



City of  
**Peterborough**

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**To:** Arts, Culture & Heritage Advisory Committee

**From:** Becky Rogers, Manager, Arts, Culture & Heritage Division

**Meeting Date:** January 14, 2016

**Subject:** Report ACHAC16-003  
Submissions to the Province's Culture Strategy

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## **Purpose**

A report to inform the Arts, Culture & Heritage Advisory Committee on the City and ACHAC submissions to the Province's Culture Strategy.

## **Recommendation**

That the Arts, Culture & Heritage Advisory Committee approve the recommendation outlined in Report ACHAC16-003 dated January 14, 2016, of the Manager, Arts, Culture & Heritage Division, as follows:

That the Arts, Culture & Heritage Advisory Committee receive the Report for Information.

## **Budget and Financial Implications**

There are no budget or financial implications at this time.

## **Background**

On September 24, 2015, the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (MTCS), formally launched public consultations regarding the development of the Province's first *Ontario Culture Strategy*. This culture strategy will serve as a guide for future government support for the cultural sector, through the principles and priorities identified through the public consultation. From October through December, people in Ontario had the opportunity to participate in the consultation in various ways.

Both the Arts, Culture & Heritage Advisory Committee and Division staff made written submissions to the Province. They are attached in Appendix A.

Submitted by,

Becky Rogers  
Manager, Arts, Culture and Heritage Division

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Attachments:  
Appendix A – Position Paper submitted by ACHAC

**Appendix A**  
**Arts, Culture & Heritage Advisory Committee:**

The Honourable Michael Coteau  
Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport  
Queen's Park, Toronto

Dear Minister Coteau

Please find enclosed a position paper from the City of Peterborough's Arts, Culture and Heritage Advisory Committee regarding the province's proposed Strategic Culture plan. The Committee applauds the province for undertaking this important initiative and welcomes the opportunity to provide our comments as the new plan is being formulated. The committee looks forward to an ongoing discussion with ministry staff and stakeholders as the process for crafting a final plan for Ontario moves forward.

Yours truly  
Dennis  
Dennis Carter-Edwards  
Chair,  
Arts, Culture and Heritage Advisory Committee

cc. the Hon. Jeff Leal  
the Hon. Maryam Monsef

Discussion Questions:

**What does culture mean to you and your community?**

The term "culture" encompasses a full range of cultural activities such as the performing arts as well as the cultural traditions and expressions of different ethnic communities and First Nations of Ontario. The City of Peterborough's Municipal Cultural Plan (2012) defines "culture" as follows: "Culture in Peterborough consists of more than just artists and major cultural facilities. It also includes the city's built and natural heritage, festivals and events, sports and recreation, local customs, oral histories, and much more. Therefore, the MCP uses a broad understanding of "culture" for Peterborough, which includes common values, a sense of place, lifestyle choices, creative activity, the products generated by artists and entrepreneurs, and the communities and places where opportunities to exchange and express cultural values exist." (p.49)

**What is the greatest cultural experience you have had in Ontario? What made it great?**

Question is suited to individual responses

**How do you and members of your household participate in culture?**

Question is suited to individual responses

**How can we strengthen and grow the culture sector in Ontario so that it continues to contribute to our social and economic well being?**

An important consideration in strengthening the cultural sector in Ontario is to be mindful of the changing demographics, particularly the aging population. This is especially important in Peterborough which has one of the highest percentages of seniors in the country. Accessibility for challenged individuals is critical. Apart from physical aids such as ramps, large print, audio tapes, etc, training in best practices for providing programs for children, youth, adults and seniors with a range of special needs and accessibility challenges is necessary. This would provide the many populations with first-rate opportunities to learn, grow, and prosper through inspiring cultural experiences and institutional programming.

In addition to accommodating the “consumers” of culture, the province must consider the various means at its disposal to assist the “producers” of culture, through tax measures to help write down expenses, training, etc. Current programs that provide for artists, playwrights and musicians to bring their talents into the classroom should be enhanced through such agencies as the Ontario Arts Council. Support for Ontario’s growing film industry should also be considered.

Ontario can help grow the culture sector through an active program of boosting cultural tourism, especially within international markets. Ontario has many unique cultural attractions, especially the rich First Nations cultural expressions that can be promoted on an international scale. The creation of a special agency, (Creative Ontario as an example), to market and promote Ontario’s share of the cultural tourism market would help. In addition, this Creative Ontario Agency could communicate the good news stories about the province’s successes in promoting the “creative economy”, co-ordinate funding to support the arts, film, video, writing, etc and open new opportunities and markets both within and beyond Ontario’s borders.

One of the province’s recent initiatives to help communities develop municipal Cultural Plans is an important tool to help communities assess their strengths, identify their needs and build partnerships to enhance their offer of cultural experiences. A follow up program to evaluate the outcomes of MCP’s and review how they are assisting communities would be beneficial.

**How can we inspire more youth to create and participate in Ontario culture?**

The province can take a number of steps to achieve this objective. Ensuring a significant component in the school curriculum for cultural programs and study is an important element in any province wide strategy. The province can also strengthen the cultural sector by providing more resources (both human and financial) to the many provincially operated sites to enhance opportunities for youth to experience cultural programs. The positive experiences that youth have with culture can build an appreciation that will continue through their adult life.

Both Elementary and Secondary Schools are important settings to get youth involved in the creation and appreciation of art. There are a wide range of projects that could be shared amongst school groups, whether it is sidewalk chalk art initiatives, the traditional Christmas art in storefront windows or other forms of public art. Sharing best practices could help with promotion and inspiring youth. This could be linked to the mandatory 40 hours of community service that is required in order to graduate.

The province can help facilitate bringing school groups to arts programs such as theatre productions and art shows, by subsidizing travel. This is especially the case in Northern Ontario where travel costs are prohibitive. Additional funding for the OAC and programs such as MASC would support the objective of getting more youth involved in culture. There is merit in having more fine arts programs at the College and University level to enhance and support the many talented individuals looking for careers in the cultural sector of the economy.

School and Public Libraries are becoming important centres for cultural programming. Many youth get their first experience of “culture” through reading programs, craft programs and other similar activities at their local library. There is a wide spectrum of initiatives that can be run through the library system. This also applies to the school libraries which are too often underfunded and understaffed. It would be worth examining how Elementary and Secondary school libraries are being utilized and perhaps make them neighbourhood hubs for broader use. As an example the Public library in Peterborough is a centre for New Canadians with programs and resources to support them.

### **How can we help ensure that support for culture reflects Ontario’s diverse regions, communities and populations?**

The province can take a twofold approach towards supporting the diversity of cultural expressions and opportunities in Ontario. The province has a direct role to play in the material support it provides to various organizations and groups. Sustainable, adequate funding is important to ensure the viability and success of institutions such as the Royal Ontario Museum, the AGO, etc. The province can also assist in helping organizations and cultural communities create partnerships amongst themselves or with private sector funding agencies and businesses to help sustain and grow their programs.

Ontario has a wealth of creative talent that sustains the culture sector of our economy. The province can support this talent base by encouraging a wider sharing of culture “producers” with other parts of Ontario. For example, Northern Ontario Aboriginal artists could bring their unique experiences and expressions to an audience in Southern Ontario. The notion of a cultural exchange within Ontario has merit.

Ontario’s diversity enriches our collective cultural expressions. The province could enhance this wonderful asset by looking at a twinning program that would support communities linking with other international centres for mutual benefit. For example, Peterborough’s strong Irish heritage could be enhanced with a twinning with Cork Ireland where many of the early Irish settlers to the Kawarthas came from. The opportunities for economic benefits from such exchanges go beyond the cultural sector and would provide a forum for other business opportunities.

### **How can we help the culture sector respond to digital challenges and opportunities?**

One of the challenges posed by the digital revolution reflects a need to preserve our documentary heritage. Helping archival institutions and agencies to preserve and digitize their archival holdings is vital to the retention of the corporate knowledge of our province.

The province can help the culture sector by either sponsoring or facilitating activities like promoting on line gallery experiences. This is an especially important digital cultural experience opportunity for communities in northern Ontario to see local art.

The province needs to look at helping local art galleries to digitize their collections.

The province needs to provide support through a variety of measures to help local artists who are creating digital art or companies that are producing digital art programs, software, games, etc.

It is also important to consider the impact of the digital revolution on libraries. Is there a need to support libraries in digitizing collections, offering more digital resources?

**In a time of scarce resources, what key cultural priorities should the Ontario Government support? How can your organization work in partnership with the government to support these priorities?**

Sound planning through municipal Cultural Plans, collaboration amongst like minded groups and partnership building capacity should all be priorities for the province to meet its culture objectives and to assist communities in reaching their full culture potential.

The province should consider if there are next steps in the whole cultural planning cycle beyond just preparing the plan but assessing how effective they have been in achieving their objectives. Another round of community consultations focusing on good planning and outcome evaluations would be helpful. As an incentive, the province could tie funding for cultural programs to sound planning. Communities that have prepared MCP's and done follow up evaluations could take priority in terms of grants.

The City of Peterborough is fortunate to have the Canadian Canoe Museum as one of its major cultural attractions. The museum's board and staff have developed a realistic and carefully thought out plan to relocate from its current landlocked location to a waterside location. A move to a new facility with water access will offer opportunities for extensive programming from a world class architectural structure. This new facility will no doubt elevate the Museum's position in the international cultural tourism marketplace and add to Ontario's economic growth. Nevertheless, to achieve this worthwhile and meaningful endeavour, strong support from all levels of government will no doubt be welcomed.

**Do the guiding principles on page 9 reflect what is important to you? Are there others we should consider?**

In our view, we consider the current principles valid and we have added to the section "Diversity and Inclusiveness", see below.

***Creativity and innovation***

*Culture exposes us to new ideas, inspires new ways of thinking, and fosters creativity and innovation. Support for culture should help enrich our lives, animate our communities, and build a dynamic business environment in Ontario.*

***Quality of life and economic development***

*Culture contributes significantly to both quality of life and economic development in Ontario. Support for culture should maximize both the social and economic benefits of culture for individuals and communities.*

***Diversity and inclusiveness***

There is a need to have new Canadians see themselves and their culture and experiences reflected in life to give hope to youth.

It is important to stress the notion of Ontario being a cultural mosaic. We draw strength from our diversity and should support programs that reflect this.

Ontario's rich diversity is one of our province's greatest strengths. People in all parts of Ontario, and from all of our communities, broadly defined, should have the opportunity to enjoy and benefit from cultural experiences according to their individual interests and abilities.

***Respect for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples***

*First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives on culture and heritage represent distinct identities, histories, and ways of life. Ontario is committed to strengthening and transforming its relationship with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, and to implementing changes that reflect First Nations, Métis, and Inuit priorities.*

***Public value and accountability***

*Government investment in culture will be guided by what Ontarians value and what makes a positive difference in the lives of individuals and communities. The Ministry, its agencies, and the organizations that receive funding through us are accountable for achieving the best possible outcomes within available resources.*

**What is the Ontario Government doing well to support the arts, cultural industries, public libraries and cultural heritage sectors? What would you like to see changed? Are there best practices that Ontario could learn from and adapt?**

The new provincial policy mandating that schools make space available to community groups for minimal costs is a good step in encouraging schools to be seen as a neighbourhood centre. The province could explore ways of expanding this policy and make other provincial offices available at minimal cost, such as renting out board rooms.

As the province reviews the whole gaming program through new outlets and private sector operators, consider having lotteries that support cultural sectors. Originally, Wintario was designed to support cultural programs. The whole gaming enterprise should be reviewed in light of supporting Ontario's Culture Strategy.

The Ontario Heritage Act makes provision for the province to designate provincially significant properties. The province should be more proactive in identifying and designating provincially significant buildings that are at risk. A particular category of buildings – religious structures, especially historic church buildings – are under threat. There is an opportunity for the province to look at how church buildings can be repurposed. A special task force to examine the Places to Worship challenge would be a valuable step in crafting a province wide program to identify threatened buildings, set criteria for prioritizing cultural value and ranking the buildings for alternative uses.

The province should consider supporting Colleges and Universities in offering credit level courses designed to bring a higher degree of knowledge and professional skill to the field of historic building preservation and adaptive reuse. By investing in this form of education, the province would help ensure a critical mass of expertise and public support for the appropriate commemoration of our built heritage.

The Places to Grow planning document is currently under review. A new iteration of the province wide land use planning document could incorporate cultural considerations; if the intent is to have intensification in existing urban cores, residents in the urban concentrations will require a wide range of services and cultural opportunities to add to their quality of life.

City beautification programs and philosophy, including public art and its contribution to the overall quality of life in our urban settings, should underlie public works like bridges and sidewalks. In the past, this approach to urban planning brought great dividends and should be re-examined in light of our pressing infrastructure requirements.

The province could call for a symposium on public art to enable various jurisdictions to share best practices and help encourage municipal Public Works departments and the private sector, especially businesses, to think about public art as an integral part of their daily work.

## Division Submission

6 January 2016

Mr. Kevin Finnerty  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, Culture Division  
Culture and Strategic Policy Branch, Culture Policy Unit  
401 Bay Street, Suite 1800  
Toronto, ON M7A 0A7  
Re: Ontario's Culture Strategy

Dear Assistant Deputy Minister Kevin Finnerty:

Thank you for providing this opportunity for the City of Peterborough to contribute to the development of Ontario's first-ever Culture Strategy. We hope that the Culture Strategy will continue to recognize and support the important role that local government plays in developing Ontario's cultural capacity and by extension, Ontario's economic vitality.

Culture helps to build better communities; it is a competitive advantage that enriches quality of life and community vitality. In today's economy where companies can locate virtually anywhere, municipalities must maintain and invest in their communities if they are to attract creative occupations, retain knowledge workers and drive economic growth.

We would respectfully ask that Ontario's Culture Strategy include policies and programs that:

- Recognize the contribution Culture makes to Ontario's economy by strengthening provincial investments in cultural infrastructure, cultural industries, capacity-building programs and new technologies.
- Enhance culture-led competitiveness of Ontario's cities, towns and regions;
- Work with public and private investors and cultural leaders to deliver a new Provincial investment model for culture.
- Invest in sustainable centres of excellence outside of Toronto.
- Establish a new cultural capital fund to address the funding, infrastructure, renewal, and deficit needs of cultural facilities and organizations across the Province.
- Provide predictable and sustainable operating funding for cultural facilities, organizations and culture workers.

- Support local economic development programs and initiatives aimed at developing and sustaining local cultural industry capacity and development.
- Facilitate First Nations, Métis and other distinct communities in expressing and sharing their culture and perspectives.
- Collaborate with municipalities and communities on the development and implementation of local cultural strategies to sustain levels of participation and investment in a more diverse and locally representative arts, culture and heritage sector.
- Promote inclusive cities by ensuring respect for cultural diversity and cultural rights for all.
- Enhance incentives and support for communities to develop arts, culture and heritage assets and promote the use of existing buildings and spaces for cultural purposes.
- Develop sustainable cultural tourism to benefit local communities and individuals;
- Explore opportunities to enhance partnerships among all three levels of government, the private sector, non-profit organizations, cultural and educational institutions and individuals to develop a new model for funding and investing in culture in Ontario.
- Encourage Provincial ministries to work together in implementing initiatives that will fall under the new culture strategy.
- Develop and maintain tools and indicators to track cultural activity and measure culture's contribution to the local economy. The indicators must fit communities, towns, regions and cities of all sizes, and must be:
  - *Replicable* - it must be possible to repeat the data collection and analysis in the future, in order to prepare reporting at regular intervals;
  - *Portable* - it will be possible to apply these indicators to other Ontario municipalities, so that the strength of the local cultural sector can be measured relative to those of other cities; and
  - *Legible* - the indicators are accessible and understandable to a range of users, constituencies, and stakeholders.

Further, we support the Creative Cities Network of Canada's recommendations that Ontario's Culture Strategy should reflect the roles local government can play in developing and strengthening Culture in Ontario by:

- *Emphasizing* the importance of local governments in the Ontario Culture Strategy Guiding Principles, recognizing that culture is different everywhere and highlight the unique role of local governments in supporting Ontario's diverse municipalities;
- *Investing* in funding for municipalities to boost the implementation of municipal cultural plans, and strengthen the management and development of local cultural resources; and
- *Advancing* the role of local governments in fostering an environment in which arts, cultural industries, cultural heritage, and public libraries thrive in communities by partnering with relevant professional networks and organizations on the creation of new resources and tools, professional training, and knowledge sharing opportunities.

Peterborough boasts a wide array of quality cultural resources and facilities with levels of activity above those typically found in other communities of its size. The city has a wide variety of museums and galleries, an exciting vibrant music and theatre scene, a busy festival calendar and well-preserved built heritage. Through our Community Grants programs the City provides project, service and investment funding support to numerous Arts, Culture & Heritage organizations and facilities. The City's growing public art collection includes sculptures, murals, monuments and other art installations. The cultural maps include hundreds of cultural assets that contribute to the uniqueness of the city. These include the city's historical, artistic, and archaeological heritage; local festivals, and rituals; leisure activities; opportunities for sports and recreation; cultural and entertainment venues; the cultures of youth, ethnic minorities, and other communities of interest; and the local products and skills unique to Peterborough, such as canoe-making. Our cultural assets are both enablers and products of our creative expression and our distinct cultural identity.

In 2012 Peterborough completed its first Municipal Cultural Plan - a plan that drew upon extensive community consultation in order to guide Peterborough's cultural planning and development activity. In seeking to define culture, the Municipal Cultural Plan cast the net widely and, in addition to the traditional disciplines of arts, culture and heritage, it included the city's built and natural heritage, festivals and events, sports and recreation, oral histories and common values, lifestyle choices and local customs, creative activities and the products generated by artists and entrepreneurs, as well as the communities and places where opportunities to exchange and express cultural values exist. It identified Peterborough's main competitive advantage as its quality of place.

The Plan recognized the unique nature of Peterborough. While it is located in a region where the people have a strong connection to the many lakes, rivers, and streams, the city is also an Urban Growth Centre (UGC) in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) area. However, it is about 30 kilometres further away from its nearest UGC than any other pair of UGCs in the GGH and this relative isolation has contributed to

Peterborough's development as a self-sustaining community with a strong local culture scene.

Offsetting its relative isolation, Peterborough is in close proximity to the Kawarthas region which has contributed to the development of the city's rich recreational culture. The region offers a wide range of opportunities for recreational and leisure activities that cater to active lifestyles. Culturally, these activities are tied to the traditions of the past and include hunting, fishing, boating, camping, and hiking. In addition, the abundance of local lakes, the Trent Severn Waterway, and the historic hydraulic lift lock, among other attractions, contribute significantly to tourism in the region. The natural heritage surrounding Peterborough is, therefore, a tremendous cultural, social, environmental, and economic asset to the city.

In today's economy, the availability of a skilled, creative and motivated labour pool is the single most critical factor related to economic prosperity. Peterborough's strong cultural scene and quality of life are drawing an increasing number of young creative industry workers and professionals to the city creating a considerable pool of creative talent. The city's concentration of cultural workers is above the national average and there are relatively high numbers of cultural workers as a percentage of the total workforce.

In 2013 the Martin Prosperity Institute undertook an in-depth analysis of the composition of Peterborough's workforces and workplaces, and how the two intersect. "Who Works Where in Peterborough" identified two unique trends:

- Peterborough's manufacturing sector employs a high percentage of its workforce in "Creative Class" occupations – these workers are driving innovation, research and efficiency in our manufacturing sector.
- The median age of the Peterborough's population is higher than in any of the Ontario or US benchmark regions used in the study. This creates an opportunity for growth in the health services sector, and identifies opportunities for mentorship between aging community members and younger generations of entrepreneurs and professionals.

The City's Municipal Cultural Plan recognizes the importance of identifying the City's assets and strengths, and continuing to invest in culture. It also highlights the importance of promoting, nurturing, and growing the City's crucial assets to ensure a high quality of life and continued economic prosperity for the people of Peterborough. To this end, the Plan includes seven Strategic Directions that reflect the importance the community and the City place on having a broad definition of culture and maintaining its unique identity.

The Strategic Directions are:

**Strategic Direction 1: Celebrate and Strengthen Our Region's Waterways, Cultural and Natural Heritage** - recognize the region's significant cultural and natural heritage

as continued environmental, social, and economic assets for Peterborough and celebrate the important relationship between the people and the land.

Strategic Direction 2: **Strengthen the Arts** - foster and support the growth of the arts sector in Peterborough, enabling greater collaboration and partnership-building to occur within the arts community, and with community partners such as local businesses, educational institutions, and the City.

Strategic Direction 3: **Strengthen Heritage** - build on the City's past heritage work through continued development of policy and regulatory frameworks and tools such as heritage conservation districts to protect Peterborough's historic buildings and landscapes.

Strategic Direction 4: **Strengthen Downtown as a Cultural Hub** - reinforce City policies and initiatives to increase quality of life downtown, improve the pedestrian environment, and emphasize downtown as the "cultural hub" or focal point of cultural activity and creative entrepreneurship incubation in the community.

Strategic Direction 5: **Incorporate Culture in All Neighbourhoods** - support cultural development initiatives at the neighbourhood level and recognise the "uniqueness" of Peterborough's neighbourhoods. Cultural development should be supported at the neighbourhood level through partnerships between the City, neighbourhood organizations, artists and cultural workers, business owners, and residents.

Strategic Direction 6: **Encourage Inclusivity and Facilitate Diversity** - partner with a wide array of organizations to promote diversity and facilitate a more inclusive city, continuing to attract and retain newcomers and youth, and continuing to respond to the needs of changing demographics.

Strategic Direction 7: **Build the Capacity of the Arts, Culture, and Heritage Division** - explore greater opportunities for collaboration, enhanced efficiencies of cultural facilities, and continue to raise awareness of the Division's role in city-building.

These are the Strategic Directions the Municipal Cultural Plan identified for Peterborough. Other municipalities and communities either already have developed, or will develop their own Culture Plans and identify the best mechanisms for investing in their culture, and creative industries to create employment growth, develop their own cultural identity, revitalize urban areas, transform ordinary cities into 'destinations', create stronger connections between arts and business and attract skilled workers. Ontario's Culture Strategy needs to enable local government efforts to develop and sustain their own brand of culture, while also strengthening the Province's arts, culture & heritage sector, its creative industries, its competitiveness and its capacity for innovation.

Thank you for this opportunity to contribute to the Ontario Culture Strategy.  
Becky Rogers

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