Cultural Vitality

Cultural Services Update Report

2014-15
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Top 10 Highlights 2014/2015

1. Obtained Council approval for the first-ever Public Art Master Plan for the City of Kingston

2. Facilitated the appointment of award-winning writer Helen Humphreys as Kingston's Poet Laureate for the period 2015-2018

3. Commemorated the Sir John A. Bicentennial with articles highlighting community leaders, a new website, a bilingual walking tour mobile app and many special events

4. Opened the Tett Centre for Creativity and Learning as a new cultural hub for artists and residents alike

5. Worked with representatives from the local First Peoples’ communities to develop a recognition statement for the City of Kingston

6. Completed the Kingston Commemorations Strategy that provides a vision of how commemorations can support a greater understanding of Kingston’s many stories

7. Secured $74,390 in matching funding for 22 local arts, heritage and cultural organizations through artsVest, a program delivered by Business for the Arts

8. Partnered in the creation of The Kick & Push Festival, a ground-breaking multi-partner theatre and performing arts summer festival based at the Grand Theatre

9. Initiated ‘Arts on the Rise’ as a new arts-based program in Rideau Heights

10. Secured $175,270 in funding to support programing across different service areas from higher levels of government, both Provincial and Federal
**Cultural Services**

**Mission:** To organize and leverage the resources, knowledge and experience of the City of Kingston—along with the community, businesses and public institutions—to build cultural vitality within the cultural sector and throughout the community.

**Vision:** Kingston will be known as a cultural hub that builds on its many histories, engages its community and inspires current and future leaders to foster a collective sense of pride and belonging.

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**Cultural Vitality**

Enriching people’s lives through arts, heritage and culture

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**Core Service Areas**

- Cultural Heritage
- Performing Arts
- Community Investment
- Cultural Development
- Marketing & Communications

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How much is spent on culture through Cultural Services?

- **Operating** $3,847,270*
- **Capital** $536,705*

Total = **$4,383,975**

Per capita = **$35.54**

2011 census pop. = 123,363

*2014 Actuals

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What percentage of the average municipal tax bill supports culture in Kingston? **1.8%**

$57 of $3,118, average house value of $272,440

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How much is spent in each core service area of the Cultural Services Operating budget?

- Administration: 16%
- Cultural Heritage: 17%
- Performing Arts: 16%
- Community Investment: 27%
- Cultural Development: 10%
- Marketing and Communications: 14%

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P. 2
How many people attended programs offered through Cultural Services? (2014/2015)

138,936 people attended programs offered through Cultural Services.

Museums = 16,458
Grand Theatre = 60,240
City Hall = 40,707
Cultural Development = 21,531

How much is invested through our grants to community?

$522,078* City of Kingston Arts Fund
$183,000* City of Kingston Heritage Fund

Total = $705,078
Per capita = $5.72
2011 census pop. = 123,363
*2014 Actuals

In June 2015, Statistics Canada published a landmark report regarding the direct economic and employment impacts of culture in Canada, the provinces and the territories. This research was based on the 2010 Provincial and Territorial Culture Satellite Account and asserts that the Culture GDP in Ontario in 2010 was $21.9 Billion, which represents 3.7% of Ontario’s economy. That compares to $2.1 Billion in sport products, which indicates culture has ten times the direct economic impact than sport in this province.

605 artists live in Kingston equalling 0.95% of labour force.

2,325 cultural workers live in Kingston equalling 3.65% of the labour force.

In December 2014, Hill Strategies Inc. published “Artists and Cultural Workers in Canadian Municipalities” based on the 2011 National Household Survey. The purpose of the report was to examine the number, incomes and demographic characteristics of artists and cultural workers by size of municipality.

According to the report, Kingston exceeds the average in terms of the number of artists and cultural workers living in cities of comparable size. Kingston also exceeds the national average in terms of the concentration of resident artists.
Cultural Heritage

Asset management continues to be a major focus for Cultural Services as it relates to cultural heritage and the civic collection in particular. The City’s collection of objects, artifacts and artworks help tell local stories through an increasingly diverse range of items that reveal how people have lived, worked and played in this community over several centuries.

Asset management also includes the two City-owned museums as well as Kingston City Hall National Historic Site and the objects it houses. The MacLachlan Woodworking Museum features the culture of wood and wood crafting. As Kingston’s first waterworks, the Pump House Steam Museum explores water through the lens of science and technology as well as a range of topics of general interest. Kingston City Hall National Historic Site sits at the heart of the city, functioning as both the seat of local government and as the embodiment of Kingston’s 19th century history and ambition.

24,150 items in the civic collection  148 programs offered through the two City-owned museums  40 volunteers participating in the City Hall Tour Guide program
Performing Arts

The Grand Theatre provides downtown Kingston with another significant historical facility that continues to function as a lively and important community resource. Restored and re-opened to the public in 2008, the Grand Theatre welcomes thousands of patrons each year who enjoy dozens of productions presented by and for the community along with numerous commercial presentations. The ‘Grand Theatre Presents’ continues to offer an important City-led service designed to expose Kingston residents to a range of national and international artists through a combination of performances, education and engagement activities while striving to maintain a balance between artistic integrity, artist development, audience accessibility and fiscal responsibility.

184 performances
hosted by the Grand Theatre

$2,214,221
in tickets sold

6,357 participants
took part in engagement activities presented in tandem with the Grand Theatre Presents
A key aspect of community investment involves funding organizations and programs that enable the City of Kingston to broaden its reach and foster cultural vitality. These investments take many forms that include the City of Kingston Arts Fund (CKAF) established in 2007 and the City of Kingston Heritage Fund (CKHF) established in 2012. In recent years, the City of Kingston has also expanded its investment through a series of Service Level Agreements with the Kingston Arts Council and the Kingston Association of Museums, Art Galleries and Historic Sites and, in 2014, the Tett Centre for Creativity and Learning. The purpose of these investments is to strengthen the sector as well as to expand the cultural resources available to the community. These investments also help to stimulate economic development and support cultural tourism through product development.

$1,076,049 in community investment through Cultural Services

46 operating and project grants allocated through CKAF and CKHF

11,173 in attendance at events at the TCCL between January and August 2015
Cultural development is the responsibility of the community engagement and education staff who act as the link between Cultural Services and Kingston’s diverse communities. Their work includes program design and delivery, partnership and strategy development, research and special events and projects. Many programs are delivered through various City-owned facilities but the goal is to work with the community – including communities that have been underserved – to identify opportunities, leverage resources and maximize access to cultural experiences for all residents.

180 students involved in Sir John A. Macdonald bicentennial programs
2,183 youth involved in programs
14,000+ people participating in free programming
The Marketing and Communications group within Cultural Services works to determine the appropriate target audience for each of the services offered through the Department and assists with the development of the products and pricing and promotes each product to maximize the return on investment. Working with external marketing partners including Tourism Kingston, The Great Waterway, Kingston Accommodation Partners is an important part of extending our message to visitors for special events and programs. The group also works with Strategic Communications Department within the City and many external partners from the arts and culture community to promote non-venue based programs and events to increase cultural participation across this city.

27,000 opt-in email newsletter subscribers
218,000 unique visits across four websites
10 million impressions through four Twitter accounts
Fostering Cultural Vitality

The purpose of the Cultural Services Department is to leverage a diversity of cultural assets and resources to enrich people’s lives through access to the arts, heritage and culture. Cultural vitality is the end goal and its fulfilment depends on the existence of a strong cultural infrastructure coupled with high levels of participation. Social cohesion and the ability to foster a strong sense of local identity are also important to this work that has benefitted significantly from an investment of approximately $2.0 million in operating funding since the Kingston Culture Plan was approved in 2010.

The Kingston Culture Plan was conceived of as a ten-year strategy and 2015 marks the mid-point of its implementation. It is also meant to be a living document and at this juncture, the timing is right to reflect upon the investments made to date and their impact in terms of community benefit. That work has begun and various partners have been approached to participate in what needs to be a collaborative process. The plan is to align this work with the Canadian Index of Wellbeing and, along with stakeholders like the Community Foundation for Kingston and Area, to use a combination of measures and performance indicators to demonstrate how cultural investment helps to improve overall quality of life.

Pursuing Community Investment

Community investment forms a major part of the work pursued in recent years to foster growth within the sector. This includes annual increases to the City of Kingston Arts Fund along with the creation of the City of Kingston Heritage Fund in 2012. More than $700,000 in annual funding is made available through these programs and more than $4.0 million has been dispersed to 242 recipients since 2007. After almost 10 years a plan has also been put in place to develop a more structured way to measure and demonstrate the impact of these two programs to be completed in 2016.

This work will be pursued in collaboration with the fund administrators, the Kingston Arts Council and the Kingston Association of Museums, Art Galleries and Historic Sites. It will involve developing indicators specific to the arts, heritage and culture along with measurement tools, processes and shared outcomes that align with indicators used as part of the Canadian Index of Wellbeing. This will result in an ability to track uptake and impacts over time and assist in evidence-based decision making.

Such work will also provide the City of Kingston, and the cultural sector as a whole, with the tools needed to understand the community, reveal opportunities for increasing and sustaining cultural investment and focus public attention on culture as an indicator of quality of life. It also provides a mechanism for cost containment by ensuring both value and return on investment.
A Corporate and Strategic Initiative

To achieve the level of cultural vitality being pursued in partnership with stakeholders across the community, it is critical that Cultural Services continue to be positioned within the City of Kingston as a corporate and strategic initiative. While some of the services delivered by the department are more traditional in scope, an increasing amount of effort and resources are being directed toward community investment and cultural development as areas of increasing importance. Such work aligns with the vision proposed for Cultural Services within the Kingston Culture Plan that articulates the department function as a municipal cultural development agency.

Cultural Services plays the role of a connector bridging the cultural sector with business, community and institutional sectors as well as the institutional spheres and other City departments to build cultural vitality through the city as a whole. This work is strategic by nature and is directed toward achieving a variety of objectives, including the cultural enrichment of residents and visitors, the development of new cultural experiences and products, the removal of barriers that hinder participation in culture, planning around community investment and the creation of a thriving arts and heritage sector that is relevant and accessible to residents and attractive to cultural tourists.

Council’s Strategic Priorities

The strategic priorities of the department also integrate with Council’s Strategic Priorities for the years 2015-2018. Some of these connections are more apparent such as Council’s continuing support for the on-going implementation of the Kingston Culture Plan as part of planning for a livable city and encouraging artistic and cultural business opportunities as part of creating a smart economy. Perhaps less obvious, but no less important, are the connections that can be made in relation to creating a smart economy (i.e. establish Kingston as a leader in innovation and incubation; foster an open-for-business culture; prepare a city-wide tourism strategy; and develop a youth employment strategy); planning a livable city (i.e. protect heritage; foster downtown intensification); and advancing a vibrant waterfront.

Cultural work is, by its very nature creative and it is about creating conditions that allow for different and dynamic actions to emerge—learning, experimentation, risk taking, problem solving, collaboration, change, growth and vibrancy. These are all things the City of Kingston itself is pursuing as an organization and Cultural Services has the chance to do the same within the cultural sphere.
Modern Fuel Artist-Run Centre is among the eight tenant organizations that now call the Tett Centre for Creativity and Learning home. After 35 years at its previous location on Queen Street, Modern Fuel has gained a higher profile and is finding new audiences for its programming. In the first six months of 2015, Modern Fuel has seen more than double the number of visitors than in previous years (4,600 visitors as of the end of July 2015). Improved accessibility and proximity to the other tenant organizations are responsible for some of this growth, whether it is local residents discovering the new facility or children from the Kingston School of Dance wandering down the hall and bringing their parents along to show them what they’ve seen. Modern Fuel is also experiencing an increase in school tours as a result of its new location. This includes elementary school students taking tours of the Tett as well as secondary students coming in en masse for a specific exhibit. This kind of response is not unique to Modern Fuel as all of the Tett tenants have all reported significant increases in visitors, memberships and program participation since relocating to the new facility. Many tenants have also seen their revenue increase as a result and they have also been able to access increasingly diverse sources of funding—through private donations, sponsorship, fundraisers and other levels of government—because of their involvement.

“Rarely would we have children at the previous location but now … it’s really interesting to see the kids getting excited about the work and bringing their parents in to see. It’s good for kids to be able to encounter different kinds of work and the Tett provides great ways to see a variety of art forms. Their curiosity is peaked. One of the best things is to see kids talking to their friends about what excites them about the work.”

Kevin Rodgers, Artistic Director, Modern Fuel Artist Run Centre
artsVest

The City of Kingston applied to Business for the Arts to be considered as a participant in the artsVest program they deliver. The application itself was prepared in partnership with the Kingston Arts Council and the Kingston Association of Museums, Art Galleries and Historic Sites and proved successful. The program launched on June 17, 2014 with a full day workshop at Kingston City Hall that also included a reception designed to bring together the program participants with local business professionals. A total of 22 arts, heritage and cultural organizations were accepted into the program that provided access to a comprehensive array of professional development opportunities to help them learn, grow and become sustainable. These included group and one-on-one mentorship sessions and a live peer-to-peer mentoring workshop. The result was the opportunity to seek sponsorship support from within the community that would be matched by Business for the Arts. In the end, 18 of the participating organizations were able to secure sponsorship and matching funds providing an economic boost of $176,349 to the local cultural sector.

“We are delighted to see Kingston barrel past their $170,000 impact goal, having raised critical private sector investment into the cultural landscape of the community. We congratulate [the] 18 arts organizations and all of the businesses who participated for building strong and sustainable community partnerships over the past year and look forward to hearing of continued success.”

Claire Hefferon, artsVest national program director, Business for the Arts

artsVest is delivered by Business for the Arts in communities across Ontario with funding from Canadian Heritage, the Ontario Trillium Foundation and Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.
The Kick & Push Festival

The absence of summer programming at the Grand Theatre has been identified as an issue of concern among many stakeholders within the Kingston community, including City Council, local businesses and tourism providers. While summer programming has been offered through the Grand Theatre in the past, it has not proven to be sustainable because of the high level of risk involved. In 2015, Cultural Services worked in collaboration with numerous partners—Kingston Theatre Alliance, Single Thread Theatre, Theatre Kingston, Blue Canoe Productions, Downtown Kingston! BIA, The Great Waterway, Kingston Accommodation Partners and Tourism Kingston—to present the inaugural ‘The Kick & Push Festival’. By sharing the risk, these founding partners were able to create summer programming that was both unique, yet accessible and also celebrated local history and stories and showcased a wealth of local talent. Over the course of the festival, 131 performances and events were presented with 4,345 people attending. The Festival involved over 167 artists and performers, 71 volunteers and managed to earn a modest profit. Moving forward, the Festival is intended to become an annual event designed to provide Kingston audiences with a new style of summer programming while supporting the growth of the region’s theatre and performing arts community.

"When Cultural Services sat down with a group of local theatre producers to discuss this idea, I recognized that this might be an important opportunity for art in this community. The truth, I later realized, was so much more. The Kick & Push Festival was 45 events over a 30 day period in the middle of the summer that changed the game for both theatre makers and lovers in this city. By working in conjunction with various departments of the City and the business community, this team launched a new era of cultural product in Kingston. Dozens of volunteers, hundreds of local artists and thousands of patrons and participants committed themselves to a new idea: that summer theatre can be unexpected, daring and thrilling. I am sure that we have only witnessed a small portion of the economic benefit that is yet to come from the Festival to our downtown core and summer tourism industries."

Brett Christopher, Theatre Kingston
Y2K Kingston Youth Strategy

The Y2K Kingston Youth Strategy is in its 2nd year of implementation towards making Kingston a youth-friendly and inclusive city. The City of Kingston is one of the partners in a collective effort to carry out the recommendations of the 2013 approved strategy. Based on numbers to date, by the end of 2015, approximately 2,640 Kingston youth will be engaged for the first time in Y2K activities, with 127 youth volunteering and participating as core Y2K members on a regular basis. This represents a significant expansion from the core 20 members who developed the strategy in 2013. More than 1,000 adults from approximately 192 organizations and initiatives will engage for the first time in Y2K activities, ranging from workshops to training to advisory meetings. To date, there has been progress on all 17 recommendations, with action on 61 of the 65 action items. More than 50 organizations and 60 adults have committed and participate on a regular, monthly basis in Y2K activities, with 192 organizations and initiatives engaged in some way throughout the year.

The Y2K Strategy is beginning to track where Kingston Youth are on several key indicators that form part of the Ontario provincial governments Policy Framework, Stepping Up, for youth outcomes, which are particularly relevant to the success of a youth friendly city. Youth facilitators hired by Y2K are conducting on-going research using validated survey tools that allow comparison of Kingston results to other communities using the same tools to measure Kingston’s progress towards a youth-friendly city. Indications are that Kingston needs to do further work to be youth friendly. For instance, just 43% of Kingston youth versus 59% elsewhere say that there are many ways for themselves and their friends to have a say in what their community does. 27% versus 42% say they feel like they belong in their community. Y2K will bring forward a report to City Council that outlines a 3-year plan.

“Y2K has given us the opportunity to have our voice heard formally on the changes we would like to see in our community. Through having this opportunity Y2K has given us the chance to work on our self-confidence, leadership skills and communication.”

Katie Dailey, youth facilitator, City of Kingston
Grand Theatre Presents

Since the Grand Theatre Presents program was inaugurated in 2008 it has provided an opportunity to showcase more than 260 performances and has been supported by 150 education and engagement events for students, local artists and community members. Interest in the program continues to grow as the 2014-2015 season set a new record in subscription sales with more than 6,000 subscription tickets sold along with more than 19,000 individual tickets sold, representing a gross revenue in excess of $1.0 million. More than 3,300 students have also attended various education performances and many more people have participated in a wide variety of engagement activities throughout the season, including pre- and post-performance talks and master classes.

In addition to ticket sales, the Grand Theatre Presents program receives funding through The Grand Theatre Foundation that stewards annual community sponsorships and donor programs and grants from Provincial and Federal agencies, such as the Ontario Arts Council and Canadian Heritage. The Grand Theatre Presents program also functions as an anchor tenant at the Grand Theatre providing between 55 and 60 bookings each year. Grand Theatre Presents contributes to multiple revenue streams, including merchandise sales, concession sales, box office fees, rental revenue and capital improvement fees. According to the 2013 Grand Theatre Economic Impact Analysis—which stated that the venue’s economic impact exceeds $7.5 million a year—for every dollar invested in the Grand Theatre operating budget there is a return on investment of $9.87 to the community through the purchase of goods and services, along with salaries and wages, that ripple across the community.*

First Peoples’ Recognition Statement

Starting in 2001, an agreement was made between the City of Kingston and the Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs (MNCC) that outlined a mutual commitment to restore and protect Belle Island as the site of a First Peoples’ campsite and burial ground. This partnership initiated a respectful and ongoing dialogue with Kingston’s First Peoples, including the surrounding Mohawk communities, Algonquin communities, the Mississauga of Alderville and the Frontenac High Land Métis community. Since 2011, the City of Kingston has also been working to strengthen relations with the First Peoples’ community locally and regionally through numerous initiatives, including the annual proclamation in June of Aboriginal Peoples’ Month, the gifting of a traditional talking stick regularly used during City-led First Peoples’ public gatherings and at council meetings during the month of June, as well as the use of traditional smudge ceremonies where appropriate. In 2015, City Council directed the Cultural Services Department to consult with the First Peoples’ community to prepare a brief, respectful recognition statement to be formalized and read by the Mayor and other City representatives at municipal public meetings. That work was completed in April 2015 and the recognition statement itself was approved by City Council in June 2015 and is now being read at the start of every Council meeting.

“It was an honour to witness our Mayor read for the first time, the recognition statement that recognizes the First Peoples’ community and the history of our ancestors here in Kingston. After living here for almost fifteen years, and having been involved in some extraordinary activities where the City of Kingston demonstrated considerable leadership around youth, the LGBTQ community and housing, never did any of those powerful experiences match what I felt that evening in Council Chambers. I was touched deeply and for the first time ever felt that level of pride in calling Kingston home. I felt that our history mattered, our experiences as First Peoples were important and that I belonged.”

Pytor Hodgson, CEO,
Three Things Consulting
Customers and Customer Service

The customers served by the Cultural Services Department are extremely diverse but can be grouped around four different types of relationships: (1) audience/participants; (2) students/learners; (3) artists/creators; and (4) organizations/community.

Our customers are not wholly defined by demographics or psychographics, and require multiple points of entry so they can access and participate in the range of services the Department provides in ways that best suit their needs.

Customer service must be relevant, timely and responsive at all times and involves engaging with existing customers more deeply as well as reaching out to new, potentially underserved audiences to establish new relationships.

Corporate and Departmental Values

In addition to the corporate values endorsed by the City of Kingston (teamwork, respect, integrity, pride), the Cultural Services staff as a group has also identified four additional values that help shape its work.

**Collaboration:** We work closely with colleagues and the community, with respect and creativity, to achieve outcomes that are strategic and widely beneficial.

**Support:** We are aware of what the Corporation and community need and endeavour to fulfill those needs responsibly and professionally.

**Inclusivity:** We make sure our work is relevant and responsive and we embrace our role as facilitators to ensure access, diversity and social inclusion.

**Boldness:** We are not afraid to be creative, take risks and make mistakes in order to learn, grow and foster change within the Corporation and the community.