



## KINGSTON COMMUNITY CULTURAL POLICY PLAN

### Stage One Update

January 12, 2010

This Update provides a summary of Stage One of the Kingston Community Cultural Policy Plan (KCCPP) planning process. It is based on ideas and opinions shared to date and represents how we are organizing our thinking about the KCCPP. This information will form the basis for the presentation that we will make at the public workshops that will be held on January 28 and 29 in City Hall, Kingston.

#### PURPOSE OF THE KCCPP

The purpose of the Community Culture Policy Plan is to:

- Articulate a sustainable, authentic, long term vision for cultural vitality in Kingston.
- Develop a list of strategic directions, initiatives and recommendations for action and an implementation timeline.
- Identify possibilities for connections between cultural organizations and other stakeholders and opportunities for collaboration among City departments to achieve municipal/community strategic objectives.

#### Please share your thoughts with us!

There are a number ways that you can contribute your thoughts on this Update. You can go to the KCCPP web page and use the “Your Opinion” button.

You can also attend a public workshop on Thursday January 28 at 6.00 p.m. or January 29 at 9.00 a.m. at Memorial Hall.

Finally, you can use our online discussion guide that will be posted on the web page for two weeks from January 25<sup>th</sup> to February 8<sup>th</sup>.

#### KCCPP WEBSITE

[www.cityofkingston.ca/residents/culture/masterplan.asp](http://www.cityofkingston.ca/residents/culture/masterplan.asp)

If you have any other comments or questions, please contact Charles Tilden from the consulting team at [ctilden@canurb.com](mailto:ctilden@canurb.com) or at 416-365-0816 x282, or Colin Wiginton at the City’s Cultural Services Department at [cwiginton@cityofkingston.ca](mailto:cwiginton@cityofkingston.ca) or at 613-546-4291 x1357.

## WHO WE'VE TALKED TO & WHAT WE'VE HEARD

Stage One included discussions with representatives of cultural organizations, municipal government, business groups and other stakeholders from a number of disciplines and initiatives in Kingston. We held two public workshops in September 2009 at City Hall attended by more than 100 people and convened a number of focus groups for stakeholders and interested parties from a variety of cultural disciplines.

We heard a wide variety of comments and opinions about the Culture Plan and a number of themes have begun to emerge from discussions with the community, key stakeholders, City of Kingston staff, and the consultant team. They are listed here in no particular order of importance:

**1. Kingston's arts, historic and built heritage assets can have a central role in cultural tourism and economic development.**

The cultural vitality of cities is linked to their ability to retain and attract high value investment, people and jobs. As a result, cultural activity and the creative economy are important sources of wealth creation.

The KCCPP has an opportunity to strengthen the relationship between cultural assets and economic development in Kingston. These cultural assets could include:

- the historical narrative of the First Nations, French, Anglo, including Anglo-American, early Hudson Valley Dutch, Irish as well as the narratives of recent immigrant communities;
- the institutional narratives of the military, penal and educational facilities that are so important to the history of Kingston;
- physical aspects (built heritage, cultural venues, waterfront);

- natural heritage (Rideau Canal, 1000 Islands, Prince Edward County, Great Lakes, Blue Belt); and
- movable cultural assets (artifacts and collections).

Heritage policy (i.e. built heritage) is quite well developed in Kingston and there is a real opportunity to broaden the focus from heritage protection to heritage resource management and to make economic development linkages. Opportunities also exist to strengthen the presence of arts in tourism initiatives.

- 2. All cultural activity needs to be understood and valued.** There is an importance and value to all elements of the cultural system. This is not always understood for different reasons. There is a need to develop a common understanding and narrative to describe the relationships, value and interdependencies of all sectors of cultural activity, including amateur and professional, official and non-official.
- 3. The municipal government needs a framework on which all city departments and Council can build policies / programs, and financial support for cultural vitality.** There is an important opportunity for the Culture Plan to make linkages to existing city strategic plans, urban design guidelines; subdivision planning. This cultural policy framework and the connections it makes can help Kingston plan for cultural vitality. This includes integrating culture into sustainability planning through the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP). The Culture Plan can also provide a basis for interacting with other orders of government.
- 4. Place Making is Important.** The KCCPP creates an opportunity to identify how the City can use space to enhance cultural vitality – e.g. Market Square, waterfront, Rideau Canal, better gateways into city, public spaces, public art, neighbourhoods, identification and way finding. A vibrant, pedestrian friendly, prosperous downtown is important to the cultural vitality of

Kingston. The KCCPP should also identify places in the rural areas of Kingston that could be opportunities for place making.

5. **Cultural Tourism needs to be based on an authentic experience that is relevant and meaningful to the local population as well as compelling to an affluent tourism market.** What is needed to attract this market? How do you build an audience beyond existing audiences in a town with 150k people? Strategies are needed that build authentic local experiences that attract the local market and in turn attract an affluent tourist demographic.
6. **Assure broadly distributed and accessible opportunities for people from a diversity of communities within Kingston to engage in cultural activities of their choice.** The KCCPP should provide opportunities for people to engage in cultural activity in their neighbourhoods or the rural areas of Kingston. There is an opportunity for the KCCPP to suggest measures to ensure socially inclusive cultural programs and measure the social cohesion benefits of cultural activity. Kingston has an opportunity to be a safe and encouraging place for people to express their cultural identity.
7. **Integrate, Integrate, Integrate.** The KCCPP should suggest ways to create a closer alignment between the university and community cultural activities and the City. There is a need to break down the silos and increase communication between cultural groups, community groups, governments, educational institutions and much else. The KCCPP is an opportunity to create an overarching cultural narrative to which everyone in Kingston can contribute.

## FOCUSING THE DISCUSSION IN STAGE 2

Based on what we heard, the following draft principles, proposition, strategic directions and big moves are being explored. In Stages 2 and 3 of the KCCPP study, a set of actions and initiatives will be developed to support the strategic directions.

### Principles

The following principles are proposed to guide the development of the KCCPP.

- Collaboration, participation and inclusion
- Link cultural vitality, economic prosperity and sustainability
- Value all the elements of the local cultural system and the interrelationships between them.
- Attract and retain talent
- Support cultural and creative businesses and foster entrepreneurship
- Value Kingston's unique history and place in North America

### Core Proposition

Kingston has an opportunity to differentiate itself from other cities in North America based on its cultural assets and resources.

### Strategic Directions

**A unique identity and a culturally vibrant Kingston is built around six strategic directions:**

1. A powerful historical narrative
2. A strong downtown cultural core
3. A strong performing and visual arts offering
4. A sustainable cultural sector
5. Broadly distributed opportunities for people to engage in cultural activities of their choosing
6. A model heritage community of the future

Our work over the next stage of the study will be to develop the content of these strategic directions. At this point we are looking for general comments, suggestions for concrete initiatives that could support them or alternatives

## Big Moves

These 9 ideas for big moves (listed in no order of importance) are based on our discussions with stakeholders and interested parties and among the study team. They are offered for consideration and discussion as initiatives that could support the strategic directions. Many of these big moves are multi-faceted, could connect to more than one strategic direction and often could fit under several sub-headings.

### 1. Place Making and Clustering

- Reshape the gateways to Kingston
- Waterfront vision/plan – public access, public spaces, public art, waterfront access in front of the old Kingston Penitentiary
- There are more spaces like the courtyard for Chez Piggy, which have not yet been taken advantage of to create unique experiences.
- Creating a cultural district downtown
- Create a centre or cluster for contemporary art – in downtown or in the North Block

### 2. Cultural facilities

- Examine whether City Hall is a suitable building to retrofit for museum or other public use.
- Acquire or repurpose movie theatre across from Grand Theatre for use as a smaller performance venue (250 seats)
- Creating a centre for innovation at the Pump House (tie in green technologies and sustainability concepts)
- Incorporate Woodworking Museum into a larger Heritage centre facility at present site to capitalize on natural setting

and interest in links between heritage, natural heritage environmental messaging and sustainable living.

- Incorporate cultural components in city owned community spaces
- Incorporate libraries into a strategic direction around facilities and distributed cultural offerings throughout the urban and rural areas.

### 3. Cultural tourism initiatives

- Place cultural tourism at the heart of Kingston’s tourism strategy (cultural, culinary, heritage tourism)
- City-wide(including rural areas) interpretive plan – which uncovers shares and celebrates hidden stories, assets
- Coordinate a summer arts festival of international significance
- Promote culinary/food assets in Downtown Kingston(110 restaurants and bars); link to Kingston’s rural food production ; Move ‘Artevino’ to Kingston for its awards
- Reposition Kingston as the new urban centre for local rural wine and food culture.
- Develop a centralized marketing strategy and resources to communicate to local, regional, national markets.

### 4. Heritage

- Be a model heritage community of the future.
- Transition from heritage site preservation to cultural heritage resource management (including interpretation, archeology, etc.)

### 5. Organizational and community capacity

- Create a parallel organization to the Arts Council and the Arts Advisory Committee for heritage and museums.
- Build professional operating capacity and create/support a philanthropic culture in the community

- Strengthen coordination of the communications infrastructure
- Consider municipal funding for non-professional groups
- Consider the merits of offering grants to individual artists, including writers (Toronto is only municipality that provides funding to individual artists)

## 6. Retain young talent

- Develop a suite of opportunities for emerging artists to connect to the culture scene – e.g. opening acts for big name acts at local venues.
- Recognize and foster young leaders through an “emerging leaders” initiative.
- Attract young people to Kingston or bring them back
- Consider initiatives to bridge from student to full-time working life in Kingston.

## 7. City’s role

- Identify the appropriate level of investment the city could make in programming, events and community development funds
- Develop a rationale for increasing City resources to cultural initiatives. Identify return on investment.
- Define a role for Cultural Services as facilitator of partnerships and creator of new methodologies of collaboration.
- Identify appropriate role(s) for city government.
- Incorporate cultural components into parks & recreational programming (e.g. dance, arts & crafts).
- Convene an advisory group on cultural vitality with broad representation from all sectors (business, institutional, community).
- Accessibility: Reconcile accessibility with historic preservation mandate.

## 8. Collaborate with educational institutions

- Incorporate the Queen’s Performing Arts Centre into municipal planning for cultural vitality.
- Create a tri-partite committee on cultural vitality in Kingston – City, Queen’s, St. Lawrence.
- Work with St. Lawrence College to develop new programs in viticulture and oenology
- Build a critical mass of applied arts training in Kingston (where the cultural facilities are)
- Arts education – City programming could be in schools and City facilities (in partnership with schools)

## 9. Cultural Diversity, Inclusion, Social Cohesion, Anti-poverty

- Articulate the role that Culture plays in building social capital; continue discussion with Poverty Reduction Roundtable
- Make case for access to cultural activity as element of poverty reduction strategy
- Develop measures of social cohesion as a result of involvement in cultural activity.
- Acknowledge that many contributing artists live under the poverty line; consider development of affordable live /work space for artists.

