussions at the Museum, history-inspired activities (like Irving House) would help keep people engaging with the displays, especially the static ones at the front that don't really change. The exhibits at New Media Gallery are not your average art displays, they're very techy/scientific and the artistic ideas behind them may be complex/high-level, which may be challenging for some people, especially children, to fully appreciate; could the exhibits be accompanied with more visual displays that would help explain the tech/science and the artistic concepts more simply? Or simple interactive activities that helps demonstrate how some of the exhibits were designed/the concepts incorporated? "
- "More theatre plays, those nice jazz concerts and more advance notes via social media to stay up-to-date!"
- "more warm, welcoming environment. More activations, hang out space in general main floor lobby area. Community Library would bring a lot of those elements. "
- "New Media Centre is a treasure!"
- "New Media Gallery could use more exposure in the VLM as it is totally unique and a gem in NW"
- "New Media gallery should be closed... Regardless, it's a waste of space and money."
- "Nmg and lab are amazing. I wish these services were expanded. "
- "Not a welcoming venue. I feel like an intruder, watched suspiciously. No idea if I am allowed to access the archives. Always empty, not a surprise. I'm challenged by staff if I dare to go upstairs. Uncomfortable, oppressive atmosphere. Feels like the public isn't allowed in."
- "Not enough promotion for existing activities, not enough activations to see when hanging out, getting better at attracting more performance and conferences but we need more. Anvil should be attracting more! Local artists should get free rental. Eliminate requirements for catering."
- "not having a downtown library branch here was a lost opportunity"

- "Offer more classes, more often. Keepmup with the concert and play performances. We love the ability to walk to such events. Perhaps have a branch of the public library or quiet reading space. "
- "Please add more yoga / fitness classes throughout Saturdays and Sundays. I learnt Sunday yoga classes are temporary as they were moved due to demolition of the other fitness center. Please continue to keep Sunday yoga classes. Would like more fitness classes on weeknights/evenings that would accommodate 9-5 work schedules. Also more prenatal/ postnatal yoga classes and more programs for parents + toddlers/babies on the weekend or weeknights. "
- "Please expand the museum and Art Gallery. We love visiting these places with our kids. "
- "Possibly a venue directory at the entrances "
- "Publish/print program registration guides in advance. When I went looking in early January for the winter (Jan-march) guide, I was told it wasn't yet available. Promote programs better to avoid cancellations due to low participation. Half of what I've signed up for has been cancelled. Improve outdoor signage. The grey signs against grey walls are invisible and there's no info about hours of operation. The two screens can only be seen from immediately in front not from those approach from skytrain. Inside, the signage is overly discreet. Program cultural events in the main lobby for New West residents to make it a vibrant space--right now it's not. The security desk beside the elevator is NOT a welcome. Make the route to the elevators more visible and inviting. The intimidating stairs are a barrier. Change programming at museum to make it worth returning. Make it possible and easy to find art and theatre programming on the Anvil Centre website. Presently it only serves those seeking to rent the facilities."
- "Staff are very friendly and helpful. At times, when I am in the area of the Anvil Center, there are people who appear to be intoxicated by alcohol and drugs. Because of this I find that I may not visit the center or the area, particularly at night. If there is an event that i wish to atte nd i do not letbthis stop me. I find I just need to be more aware too ensure thst I feel safe. It would, however, be nice if measures could be put in place to help with this issue. Otherwise, I believe the facility is providing a decent service to the r esidents of New Westminster and surrounding communities.r"
- "Strengths: NMG & LAB, Museums, location downtown. Weaknesses: Austere/unwelcoming, hard to tell what the building is for or if its ok to go in, stark/not creative on the main floor, underutilized"
- "The Anvil is a cold space - all the angles and lines do not jibe nicely with the lovely heritage building and theme of New Westminster; but "what's done is done". It needs lots of plants, and lots of "warm art" to try and make the space less austere. Also, the acoustics are horrible. While sitting in a class, we could hear the choir singing; while listening to the choir, we could hear people on other levels talking and background noises. Very frustratingly, some of the washrooms are locked. As is the entrance on Columbia - having a mobility issue, I have to walk all the way around to

the other entrance. (Why even have a door there if it's constantly not accessible to anyone?). The parking is horrendously expensive."

- "The building feels unfriendly in my opinion because it's very hard and colourless. Bringing in softness and colour would make it feel more inviting. Colourful floor decals, plants, interactive artwork by the community, soft seating, textiles like weaving and 'yarn bombing' and other quirky/fun things would help people relax. I made a Pinterest board of ideas. [HTTPS://ca.pinterest.com/veganyarn/anvil-centre-ideas/](https://ca.pinterest.com/veganyarn/anvil-centre-ideas/)"
- "The building is not that inviting"
- "The centre is very cold and unwelcoming. Having the main floor be conference focused seems counter intuitive for a civic space that wants to be activated. Having private events at the entrance is very disengaging. "
- "The conference rental pricing are out of budget for the event I would like to host at the Anvil Centre. I didn't know 'Hanging out in the building (use the wifi, bathroom, etc.)' was allowed, never see anyone doing that. Doesn't feel welcoming to do so. I'm usually not aware of the Theatre performance, despite being very involved in the community. There have been few events/shows in the last ten years that I've attended, unfortunately, would love to see more there."
- "The facility is fine although seems underused. The New Media gallery is a civic treasure and needs to be supported in any and all ways! More promotion of the museum please not just locally but beyond."
- "The last time I went into the Anvil Centre was over a year ago, when I wanted to purchase a pass for the Q2Q. The lady said they do not sell them anymore and haven't in a long time. I asked her how much it cost to ride, and she did not know. She told me I could ""google it."" This was the last time I went into this building. How useless to be a visitor centre, when your workers don't know anything about the one boat service in the city. There were three workers at the desk, all useless, and not doing anything. Do we really need three desk attendants, when there's no one in the building? Especially when all three could not answer my question? Is this pure ignorance on the workers part, or proof of city councils lack of care and acknowledgement for the residents of Queensborough. The visitor centre in downtown Vancouver knew how much the Granville island ferry cost to ride, and all the stops to hop on it. I was unaware that there were ""things"" in the Anvil Centre. It's so awkward and uninviting to walk into the lobby because it's always empty. It's more welcoming to walk into a Subway restaurant, which normally only has one person working at a time, not three. Now the Anvil Centre is just a secondary building for Douglas College. What a waste of increased property taxes, and the funding that was supposed to be for the pedestrian bridge from the Quay to Port Royal, when most people just remember it as the place where they got their covid shot."
- "The New Media Gallery and Lab are awesome. I'd love to see more art and technology offerings."

- "The New Media Gallery and the LAB is a fantastic resource and exhibition space. I would like to see the LAB expanded with more services offered by Art + Technology division. Especially technology and programming specifically focused on students of secondary school age. An outreach option where by the educational themes and technology can be explored practiced and developed in schools and linked to the LAB would enhance essential learning and encourage a greater ongoing link between the school teachers and students with the New Media Gallery and the LAB."
- "The New Media gallery has vastly improved in the last 18 months. It should be expanded - the Art & Technology division could offer a lot more services. Your survey should have an extremely satisfied option to pick, I am extremely impressed with the creativity and structure of the New Media gallery."
- "The New Media Gallery is an absolutely indispensable part of the Lower Mainland's cultural fabric. Its programming is superb and world-class, and will continue to draw audiences to its venue. I am truly grateful for the work the directors/curators have been doing, and it's fantastic that they've put New Westminster on the map for the international discussions on new media art."
- "The New Media Gallery is an excellent asset for the city and community members. It is relevant, innovative, accessible. The format of the gallery and learning lab are excellent opportunities for learning, connection and community. I'd like to see expanded programming in the Art and Technology Division at The Anvil Centre. "
- "The New Media Gallery is unique and amazing. I bring my family, my friends and my students to visit their one of a kind art exhibitions that put New Westminster in the world map. It is really amazing to have a place like this close to home. I am not familiar with other activities or events at the Anvil Center but I find their facilities excellent. There is always friendly security, information, bathrooms are clean and everything just works. Excellent job everyone !"
- "The New Media Gallery was impressive - I would like to see more of this. I also enjoyed a tour of the lab. I want to do more work with 3d printing, and I want to involve my children with programming in new media and the lab. "
- "The programming at the New Media Gallery is unique within the lower mainland region and I try to see all of the exhibitions, and attend talks and events as regularly as I can. The gallery's programming is very interesting and unique, and is a valuable part of the local art ecosystem."
- "The space needs to become part of the community. As someone who visits the space regularly for art and culture events, there is always a feeling of unease and no belonging in the space. The lobby is not very welcoming and the vibrancy of the fun and art-focused things taking place at Anvil Centre are hidden on the 3rd and 4th floors. This space needs to feel more open to the community. The focus always appears to be on conferences and meetings. It does not feel like a welcoming space for community members and visitors to explore and experience. The front desk feels like a security check in, there is no art in the lobby, there is nothing that

expresses the cultural diversity of our community. It is not a lively and approachable space for the community to enjoy."

- "The staff running the facility and the programs are warm professional, and unmatched in excellence. I enjoy every chance I have to go to Anvil Centre. I would love to see the space used more often. The cost for space rental could be subsidized/lowered, especially for artists/arts events. Although New West might (?) some programs back to the new Aquatic Centre that were at Centennial Centre, it's a shame not to see more Arts & Rec programs/camps/classes being run at Anvil. It feels like there is less after the height of the pandemic. Perhaps an annex of the New West Public Library/alternative space for events. The downtown core is rapidly densifying and has more families in its demographic than 2014 but I am still seeing so many offerings Uptown and in Queensborough. Finally, it would also be a great space to facilitate programming for newcomers. "
- "The theatre and community art gallery are not easily accessible for those with mobility challenges or using wheelchairs. The bridge is very narrow (yes, I know it meets BC specifications), but in actuality it is not easy to push a wheelchair across with people trying to push by you on either side. It's also not comfortable for those who are afraid of heights. (Fortunately, I have usually been able to find a staff person or another guest who has been able to assist me in crossing the bridge, which even so is a terrifying experience.) In the theatre itself, I understand that someone using a wheelchair has to get to the fourth floor and somehow get in to the theatre that way. If there were a fire or other emergency, I suppose the wheelchair occupant has to navigate this trip backwards. Also, washrooms on all floors are not always open and accessible to the public, again another major challenge for seniors and people with mobility challenges and wheelchairs."
- "The theatre offerings are poor. Can you get a wide selection of live music please?"
- "Theater seating very uncomfortable"
- "This is a cold building. When you walk in it is a great empty, echoing space with no indication that this might be something more than an office building with a security guard. I would have hoped for a hopping community centre/hub bustling with activity for people of all ages. Instead I didn't think I should be in there. "
- "touring art or museum shows, install Handrails in the theatre"
- "Urgently needed are handrails along the stairs in the Theatre. Now I will only go to the theatre if I can sit in the front row -- this is not always the best row for specific performances."
- "We really love the art classes at the Anvil Centre for kids. Would also love if there were classes for younger ages (3+). "
- "We've been pushed out of rentals due to other events happening in the basement of the Anvil Centre, which is frustrating given that the theatre is open and unusable during these events/conferences. If it's a shared space, that's great, but don't have two sets of rules. We feel like there could be a more balanced community approach to staffing. Being required to have multiple ushers, who have no idea what's going on and frankly not helpful is frustrating. The lead usher is critical, but like multiple

other community theatres in the lower mainland this could be a volunteer based position or hybrid position. I understand there are larger logistics to these positions and staffing them, but it feels like a money grab for smaller shows. In general it feels like there is a lack of understanding for small community events vs larger scale travelling performances and the needs and capacity required to encourage more performers to access this space. Tickets New West also should have a community dialogue (review), it is a major source of frustration, mainly because it feels like a large tax is levied on a non profitable venture/show. It just hurts local families or the business, whoever decides to take the hit. We want to encourage the arts in our city and this just makes it harder to get more folks out to the show. We love this venue, it's beautiful, it's got all the right technical requirements, the tech staff make it a breeze to perform in. We will continue to book here, we hope in the future it's more flexible and inviting for smaller community performers."

- "Weekday classes after school for kids computer lab. Tinker Cad etc. This is a wonderful place! "
- "When not in use for a conference or banquet, the ground floor of the building needs to have more animation and opportunity for small information gatherings (i.e. lounge furnishings). Right now, there is no reason to want to remain on the ground floor which creates the impression nothing is going on in the building. Locate bistro style tables and chairs outside of the facility during the warm weather months to create spaces for the public to congregate."
- "Would love a library and craft fairs with local arts/crafts/food"
- "Would love to see expanded programs and cultural space for new media gallery. Great space and my only reason for visiting the space from Surrey."

Verbatim Notes: Intercept Surveys

During the week of March 4, 2024, Anvil Centre and Public Engagement staff took to the streets around Anvil Centre to survey New Westminster residents about their familiarity and experiences at Anvil Centre. Staff spoke to many people during the shifts; however, only 58 of them qualified as residents and were able to complete the survey. Below is the input provided by participants, as written by staff.

Q1A. Tell me about a recent experience at Anvil Centre. What did you like? Anything you would change?

- "It's a nice building, the front desk staff were very friendly."
- "Attended a jazz show just last week: 'Tom something'. Would like to see two types of wine."
- "Attended prenatal yoga and baby and mom yoga. Attended a show on retro video games. "
- "Attended yoga-lates, musical theatre. Good experiences."

- "Been to New Media Gallery, plays, and more. Change the wine, there are a lot of inexpensive wines on the market. Always enjoyed the theatre. Would like to see more exhibits in the museum/gallery, more interactivity."
- "Came to a theatre show. Liked: clean facility, nice polite people setting up."
- "Came to the Anvil for the original opening!"
- "Cardio Ballet. Change: more kid friendly events, e.g. parent and kid drop-in workshops; would like to see child minding for class attending. Also suggest bar / snack bar for people on break at work or after work in concession."
- "Catering service was good. Could be cheaper; board meeting client at Anvil."
- "Come to the Anvil on Sundays for Spiritual Solutions (liked it better when it was at Sapperton because they live in Sapperton). The Anvil is a nice building."
- "Covid shot, good experience. Gone to the museum."
- "Covid shot, it was well run."
- "Covid vaccination and bridal show. Likes: friendly staff. Don't like modern architecture, so that's not really my thing. Didn't know the museum was free."
- "Covid vaccination, good experience."
- "Covid vaccination, great experience."
- "Covid vaccination. Would love to see ballet."
- "For vaccine; very organized."
- "High ceilings, big open windows, welcoming space; came for an art opening."
- "Immunization clinic; don't know what's in there; community restaurant, café."
- "It was good! Attended a dance event. Nice facility, good acoustics."
- "Job fair."
- "Meetings in the Anvil board rooms; I work with the Massy Theatre. Attended a talk on old houses of New West. Bought a shirt from an artist through the Anvil Centre."
- "Museum being free, kinda small. No other experiences."
- "Museum visit. Liked it; will come back."
- "New Media Gallery opening: it's perfect. Staff at desk didn't know about it; need more knowledge. Seen lots of theatre shows. Mondays aren't good."
- "NMG classes for kids. Would change: want to have more variety (class type), class times, e.g. after school. Busy mom, can't always attend, also they fill up fast, and there aren't enough options for recreation in this city."
- "No art on the windows. Aware of art gallery. Hearing lots of complaints in the community – too expensive to rent for artists."
- "Saw community art space exhibition. Change: lack of advertising. Suggest posters at River Market, because I don't really go many places outside of the Quay. "
- "Saw Hey Viola in theatre, and coastal dance performance. The chairs could be more comfortable in the auditorium; they are not suited for larger bodies. Could use more signage and information. The facilities are very nice. Have used the conference venue a couple times and had flawless experience voting and getting vaccinated. No bad vibes."
- "Theatre - classical music concert."
- "Theatre show. Liked: beautiful building and tour."

- "Visited for the Hong Kong Fair and loved it."
- "Visited when it was first built, and for covid vaccination. Like: beautiful building."

Q2A. Anvil's Tag line is "Where Culture, Community, and Commerce meet." How have your experiences at Anvil Centre lined up with these three areas? (Asked to those who answered 'yes' to Q1)

- "Culture and community."
- "Culture and community, family events, the phrase encompasses it."
- "Culture and community, not commerce."
- "Culture only. Also got vaccinated and had a good experience."
- "I don't see the commerce. Yes to community/culture."
- "Just the community part."
- "Like culture part, curious about the theatre; want movie nights (retro cinema)."
- "Like the theatre and museum. More immunization clinics."
- "Lines up."
- "Lines up, but feel like there is still lack of info about the Anvil. I like that the Anvil offers niche experiences."
- "Matches up."
- "No opinion on the tag line."
- "No opinion on the tag line."
- "No thoughts."
- "No thoughts."
- "No thoughts."
- "Not aligned with commerce for me; does it make money? Culture is good. Programming needs promotion, more information."
- "Not sure. I like the conference events; would like to visit the theatre."
- "Only visited museum and theatre; no other context. No thoughts on this."
- "Otherwise no; not really aware of the community center."
- "Relate most to community; and I'm planning to go more."
- "Seems it's not fitting the tag line because the building feels empty, even though things may be happening on other floors upstairs."
- "That sounds appropriate for the space and totally right."
- "Yes, culture and community through the meetings. People who attend NA often end up contributing to the economy and contribute to commerce."
- "Yes. Good meeting spot."
- "Zero alignment; better advertising needed. Needs a cafeteria (cheap), pool, gym."

Q1B. What is keeping you from visiting Anvil Centre? (Asked to those who answered 'no' to Q1)

- "Accessibility need: visual impairment. No idea what it is."

- "Aware of it but have not been. Not feeling welcome. Business is too opulent."
- "Busy with childcare/family."
- "Didn't know about other offerings available."
- "Don't know of events happening; lack of marketing."
- "Don't know what you offer."
- "Have not had a chance; busy with two young kids."
- "Haven't returned due to a lack of advertisement for activities for the 20-30 age range."
- "Have no need for it; lacking info."
- "Heard about it, but haven't visited."
- "Immunization clinic; aware of Lacrosse Hall of Fame."
- "Just heard about it from the newspaper."
- "Lack of information about it in my life."
- "Lack of information, and don't really know what it is. Would like to see a large digital billboard out front, facing the skytrain. Would like the Anvil to be the new swimming pool."
- "New resident around 6 months; still exploring the city, but I've heard of it."
- "New resident, haven't had time to explore much. Don't know what you offer."
- "No free / cheap events. I'm a student with a low budget. No reason or draw to come in / don't care to."
- "No idea what it is. Lived here for a year."
- "No reason to go."
- "No reason to go in; no idea what's in there."
- "Not aware; never been. What's in it?"
- "Not very social, so there's no draw to come in again."
- "I thought the only classes are for kids or seniors. Also, I have three kids and I'm very busy."
- "Too busy."
- "We don't use the internet and we're not interested in anything too late in the evening."

Q2B. Is there anything that could change to encourage you to visit Anvil Centre more often? (Asked to those who answered 'no' to Q1)

- "A more updated website."
- "Spiritual Sundays at the Anvil, and engaging in community there has been important to my personal recovery."
- "Awareness. Tell us what's in it!"
- "Ballet shows. Would look in New West Record or on River Market community board for events."
- "Clean up the neighbourhood (homelessness/drugs)."
- "I don't know what's there for accessibility needs."

- "Give me a reason – free beer/old times of New West bars/fraternity. Maybe visit the Museum. More indigenous representation."
- "It's a little too out of the way; prefer Century House."
- "It's just not top of mind."
- "Jazz. Free yoga drop ins."
- "More family classes / events for young kids. I could not sign up for yoga because there were no classes available for kids and parents yoga (not baby yoga)."
- "More promotion."
- "More stuff to do in there. More awareness of what's in there."
- "It's not built for people in the local downtown. Poor land use for local residents."
- "Postings on social media. I search the web for events. Would like to see posters."
- "Seniors' activities. We don't go to Century House because we find the community too old. Preferred age range 70s; more age-specific activities."
- "Suggest having posters. I didn't notice the screens or signs saying what's inside."
- "Social media posting. Art drop-ins like painting. Drop-ins are low commitment. Music workshops."
- "Ask Douglas College clubs, like they have board games / other clubs, to host or come in. Also would like to see more movie nights, and free / cheap student events."
- "Update the website."
- "Grew up going to youth hub. Would like to see more social media."
- "What's inside? Where do I learn about it? More communication needed."
- "Will come now that I know about it."
- "Would come in if there were free events such as music, standup comedy, wellness (yoga/meditation). I follow some Instagram accounts, so would likely come in if they posted about events."
- "Would like to see an 'Ikea kitchen' or cafeteria for people to gather around food."
- "Would like to see more family-friendly events."
- "Would like to see sit-down coffee spots; the space seems office-like. It does seem populated, though. "