CITY OF COURTENAY

Cultural Services Report

Fall 2019

PREPARED BY:

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CULTURE + COMMUNICATION

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

Nordicity
Cultural Planning | Policy Development | Impact Analysis

Please note

- Draft circulated for partners and staff review and discussion

- Council presentation

- Positive footing

- Identify how best to move forward

Project Purpose:
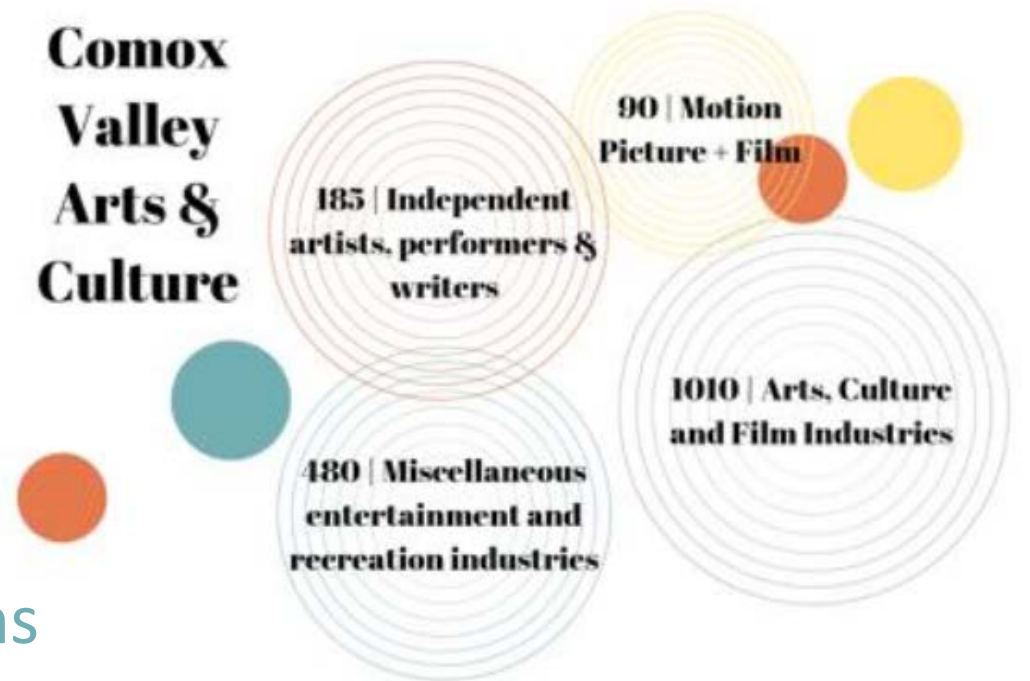
Assessment phase of cultural development

- What is the City's role in funding cultural partners and in cultural development generally?

- Who should be the key partners at this time?

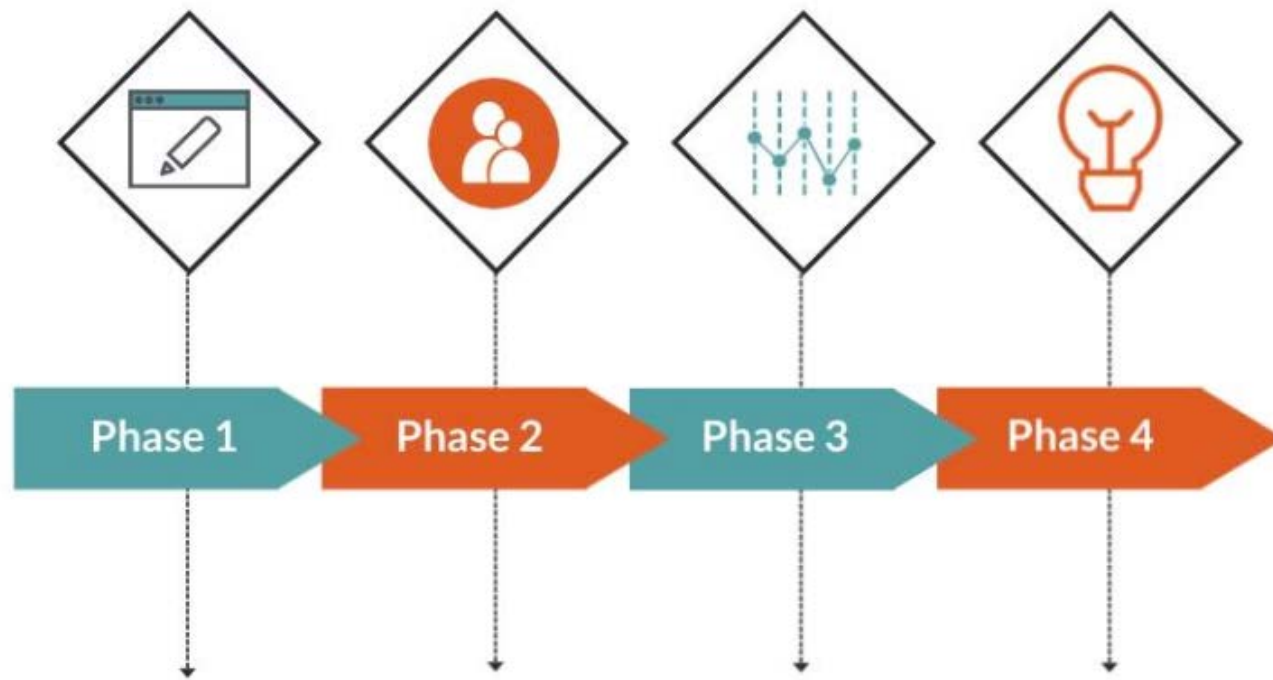- What do they need?

- Where are we headed?

Cultural Partners:

- Reviewing each of the City's cultural partners performance
- Including Comox Valley Arts
- Benchmark existing cultural services
- Viewing organizations as key resources
- Considering operational context and comparative analysis

Observations

- Changing Valley profile
- Attracting new residents
- Expectation of amenities
- Need for a valley-wide approach
- Experienced administrators
- Solid performance and operations
- Not in a crisis mode
- Good foundation to build from going forward

Comox Valley Arts & Culture

90 | Motion Picture + Film

185 | Independent artists, performers & writers

1010 | Arts, Culture and Film Industries

480 | Miscellaneous entertainment and recreation industries

Project Methodology

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4

Doc. Review

- **License of occupation**

- **Management agreements**

- **Annual reports, strategic plans** and other documents

- The **Official Community Plan** and documentation related to other municipal programs, policies and initiatives

Engagement

1 Council **Workshop**

6 Interviews:

- City of Courtenay Staff
- Comox Valley Art Gallery
- Courtenay & District Museum
- Sid Williams Civic Theatre
- Comox Valley & District Arts Council
- Comox Valley Regional District

Analysis

Document review + stakeholder engagement

- The analysis included:
  - **benchmarking** cultural services,
  - a **comparative review** of relevant practices,
  - a financial management and **performance analysis**
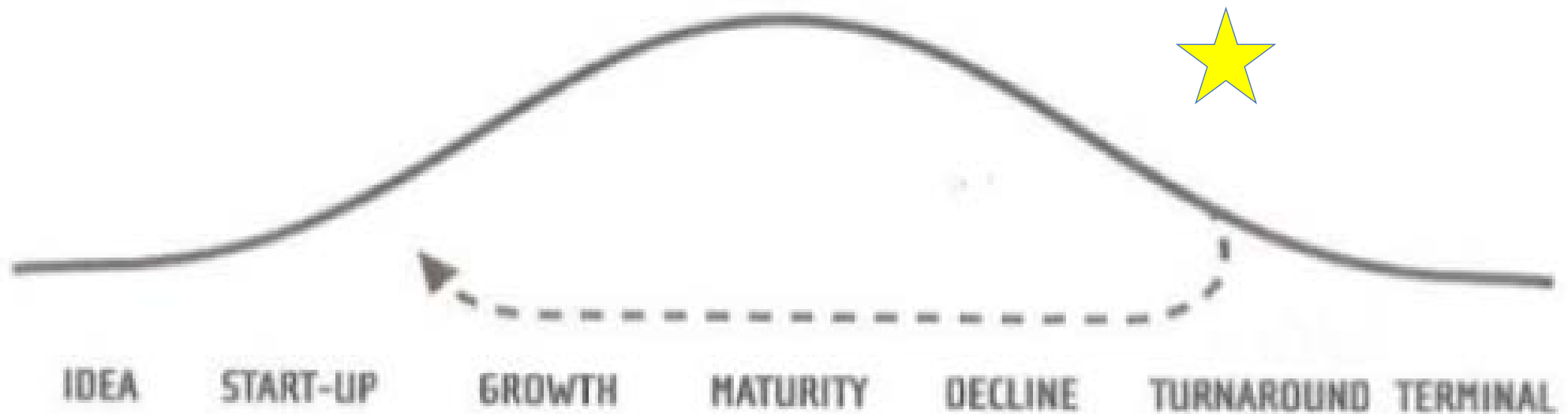
Recommendations

Report Completion

ARTISTIC VIBRANCY

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COMMUNITY RELEVANCY

Source: WolfBrown

Non Profit Organizational Lifecycles

IDEA   START-UP   GROWTH   MATURITY   DECLINE   TURNAROUND   TERMINAL

	Start Up Energy and passion are highest but systems generally lag far behind	Growth Program opportunity and audience demand exceed systems and operating capabilities	Mature Org has reputation for a steady production cycle, a relevant program, and a solid operation.	Decline Making status quo decisions based on internal factors.	Turnaround Taking decisive action to regain relevance and viability.
Programs	Simple, experimental; doing whatever might prove that artistic or cultural program can and should exist	Finding what is distinctive, developing a niche with a specific audience	Balance of favourite programs with audience resonance as well as of artistic/cultural renewal with playing it safe	Rigid, status quo; losing audiences to more relevant offerings	Being evaluated and modified in light of market viability; stakeholder input being sought.
Management	Leader is a 'spark plug' and the most experienced staff person; staff or contractors wear multiple hats	Staff battle against lack of time and constant sense of urgency; first intro of staff specialists that require competitive compensation	Second or third generation leadership, mgm't perceived as leader among field peers, leader inspires confidence among all stakeholders	Committed to status quo, organizational slippage is ignored, mgm't is trapped by commitment to programs	New leader is strong-willed w clear sense of direction; decisive and able to mobilize resources
Governance	Directors have personal connection to mission or founder, tend to defer board decisions to founder, do not view themselves in a governance role	Recruits from outside friends circle bring higher org performance expectations; board structure starting to appear	Board sets direction, leaves mgm't to leader; is organized for maximum effectiveness; keeps mandate focused and vital	Board only takes action when money starts to run out; not focused on community response to org	A core is ready to do what it takes to restore org integrity; non-committed members are gone
Resources	Low-budget, boot-strap operation, budget is the sole financial document, operating on a cash rather than accrual basis	Income sources diversifying; more sophisticated financial management systems are needed	Multiple sources of income; reasonably accurate financial forecasting and deficits generally avoided	Averse to cutting expenses; income forecasts based on the past, if asset-rich looking to prior earnings to cover current costs	Financial crisis may have been the trigger point therefore often short of cash; willingness to cut expenses to reflect reality
Systems	Finance and admin functions and systems are generally weak or are outsourced	Systems of all types must now be improved to meet demands of prog expansion, more fundraising, marketing	Regular communication systems exist w/in the org and with publics, admin systems support timely decision making	Antiquated and physical space may be deteriorating; systems haven't kept up with the times	Existing may be too complicated and expensive for turnaround stage

Adapted for small-medium arts and culture organizations by Kathleen Speakman from Susan Kenny Stevens Non-Profit Lifecycles: Stage-based wisdom for non-profit capacity.

Role of the City in culture-led development

City Role	Current	Optimal or Desired	Strategic Plan Alignment	Expected Outcomes
Partner and Collaborator	Through three cultural partner agreements	Continue and optimize	Clearly reflected in Council's new Strategic PlanUnclear	Improved performance, efficiencies and capacity
Convenor and Facilitator	No	Unclear	More of a role to play Unclear	Minimize duplication; create efficiencies and bolster sector
Owner and Custodian	Yes	Continue and expand where appropriate, or divest where appropriate	Somewhat articulated through various staff reports and cultural partner agreements	Improved cultural resource management and development.Improved cultural asset management
Funder	Yes, through grants and agreements	Continue and optimize	Yes	Optimized cultural resource Improved cultural asset management and performance; numerous direct and indirect community and sector benefits
Programmer	Yes, at recreation levels	Unclear	Unclear	Community benefit
Promoter/Advocate	Reflected in OCP and Strategic Priorities	Unclear on any future direction	Reflected in OCP and Strategic Priorities	Provides alignment for cultural partner business planning

CONTENTS

Short Term (Year 1):

- Initiate a new Fee-For-Service Agreement with the Comox Valley Community Arts Council including the introduction of a community liaison role
- Contribute towards the education and outreach position at the Comox Valley Art Gallery
- Explore the provisioning of additional space for the Comox Valley Art Gallery
- Support the Sid Williams Theatre in an application to the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund for support, and/or other grant sources.
- Work with the SWT and the Regional District in determining a funding formula to recognize and support the SWT as a regional asset.
- Work with the Museum in diversifying its revenue base and identifying cost reductions.
- Begin scoping of cultural planning process with Regional District and convening an Intermunicipal Cultural Working Group.

Moving Forward:
Considerations + Recommendations

Medium Term (Year 2-3):

- Explore the development of an earned revenue stream and/or pooled charitable fund to benefit the four cultural partners in order to minimize cannibalization of donor and earnings opportunities in a small marketplace.

- Explore the centralization of marketing and communications among cultural partners and the development of an arts marketing strategy for the area in conjunction with CVEDs and CVA.

- Work with all cultural partners in developing facilities plans, including the identification of use alternative and non-traditional spaces (e.g. gift shop pop ups).

- Collaborate with Cultural Partners on improved evaluations and measurement through the development of a cultural scorecard to incorporate into agreements.

Moving Forward:
Considerations +
Recommendations

Moving Forward:
Considerations + Recommendations

Ongoing:

- Continue to maintain to a high standard all cultural infrastructure and City-owned or leased cultural assets.
- Continue to encourage and promote cultural amenity contributions as part of the Developer Application Approval Process to help fund and maintain cultural infrastructure.
- Continue to optimize all multi-year agreements with Cultural Partners as required to provide stability and capacity building in cultural development in the area.
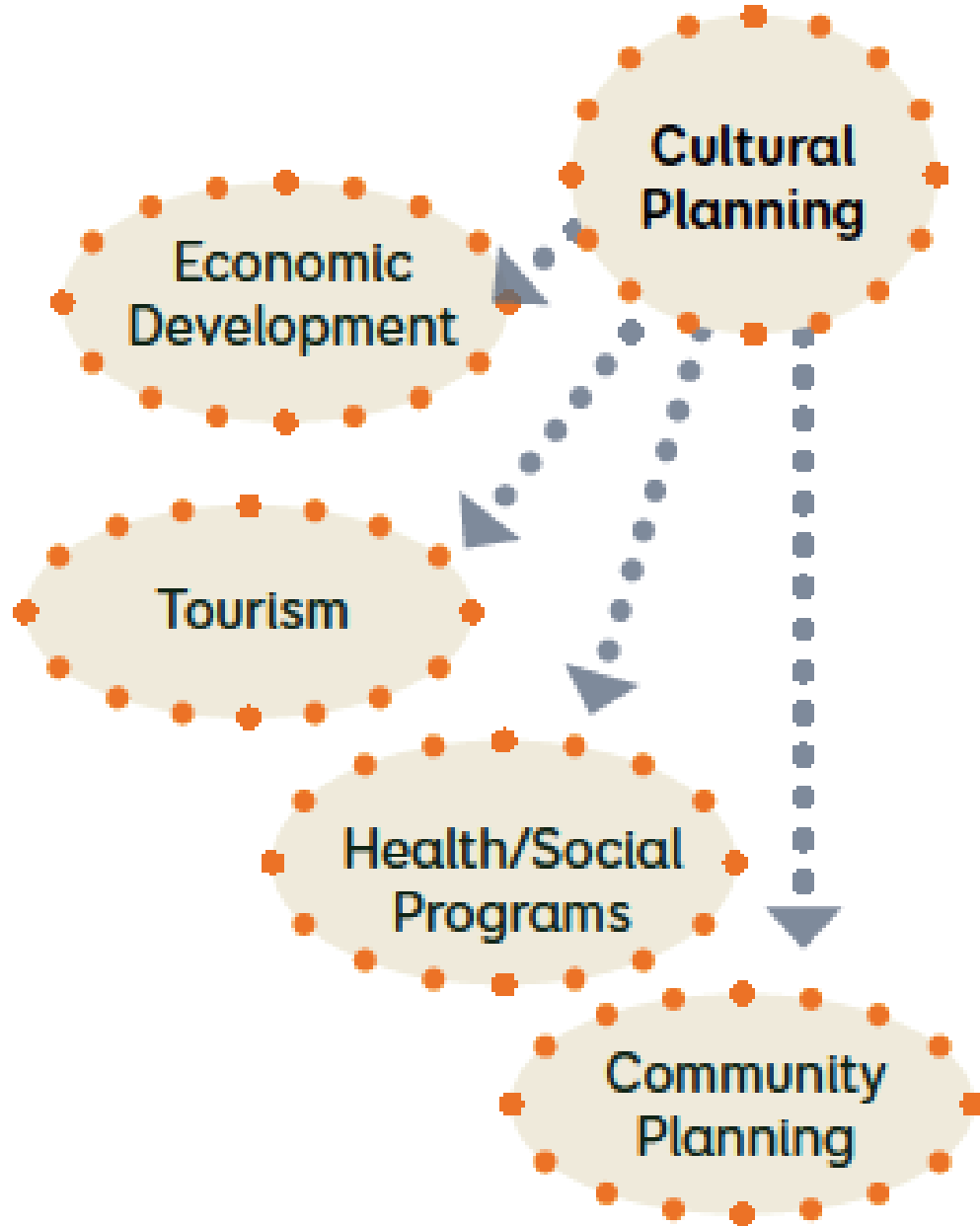
Next Steps:

Discussion with Partners

Begin implementation in collaboration
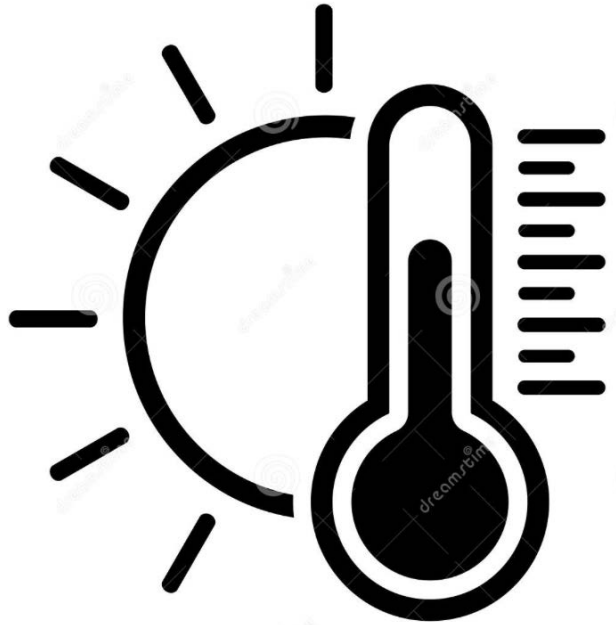
Initiate cultural planning process

Cultural Plan

culture is

a driver and enabler

of economic, social and environmental development

Discussion: Council's Comments

What works for Courtenay?

Concerns?

Key opportunities?

Thank you