

Foundry Advisory Committee

2023 Presentation to the CRA Board

November 15, 2023 5:30 pm

FAC Members

- **Lauren O’Neal** (term ends 11/08/24)
- **Sangeeta Prasad** (term ends 11/08/24)
- **Connie Chin** (term ends 02/12/26)
- **Rubén Mancha** (term ends 02/12/26)
- **Barbara Thomas** (term ends 02/12/26)
- **Jameson Johnson** (term ends 07/31/26)



Scratch Foundation hosts Scratch Day- a day of coding for kids

FAC Mission

The Foundry Advisory Committee advises the City and CRA on diverse areas including refining the types of uses to be fostered and reviewing capital changes as relevant. Recommendations are to be based on community needs and context. FAC members will consider information from the City Council, City Manager, and information gathered via community outreach activities conducted for the Foundry or for other efforts as available, hold public meetings at least annually to provide information and opportunity for public input and annually update the CRA Board at a public meeting.

- FAC Activities may include:

- Continuing to hold quarterly meetings
- Providing feedback on annual business plan and operating budget
- Reviewing annual performance measurement data and related feedback or recommendations
- Participating in programs at the Foundry to observe operations firsthand
- Helping to connect Foundry staff to relevant funders and community groups as useful

FAC Role

- To understand the use of resources such as budget and space, the FAC requests to review data key to community and city
- The FAC's role is to understand and comment on the Foundry's delivery of its mission to the community
- The FAC supports the Foundry with ideas and suggestions, and advocates for the community's interests



The Click hosts their "Refract and Reframe" dance performance

An Evolving Role

- The Foundry has evolved from design and construction to operating a multidimensional facility for our community
- The Foundry Consortium is a nonprofit organization with its own board of directors that oversees the Foundry's operations, separate from the FAC
- FAC's role, focus, and meeting structures will continue to evolve as the Foundry matures and meets its goal of becoming a community jewel

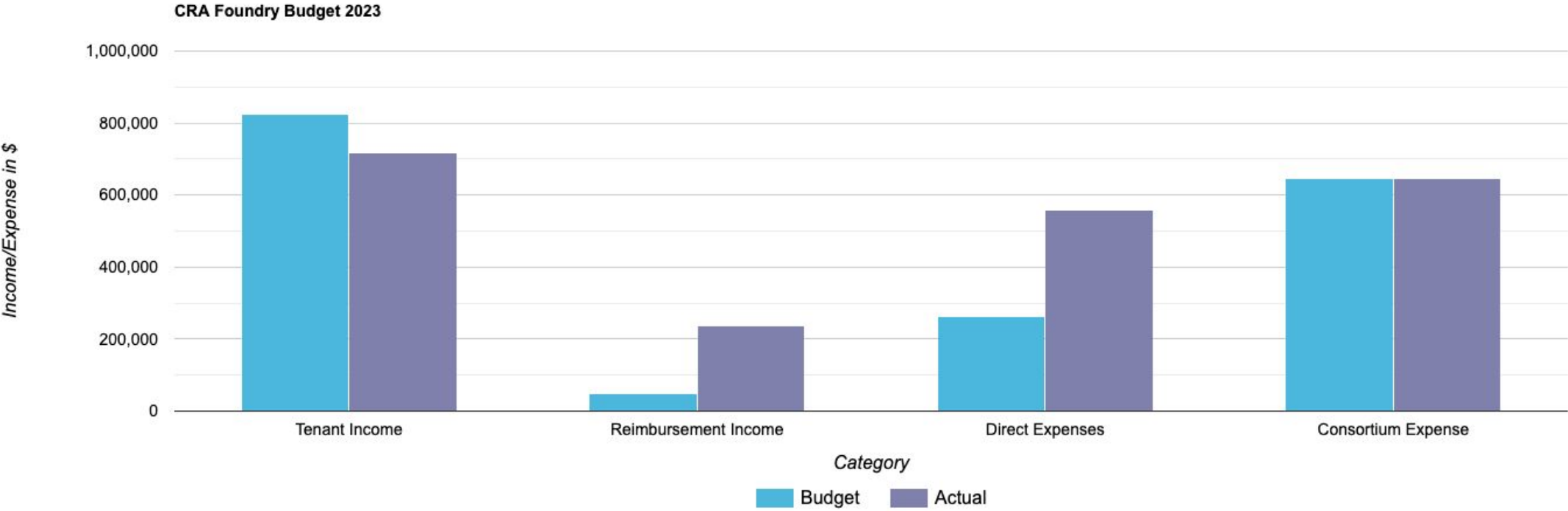
FAC 2022-23 Discussion Topics Summary

- **Financial**
 - Status of commercial occupancy
 - Reverse sliding scale for rentals, ie. higher rates for large private corporations or organizations use of facilities
- **Programming**
- **Access and Usage**
 - Transit access and no parking
 - Usage data categories and collection
 - New booking software that tracks usage
 - Opening on Sunday as a 7th open day of the week
- **Volunteer program**

The background features a series of concentric circles in light gray, some solid and some dashed, creating a ripple effect. A prominent red callout box is centered on the page, containing the text "Budget Overview".

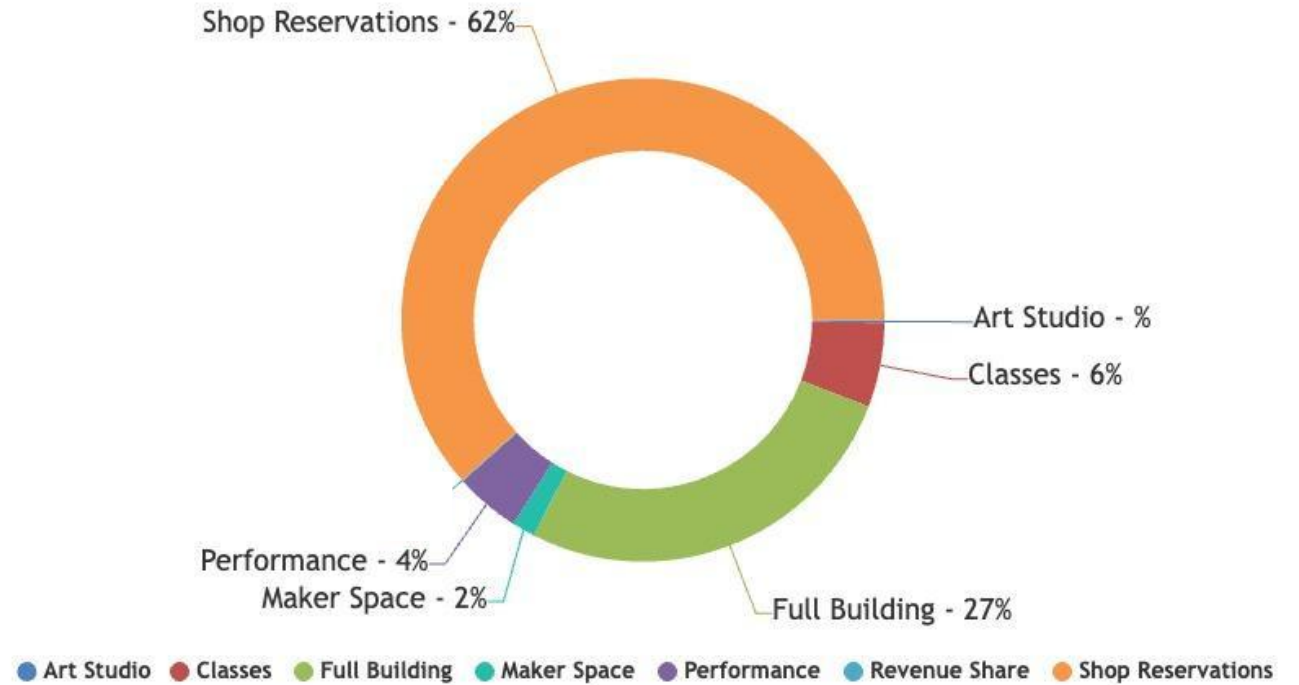
Budget Overview

CRA Foundry 2023 Budget vs. Actuals



Foundry Community Space Revenue 2023

Foundry Community Space Revenue 2023



A large red speech bubble graphic with a white outline, pointing downwards. The text "Program Data" is centered inside the bubble in white. The background features a pattern of concentric circles and arcs in light gray and white, some solid and some dashed.

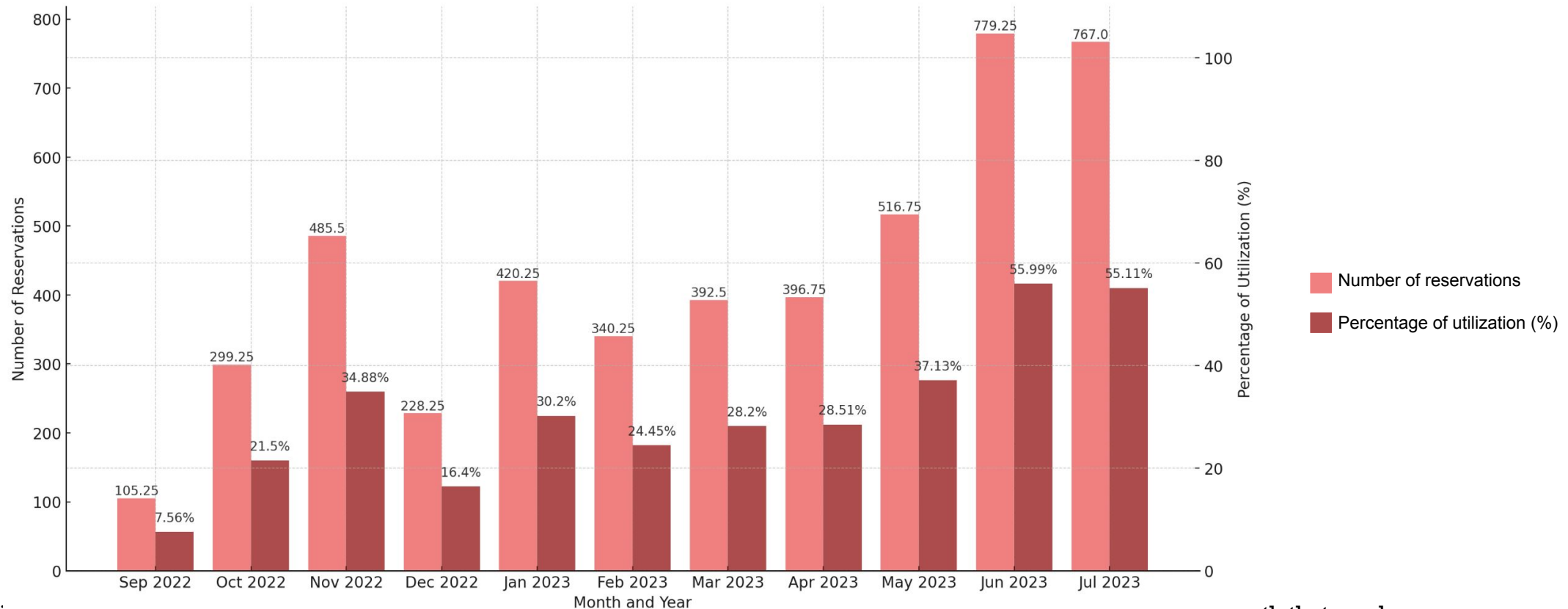
Program Data

Alignment of Mission and Programming

- The current approach to managing the facilities seeks to maximize space utilization and revenue. Is the current approach to programming considering what the Cambridge community wants?
- 43% of documented reservations are linked to Cambridge (unclear if both work and residential addresses in Cambridge are accepted).
- 307 individual reservations between Sept 2022-July 2023 (vs 1318 group reservations for that same period).
- We do not have data on the individuals participating in each program (number or demographics).
- Dance and black box theater account for the highest reservations booked
- Limited programming related to science, technology, and entrepreneurship (for example, “workforce development” events represented less than 1% of hours between Sept 2022- July 2023, and the focus of these reservations is not known)

Space Utilization

Utilization remains low & unbalanced for some spaces but usage trending upwards over the past 12 months

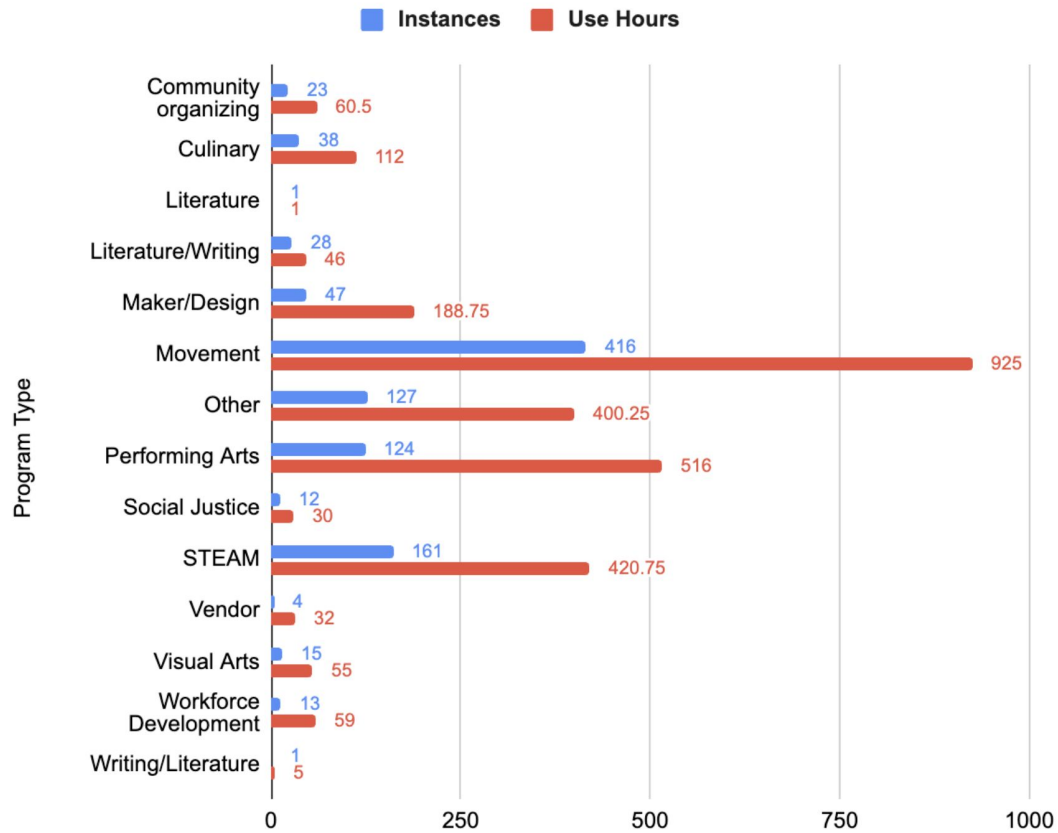


*Estimated space utilization is based on the number of reservations for the period and the number of spaces that can be reserved (the building opens approx. 252 hours per month and there are 15 spaces that can be reserved, according to the latest dataset provided to the FAC and the hours of operation listed on the website). This estimate does not take into account that some spaces may allow for more than one user/group of users to hold a reservation for the same space at once or that some reservations may be multi-space. Reservations for the period average 2 hours and 43 min.

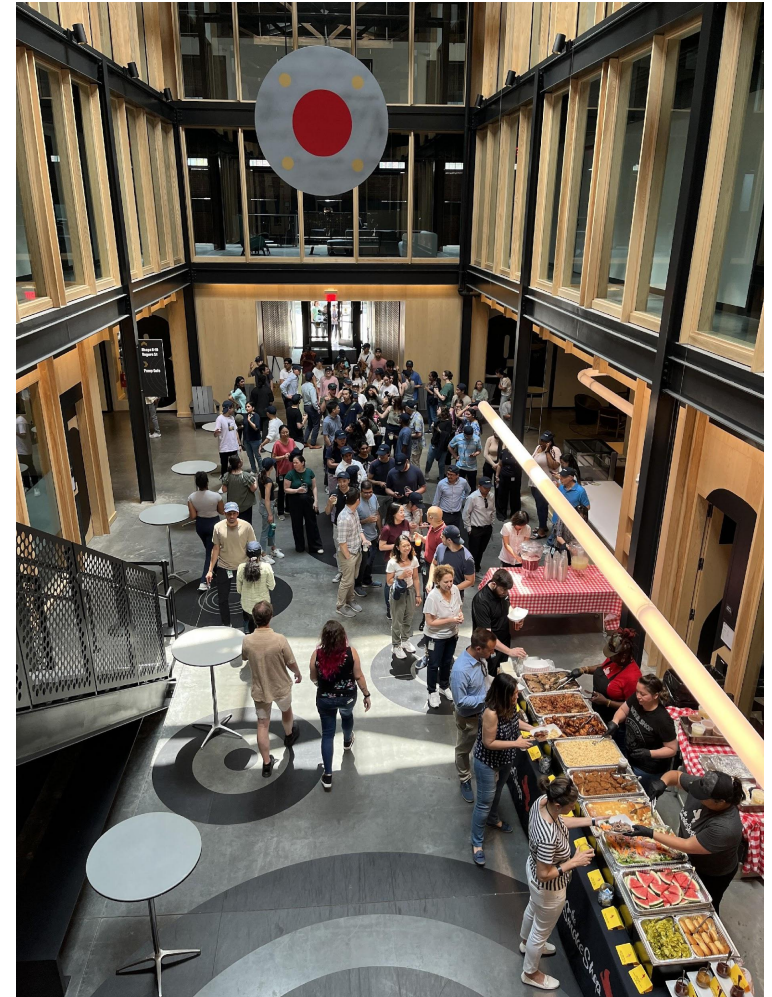
Utilization by Reservation Type

Data representing reservations by type between January and June 2023

Program Types



Movement reservations are the highest utilized while literature/writing has the lowest.



Merck and Co, Inc. rented the building for a corporate event

Activity in the Foundry

Food Lab



Broken Cup Teahouse hosts a tea tasting

STEAM Set



Olin College of Engineering hosts STEM Slam, a night of community poetry among students and youth

Wood Shop



Sixth graders from CCSC work on small projects in the woodshop

Multipurpose Room 4



A weekly guitar class by Eliot Fisk Guitar Academy



Looking Ahead to 2024

Recommendations for CRA / Foundry Staff

- **Open the Foundry on Sundays (in addition to Monday through Saturday)**
 - The CRA staff has proposed to increase its 2024 Consortium Facilities & Operations draft budget from \$664,632 to \$775,000 partially in response to the FAC's recommendation.
- **Reduce the tax liability on the building in order to help fund Sunday operations.**
- **Find ways to sustainably replenish the CRA's operating reserves that were drawn down to fund the increase.**
- **When hiring new staff, fill any skills gaps that may exist such as expertise in STEM and senior programming.**
- **Increase CRA and Foundry Consortium resources/personnel to revamp data gathering and analysis efforts.**

Recommendations for FAC Committee

- Research additional channels for generating direct/formal community feedback (in-person meetings vs. surveys vs. offsite meetings with strategic partners) then develop a plan for gathering the feedback.
- FAC and CRA to align and set protocols on the way our meetings are run, agendas are set, recommendations are received, and how we communicate with staff.



Students participating in a program by Lemelson-MIT demonstrate prototypes of their inventions



CircusUp Kirkos Youth Troupe performs in the Community Hall as part of the February Festival



Thank You!