



Additional information about the Torpedo Factory Artists' campaign:

After the failure of a five year nonprofit board (the TFACB), the City has cancelled its long-standing lease with the Torpedo Factory Artists' Association (TFAA). With the intent of guaranteeing the future of the Art Center, the City issued three year leases to the individual artists, and transitioned employees of the non-profit board to City of Alexandria Office of the Arts employees.

Unfortunately, in the [seven months since this announcement](#), the City has given no plan for what it intends to do during this interim time. With no immediate vision or management, and no long-term direction after the current leases end, many artists are feeling there is no long term future in the Torpedo Factory.

The City has taken control of several prime gallery spaces on the first floor. These spaces are underused and often closed, including the gift shop, which has had no weekend staffing and dwindling inventory. Artists are very excited about the new [Eats Place Café](#) (first announced in February), but slow City lease turnaround and procedural backlog has kept the space empty for months.

The stifling of artist programs and meetings, lack of communication about building activities and rentals, and refusal to encourage and market artist events leave the Artists struggling to maintain the expected high standard of excellence for their customers and community. The City is needlessly investing hundreds of thousands of dollars to enable short term City management, while mismanaging artist tenants and ignoring major issues.

Running and managing a complex art center like the Torpedo Factory takes a lot of time, effort, and experience. The City of Alexandria Office of the Arts is not prepared to manage the Art Center in a way that best serves both public visitors and the artists. Torpedo Factory Artists have been slowly moved from founder and innovator, to partner, to untrusted tenant.

After years of a failed nonprofit board, there simply is not time for an understaffed City department to slowly figure out management by trial and error. Without a vision and management plan, the Art Center will fail. Artists who have contributed to the creative economy for decades will be forced to find other locations or municipalities that better support their business. The draw of the Torpedo Factory as a vibrant art center providing a unique experience will fade. With a location just a few miles from some of the world's best free art museums and cultural institutions, the City of Alexandria cannot afford to let the Torpedo Factory be the next [Artisphere](#) or [Corcoran](#) or [Union Arts](#).

The constant reassurance was that this situation is only temporary, until Torpedo Factory Art Center management can be turned over to a new managing entity. Last year, the Artists invested time and resources into hiring a local [Alexandria consulting group](#) to develop [a plan](#) for an artist focused, artist run, art center. [This plan](#), released on September 9, 2016, provides for an independent, active, and inclusive arts marketplace.

The Artists, ready and willing to be the new managing entity, are the only group with a self-sustaining [comprehensive plan](#), and the experience of management. A declining Torpedo Factory impacts every business in Old Town and the reputation of the City of Alexandria. Please continue to encourage City Council that artists, not bureaucracy, should lead the creative future of Alexandria. We invite you to join us on December 17 at the [City Council Public Hearing](#). Torpedo Factory Artist buttons will be available.

