



Island Arts Centre Society

100 Jackson Avenue

Salt Spring Island

British Columbia V8K 2V8

Office: 250.537.2125

Box Office: 250.537.2102

1.866.537.2102

Capital Regional District

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One-Time Special Budget Allocation – ArtSpring Water Main Infrastructure Replacement

Request

ArtSpring respectfully requests that the Capital Regional District provide a **one-time special budget allocation of \$26,000** to support the emergency replacement of the facility's water main infrastructure and the restoration of the parking lot following excavation.

This request represents an opportunity for the CRD to join an extraordinary community partnership that has come together to protect one of Salt Spring Island's most important public and cultural facilities.

Background

In April 2026, ArtSpring experienced a critical failure of the water main serving the building. The leak escalated rapidly, causing erosion beneath the parking lot, creating sinkholes and compromising the stability of the site.

Following an assessment by North Salt Spring Waterworks, it was determined that the original municipal water service had reached the end of its operational life and required complete replacement. Temporary repairs were no longer a practical or responsible option.

Recognizing the urgency of the situation, the Board of Directors approved proceeding immediately with the project to protect the building, ensure public safety, and avoid disruption to the hundreds of performances, community events, educational activities and rentals that take place at ArtSpring each year.

The work was completed between **June 8–10, 2026**. During excavation, more extensive deterioration than anticipated was uncovered, requiring additional equipment, labour and infrastructure work. The project ultimately resulted in the complete replacement of the water main, providing a one-year warranty and an anticipated service life of **20–30 years**.

The final phase of the project is the restoration and repaving of the parking lot affected by the excavation.

Why This Project Matters

This project represented an **emergent need** because the failure of ArtSpring's water main infrastructure posed an immediate risk to the continued operation of the facility.

The active leak and deteriorating underground infrastructure threatened reliable water service, public safety, and the stability of the parking area. Delaying repairs would have resulted in increasing infrastructure damage, escalating repair costs, operational disruption, and potentially the temporary closure of one of Salt Spring Island's most important community gathering places.

Compounding the challenge, this infrastructure failure was **not covered by ArtSpring's insurance**, creating a significant and entirely unbudgeted financial obligation.

Immediate action was essential.

Building Stewardship and Long-Term Planning

ArtSpring has consistently taken a responsible and proactive approach to the stewardship of its facility. In 2021, with support from the Capital Regional District, a comprehensive **Building Condition Assessment and Lifecycle Plan** was completed to identify the anticipated capital maintenance and replacement needs of the building and grounds over the next twenty years.

Notably, the assessment did **not** identify the water main infrastructure as an area of concern or as requiring replacement within the planning horizon. The sudden failure of the water main was therefore both unexpected and unforeseeable, reinforcing the emergent nature of this project. While ArtSpring has diligently planned for known lifecycle requirements, this critical infrastructure failure fell outside those projections and required immediate action to protect the facility and maintain uninterrupted community access.

A Vital Community Asset

ArtSpring is far more than a performing arts venue.

It is a regional community asset serving residents throughout Salt Spring Island and the Southern Gulf Islands through professional performances, community theatre, youth and school programs, visual arts exhibitions, workshops, public meetings, community celebrations and facility rentals.

Thousands of residents use ArtSpring every year. Reliable water infrastructure is fundamental to keeping the building open, safe and accessible for everyone who depends upon it.

Protecting ArtSpring means protecting an essential piece of community infrastructure.\

A Community Partnership

The response to this emergency has demonstrated the remarkable commitment of our community to preserving ArtSpring.

The **Salt Spring Foundation** has committed **\$15,000** through its **Emergent Needs Program**, recognizing both the urgency of the project and ArtSpring's importance as a community asset.

The **Y.P. Heung Foundation** has also committed **\$15,000**, reflecting its longstanding commitment to ArtSpring and its recognition of the importance of reliable water infrastructure on Salt Spring Island.

Together, these two community foundations have already invested **\$30,000** toward this project.

Their support sends a clear message that this is not simply a building repair—it is an investment in preserving an essential public facility for the entire community.

ArtSpring has requested support from the Co-Owners of the Parking lot.

ArtSpring will contribute up to \$10,000 from its own reserves.

ArtSpring has also explored every available funding avenue, including insurance coverage, which unfortunately does not apply, and other government infrastructure programs for which the project is not eligible.

Why the CRD

The Capital Regional District has long recognized ArtSpring's value through the Salt Spring Island Arts and Culture Service and annual property tax support for facility maintenance.

This request is different.

The water main failure represents an extraordinary and unforeseen infrastructure emergency—one that falls well outside the scope of normal operating and maintenance budgets.

By providing a one-time special budget allocation, the CRD would become the final partner in a collaborative community effort that has already attracted substantial philanthropic support.

This is an opportunity to leverage significant community investment while ensuring that an essential public facility remains safe, operational and resilient for decades to come.

Request

The CRD's investment in the 2021 Building Condition Assessment reflected a shared commitment to the long-term stewardship of ArtSpring. This request builds on that partnership by addressing an unforeseen infrastructure failure that could not reasonably have been anticipated through the lifecycle planning process

ArtSpring respectfully requests a **one-time special budget allocation of \$26,000** toward the cost of the completed water main replacement project and the restoration of the parking lot.

Together with the commitments already made by the Salt Spring Foundation and the Y.P. Heung Foundation, the CRD has an opportunity to complete a true community partnership—one that protects critical infrastructure, preserves an important public asset, and demonstrates a shared commitment to the cultural and civic life of Salt Spring Island.

The completed water main replacement has secured ArtSpring's water supply for the next 20–30 years. With the final restoration work completed, the community will benefit from a safe, reliable, and fully restored facility that continues to welcome thousands of residents, visitors, artists, students and community organizations every year.

We are deeply grateful for the CRD's longstanding partnership with ArtSpring and respectfully ask for your support in helping bring this important project to completion.